

INSPECTION REPORT

ST MARY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Knaresborough

LEA area: North Yorkshire

Unique reference number: 121637

Headteacher: Mr J Livsey.

Reporting inspector: Mr D J Halford
12908

Dates of inspection: 25 – 28 September 2000.

Inspection number: 224388

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: Voluntary Aided

Age range of pupils: 4 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Tentergate Road
Knaresborough
North Yorkshire

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr T Keelan

Date of previous inspection: 4 November 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
D J Halford 12908	Registered inspector	Mathematics	What sort of school is it?
		Physical Education	How high are standards? The school's results and pupils' achievements.
		Equal Opportunities	How well are pupils taught?
			How well is the school led and managed?
J Smith 9649	Lay Inspector		How high are standards? Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development.
			Attendance
			How well does the school care for its pupils?
			How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
M Hemmings 16761	Team inspector	Science	
		Information and communication Technology	How good are curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
		Special Educational Needs	
		Art	
		Design and Technology	
		Music	
D New 22761	Team inspector	Areas of learning for children in the foundation stage	
		English	
		Geography	
		History	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Mary's Catholic Primary School is a school of 181 pupils situated in the historic market town of Knaresborough. It is part of the North Yorkshire County Authority. Pupils come from a relatively wide range of social and economic backgrounds. The school is the only Roman Catholic Primary School in the town. Children are admitted to the school at the beginning of the year in which they are five, and on entry most pupils have basic skills, which are above average for their age. The percentage of pupils entitled to school meals free of charge and the percentage of pupils on the SEN register are below average. There is a very small number of pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds, and none with English as an additional language.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an effective school with many strengths, which outweigh the weaknesses. Good leadership and management ensure that the school has a clear sense of direction. The governors and staff have high expectations of the pupils in terms of attitudes, attainment, behaviour and personal development. Teaching is at least satisfactory in almost all lessons, and the vast majority of pupils respond well, achieve well and attain above average standards by the time they are eleven. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Seven and eleven year olds attain above average standards in English, mathematics and science.
- The headteacher has established an effective senior management team which, together with the governing body, gives the school clarity about maintaining high standards
- The school cares well for its pupils particularly in relation to checking on the academic progress they make.
- The personal development of the pupils is a strength of the school.
- Strong links with other schools, including schools in the independent sector, have brought substantial financial benefits to the school and have a positive impact on pupils' learning in a wide range of subject areas.

What could be improved

- The work offered to high attaining pupils does not always provide sufficient challenge to take their learning forward.
- There are inconsistencies in aspects of short term planning in some classes, which lead to pupils being unclear about what it is they have to learn.
- Monitoring of teaching and learning in classrooms, currently restricted to observations of Literacy and Numeracy lessons, needs to be extended to include other subjects.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in November 1996 and improvement has been good. The school has had a new deputy headteacher appointed since the last inspection and he has gained the professional respect of his colleagues and the confidence of the parents. His appointment has enabled the headteacher to establish a senior management team, which has worked hard and successfully with the staff to take the school forward. The key issues from the previous inspection have all been successfully addressed and are now strong elements within the school's current provision. Every

subject area now has a coordinator and an assistant to lead it, and there is a clear sense of shared purpose in seeking to enable the school to improve. Pupils are provided with a broad range of learning opportunities as they move through the school and there is effective school improvement being undertaken. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection and standards have risen and been maintained over time. The academic progress of individual pupils is effectively tracked in Literacy and Numeracy and systems are in place to ensure high standards are maintained. The school sets itself challenging targets and is on course to achieve them.

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
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	C	A	A	B
Mathematics	C	A*	B	C
Science	D	A	B	D

Key

very high A*

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

In the 1999 National tests for 11 year olds, the standards attained are well above average in English and above average in mathematics and science. In comparison with similar schools, they are above average in English and in line with the average in mathematics, and below average in science. The percentage of pupils gaining the higher levels in the tests was well above average in English and mathematics and close to the national average in science. Test results for the 2000 cohort show a substantially similar position in English and science, although there is a decline in the mathematics standards. The number of pupils in the cohort was small and the group contained a higher than average number of pupils with special educational needs. Taken overall, the results indicate a good level of attainment. The standards seen in the work of the current Year 6 pupils is above the national expectation in English, mathematics and science. Taken across all three subjects, the trend from 1997 has been broadly in line with the national trend. The school sets appropriately challenging targets for its 11-year-old pupils and is on course to achieve them in 2001.

For pupils aged 7, standards attained in the 1999 National Curriculum tests are well above the national average in reading, above in mathematics and in line with the national average in writing. The 1999 results indicate that the percentage of pupils attaining the higher levels in reading was well above the national average. In mathematics the percentage was close to the national average. No pupils gained a higher level in writing. There has been a significant improvement in writing in the year 2000. Almost all the pupils gained the expected level in reading and mathematics in the year 2000 tests, with almost two thirds gaining the higher level in reading and almost one quarter of the pupils gaining the higher level in mathematics. Overall, pupils' results in science were above the national average, with those attaining the higher levels being broadly in line with the national average. Pupils attain satisfactory standards in all the subjects where sufficient lessons were observed for a secure judgement to be reached. Standards in information and communications technology are satisfactory, with pupils making most progress in the area of word processing. In music, pupils sing particularly well, and older pupils achieve well in history.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils are keen to be in school, take an interest in their work and in the life of the school. They show good attitudes to learning and work well.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. The great majority of pupils respond well in the way they behave to the high standards expected of them. The small number who show disruptive behaviour often do so when they are not sufficiently challenged by the work they are asked to do.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils form good relationships with staff and with other pupils. Older pupils take particular care of younger pupils.
Attendance	Very good: well above average. Pupils arrive punctually and lessons start on time.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is good. Teaching is at least satisfactory in 96 per cent of the lessons observed. It is good in 43 per cent and very good in 10 per cent of lessons seen. There were two unsatisfactory lessons seen, representing 4 per cent of all lessons. Teaching is consistently good in the Reception Class and in Year 1. It is consistently good in Year 5 and often very good in Year 6. This gives pupils a good start to their primary education and a positive boost at the end of their primary years. The quality of teaching is good in English and mathematics and the basic skills of literacy and numeracy are taught well and have a positive impact on pupils' learning across a wide range of subjects. In the small number of lessons where teaching is unsatisfactory lessons are not always effectively matched to the learning needs of the pupils. Where teaching is good, the school successfully meets the learning needs of the pupils enabling them to achieve well in relation to their prior learning. In most classes teachers' planning is good. It shows clearly what pupils are expected to learn. In Years 5 and 6 pupils are taught to take more responsibility for their work in order to consolidate and extend their learning. The quality of learning is good throughout the school, particularly in the foundation stage, in Year 1 and for pupils in Year 5 and 6 where pupils show a particular interest in their lessons. Occasionally, the pace of lessons is more moderate and some pupils lose interest.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. All subjects of the National Curriculum are given due attention, with good emphasis on literacy and numeracy. Provision for extra-curricular activities and pupils' personal and social development is good.

	Links with the community and other schools are a particular strength.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. There are effective procedures for the early identification of pupils with learning difficulties. They are well supported and make good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. Pupils are nurtured within the secure context of the Catholic Faith. They know the difference between right and wrong and are taught to live and work together, helping each other and celebrating their successes. More could be done to encourage the pupils to appreciate the richness and diversity of other cultures.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. The pupils feel confident and secure within a caring community. Parents value the good levels of care of pupils shown by the school.

There is an effective partnership between parents and the school. There is an active Parents' Association, which has worked hard to improve the quality of the immediate environment of the school. Many parents express satisfaction with the aims and ethos of the school, and some assist in the daily running of the school. This has a positive impact on the pupils' learning and on standards and achievement, particularly, for example, in the provision of music.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. Since the last inspection a new deputy head has been appointed and an effective senior management team has been established. It is having a positive impact on the work of the school, its standards and the overall quality of the teaching. A strong sense of purpose is evident and subject coordinators are clear about their role. There is a clear commitment to improving standards.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The Governing Body fulfils its role well. They give good support to the headteacher and to the staff. They share the clear educational direction of the school and carry out all their statutory duties.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The school has effective systems in place to evaluate its performance, particularly in literacy and numeracy, and is actively seeking improvement. The school has a good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. Governors are appropriately involved in school improvement.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The school has used its initiative very well in establishing partnerships, which have enhanced its financial position. It spends its available money wisely and carefully evaluates the effect of its spending on the standards it achieves.

Staffing is adequate and is generally deployed effectively. The accommodation is adequate, but has difficulties in some areas. A link passageway recently constructed between the classrooms for younger pupils and the hall is a positive addition. Resources are adequate and are used well. The governing body is well aware of the principles of best value and ensures that the school applies them effectively.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<p>The large majority of parents have very positive views about the school. They say that:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The atmosphere of the school is good and the pupils like coming to school.• The school takes good care of the pupils• Standards of work are good and pupils make good progress• Pupils' behaviour is good.• Teaching is good.	<p>Some parents made negative comments: They would like to see improvement in:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The leadership of the school• In the range of activities provided for pupils outside lessons.• The amount of homework given to pupils.

The inspection team agree with all the positive comments made. They do not support most of the negative comments. The leadership of the school did figure as a weakness at the time of the last inspection, but the establishment of a senior management team, comprising the headteacher, deputy headteacher and the Key Stage 1 Coordinator, has been very influential in moving the school forward. The inspection team see this current position as strong. The range of activities available to the pupils is satisfactory overall, and good in some areas, notably in music, and in the range of extra-curricular activities. With regard to homework, the school has a good quality policy outlining the homework provision for each school year. The school agrees that at the moment this is inconsistently applied.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

- 1 In 1999, the National Curriculum test results for 11-year-olds indicate that the average points score for English was well above the national average. In mathematics and for science it was above the national average. The percentage of pupils reaching the expected level 4 or above, was also well above the national average for English and above the national average for science and close to the national average for mathematics. Standards fell in mathematics, when compared to the previous year, but maintained position close to the national average. The percentage of pupils gaining the higher levels was well above the national average in English and mathematics, and close to the national average in science. When compared to similar schools, the results in English are above average; for mathematics they are broadly in line, and for science they are below. The lower standards in science, when compared with similar schools, were due to the fact that although the school's science results improved from the previous year, they did so by a smaller percentage than was the case nationally. Taken over the last four years from 1996 attainment across all three subjects has been broadly in line with the national trend. In the 2000 National Curriculum tests for 11-year-olds, the standards in English and Science have improved from the previous year. Standards in mathematics have fallen slightly, due to the cohort being small in number and containing a high proportion of pupils on the special educational needs register. **The attainment of pupils currently in Year 6 is above the national expectation in English, mathematics and science.**
- 2 The 1999 National Curriculum test results for 7-year-olds indicate that the percentage of pupils gaining the expected level 2 or above was well above the national average in reading, above the national average in mathematics and in line with the national average in writing. Since 1997, pupils' performance has remained above the national average throughout in all three subjects, although showing a moderate decline. Teacher assessments indicate that almost all pupils attain the expected levels in science, when compared to schools nationally, showing particularly good assessments in Life and Living Processes. The tests and assessments in the year 2000 indicate that the current position is substantially being maintained. **The attainment of the majority of 7-year old pupils currently in school is well above average in reading and above average in writing, mathematics and science.**
- 3 Children come to school with levels of attainment that are above average. By the age of five, the vast majority achieve well in all the areas of learning due to a combination of their above average attainment on entry to the school and the consistently good teaching they receive.
- 4 Building on the good foundation set in the Reception class, pupils aged 5 to 7 learn to read fluently, accurately and with expression. By the age of 7, many can understand what they are reading and use good phonic skills to identify unfamiliar words. They appreciate books and listen to stories with interest, although their knowledge of authors is limited. By the age of seven pupils show a growing competence in writing sentences independently with capital letters and full stops. They can sequence stories and are beginning to use adjectives to make their writing more interesting. Handwriting is neat and spelling is good. Between the ages of seven and eleven pupils build on this good start, particularly in Years 5 and 6. Pupils use 'brainstorming' to sketch outlines for stories, and use poetry very effectively with evocative lines to illustrate their work. In Year 6 pupils are able to capture the readers' interest by their choice of vocabulary.

Handwriting develops progressively and most pupils can use a uniform cursive style by the age of eleven.

- 5 In mathematics, pupils are able to add, subtract, multiply and divide, and explain the different ways in which they can arrive at an answer. By the age of seven, most pupils are able to calculate mentally the sum of numbers with two digits. By the age of eleven, the majority of pupils are able to recall a wide range of multiplication tables and they know the place value of digits in numbers with decimals. They have a clear understanding of percentages. They have a good understanding of shape and space and can measure accurately.
- 6 In science, pupils benefit from a wide range of practical activities. By the age of 7, pupils know how to observe scientific activities closely and how to record their findings accurately. They make good progress. This continues as pupils pass through the school, learning about the strength of different materials. The older pupils benefit from good quality teaching in science and show a good understanding of pollination, and, by the age of 11, pupils undertake good experiments in filtration.
- 7 In both key stages there is little difference between the attainment of boys and girls. Generally the girls slightly out-perform the boys, except in mathematics in Key Stage 2, when the situation is reversed and boys out-perform the girls. However, the trend over time shows that both boys and girls generally exceed the national average in English, mathematics and science.
- 8 The school sets appropriately challenging targets for 11-year-old pupils. The targets are based on accurate assessments of pupils' work and careful analysis of test scores. The school makes good progress towards meeting its published targets. Each class has individual writing targets displayed in the classroom, and pupils' work is effectively monitored, particular in literacy, numeracy and science.
- 9 Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the requirements of their individual education plans. These are appropriately set down and regularly monitored. The pupils make good progress in relation to their prior learning and can often be seen successfully undertaking the same task as their peers in the classroom. Overall, pupils with special educational needs are well supported.
- 10 Pupils use their literacy skills well in other subjects. For example, they can logically record their findings in science, and can read and understand what is written on the worksheets. In history and geography, the older pupils are competent in using secondary sources to extract information and use this to write accounts of events from the past, or in the description of other countries.
- 11 Pupils use their numeracy skills well, for example when plotting graphs in history, or in recognising geometrical shapes in Aboriginal art in Year 2. In music, pupils can maintain a steady rhythm and recognise the numerical nature of the beats.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

- 12 Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development are good. They make a significant contribution to the positive ethos and good learning environment of the school.
- 13 Pupils enjoy school and are keen to participate in all the activities it offers both in lessons and in extra-curricular activities. In over half the lessons observed during the inspection pupils' attitudes to their work were either good or very good and they were rarely less than satisfactory. These

positive attitudes to work are due to pupils' motivation and to good teaching. Pupils show a high level of concentration and interest in what they are doing. They show curiosity in science investigations and in a Year 6 history lesson pupils thought of a wide range of questions they would like to ask about ancient Greek cultures. Pupils are happy to explain the work they are doing. They are able to work cooperatively and sensibly in pairs and groups. In the few lessons where attitudes to work and behaviour are unsatisfactory this is due to pupils becoming bored and restless when they are given unchallenging and inappropriate work to do.

- 14 Younger pupils participate enthusiastically in lessons and are very responsive to the teachers' good management of behaviour. They are able to concentrate well for their age, for example Year 1 pupils are so keen to answer the teacher's questions that they sit attentively on the floor even though this does not have a carpet.
- 15 Pupils' behaviour around the school and in the playground is also good. Pupils are polite and helpful to visitors. They show a good level of self-discipline and move around the school in a sensible manner. Throughout a long whole school assembly celebrating good work pupils sat quietly and behaved well. In the playground pupils play in a good-natured way and no evidence of bullying was observed during the inspection. In the last school year there was one exclusion of three days resulting from a serious incident in the playground.
- 16 The good personal development of pupils is a strength of the school. Relationships throughout the school are good and there is a strong ethos of respect for each other. Older pupils take particular care of younger ones and help staff by entertaining the pupils during wet play times, for example during the inspection Year 6 pupils put on an impromptu puppet show for younger pupils. Year 6 pupils are given many other responsibilities, which they fulfil well: they act as corridor monitors at breaktimes; they help set up the hall for assembly and answer the telephone at lunchtime.
- 17 Attendance is very good. Pupils enjoy coming to school and the attendance rate is well above the national average. Pupils arrive punctually and lessons get off to a prompt start.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

- 18 The quality of teaching is good. It is at least satisfactory in 96% of the lessons. It is good in 43% of lessons and very good in 10% of lessons. There were two unsatisfactory lessons, one in the 5 to 7 age group and one in the 7 to 11 age group during the week of the inspection and these represent 4% of the lessons. This is an improvement on the position reported when the school was last inspected, because of a larger percentage of good and very good teaching. Good teaching is found in the Reception class, Year 1, Year 5 and Year 6, giving pupils a good start to their school life and a challenging end to their primary education. They are well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
- 19 Challenging teaching has a positive impact on the pupils' learning. It results in the pupils' learning being good. Teachers in these classes structure pupils' learning well and present work interestingly. It results in the pupils being highly motivated and they work diligently. They show great interest in their work, particularly in the lessons where the pace of learning is consistently maintained. Older pupils have good opportunities to organise their own work and carry out some elements of research independently. Teachers' planning is generally of satisfactory quality, but in some classes it fails to identify precisely what it is pupils are expected to learn. In others, the objectives are clear. The school needs to remove this inconsistency.

- 20 The skills of literacy and numeracy are taught well throughout the school. The National Strategies for literacy and numeracy are well established and pupils, particularly those aged ten and eleven, use their developing skills in a wide range of subjects for example in science when they record their findings from the good quality investigational work which is undertaken. There is also good research work about the Romans, in Year 3.
- 21 The quality of teaching for the under fives is consistently good and enables the children to make good progress. The teacher and support staff have a good understanding of the needs of young children and work well together to provide an appropriate range of activities, which are consistently well planned. Good questioning enables the children to be confident about their answers and to show real interest in their activities. Very good records show which children are eager to answer in 'show and tell' sessions and accurate assessments ensure that their individual progress is carefully monitored.
- 22 Teaching is good for pupils between the ages of 5 to 7 years. It is consistently good in Year 1, and satisfactory in Year 2. The teaching of English and mathematics is good overall. Pupils are managed well in cramped classrooms. This is particularly the case in Year 1, where the pupils have a small space to gather round the teacher and many sit on cold tiles in an area with no carpet. Small mats and cushions are provided. In literacy, in Year 1, activities are well planned and effectively reinforce the teaching, which is clear and precise. The teacher's planning is of good quality and lessons are well structured. In Year 2, the teacher has a secure understanding of the work the pupils are to undertake and lessons are resourced well, for example in an art lesson where the pupils looked closely at Aboriginal drawings and paintings. There is effective recapping of work pupils have recently covered. The teaching however, whilst satisfactory, sometimes lacks a clear structure. Discussion moves rapidly from one area to another and lesson introductions are sometimes overlong, leading to some pupils not being fully engaged on the lesson. In one lesson, when reading from a well chosen big book, ineffective guidance on which word to read together led to pupils losing the thread of the task.
- 23 The quality of teaching for pupils aged 7 to 11 is also good. It is particularly strong at the end of the key stage. In Year 5 it is consistently good and in Year 6 it is often very good. In both these classes lessons move at a very good pace and pupils' interest is maintained throughout. Lessons are effectively planned and pupils know what it is they are expected to learn. Pupils in both these classes respond well to the challenges that are expected of them. Expectations are consistently high across a broad range of subjects. In Year 3, teaching is consistently satisfactory. Good routines for the pupils are in process of being established. Some pupils are not easy to manage. Clear and precise instructions are given about what is expected of the pupils. This sometimes leads to the pace of the lesson being moderate, for example, at the start of a physical education lesson when the pupils were anxious to get started. However, planning is good and shows an appropriate understanding of how pupils learn. In Year 4, teaching is satisfactory but rather mundane. There is a heavy reliance on pupils filling in boxes on worksheets – for example, in a science lesson comparing vertebrates and invertebrates. The task was little more than colouring one outline blue and one red. The higher attaining pupils are frequently insufficiently challenged in this year group and their overall progress slows down in Year 4, but is given a boost as they move to the latter years of the key stage.
- 24 Teachers generally record pupils' progress accurately. Detailed records are kept relating to pupils work in core subjects. The quality of teachers' marking varies, with some class teachers clearly pointing out the strengths and weaknesses in pupils' work, whilst others rely simply on ticks and crosses to signify what is right and what is incorrect. The school is moving to a system of typed annual reports for parents and in some classes the comments made are exactly the

same for each child. Homework is used to extend the work, which is undertaken in school. The school has a good policy for homework, which is contained in the detailed files kept by subject coordinators. The school is aware that there is some inconsistency in the application of this policy.

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

- 25 The curricular and other opportunities offered to the pupils throughout the school are good. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection when a key issue was to improve the quality of the curriculum.
- 26 The provision for children in the foundation stage of learning in the reception class includes all the areas of learning and experience expected for this age group. Strong emphasis is placed on literacy and numeracy and also on children's personal and social education. This emphasis and the good teaching that children receive results in them making good progress in their academic skills and allows them to show increased confidence as they settle into school routines. Children are well prepared for the Programmes of Study of the National Curriculum as they enter Year 1.
- 27 The curriculum that the school provides for pupils aged 5 to 11 meets all the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum. Good implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies is helping to raise pupils' attainment in English and mathematics. Additional time devoted to the teaching of literacy and numeracy skills has meant less time available for other subjects, but the school is successful in maintaining pupils' access to all areas of the curriculum. These include rich experiences in the arts, especially music and drama, which are being further strengthened by inclusion in a 'Performing Arts Project' that is soon to lead to pupils taking part in a major celebration of dance, drama and music in Ripon Cathedral. The content of the 'Here I Am' syllabus for religious education is effectively followed. The school effectively supports the pupils' physical and personal development and there is good provision for pupils to experience personal and social education, including health education and attention to drug misuse within the science curriculum. The school provides for sex education in a sensitive and supportive manner that emphasises family values within a caring school community. Pupils in Year 6 are well supported in this aspect of their education by the school nurse.
- 28 The school successfully ensures that all pupils have equal access to the curriculum. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good with effective procedures in place for the identification and assessment of their needs. The requirements of the Code of Practice are met in full. The individual education plans give clear targets, which are broken down into small steps to enable pupils to make good progress in their learning and achieve well. The recording of pupils' progress and arrangements to review their needs are thorough and regular.
- 29 The school has improved its planning procedures since the last inspection and there is now a good structure of long, medium and short term planning in place to ensure continuity and progression of learning in all subjects. The long term planning provides an overview of the aspects of the National Curriculum Programmes of Study delivered by each year group over the year. The medium term consists of schemes of work that outline the learning objectives to be taught. Short term planning is taken from these schemes and details the key learning objectives and skills to be taught but there are times, in some classes, when these objectives are not precise enough and as a result the work given to pupils lacks sufficient challenge.

- 30 The provision for extra curricular activities offered to pupils is good and include football, netball, art, poetry, bridge and French. The school gives pupils opportunity to take part in a wide variety of educational visits that enrich the curriculum by providing further significant learning experiences for pupils. Younger pupils have been to the 'Butterfly Park' at Leeds, while older pupils have visited 'Fountains Abbey', 'Skipton Castle' and Whitby to support work in religious education, history and geography. There are also residential visits to develop pupils' social skills with Year 5 pupils going to an outdoor pursuits centre near Malton and pupils in Year 6 visiting the Lake District. There have been visits from poets and authors to work with pupils to develop their literacy skills and from other specialists to support the 'Performing Arts Project' such as 'Opera North'.
- 31 The school has very good links with the community and the church that makes a strong contribution to pupils' learning. The parish priest visits the school on a regular basis to work with pupils and to take class and whole school masses. At harvest time the pupils take gifts to the housebound of Knaresborough and at Christmas the school choir sings carols to residents of a local nursing home. The pupils are actively involved in raising money for a variety of charities, including the Leeds Diocesan 'Good Shepherd Fund' and one to support the education of a child in Pakistan suffering from leprosy. Within these activities the pupils gain a good understanding of the needs of others. There are very good links with St. John Fisher High School and King James Technology College that very effectively prepare pupils in Year 6 for their transfer to secondary schools. Very good use is made of national initiatives to raise money for resources and support a raising of standards. An example of this is the 'Building Links Project', in which the school has worked collaboratively with an independent school in Leeds on work in English, geography and science using information and communication technology links such as video conferencing.
- 32 The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school.
- 33 The provision for pupils' spiritual development through the curriculum and acts of collective worship is very good, being set within the secure context of the Catholic Faith. Pupils have many opportunities for reflection in assemblies and at other times of the day in classrooms. This was seen in assemblies in which pupils had time to think how their actions could affect others and how they should care for people in and out of school. All classrooms have a focus for reflection that is effectively used by teachers during the saying of class prayers. Spirituality is also promoted through links with the church and the parish priest comes into school on a regular basis to work with pupils and take mass. The experiences that pupils have in music, drama and art play an important part of the school's provision for spiritual development. All teachers value all pupils' ideas and efforts and this is shown by the way that all pupils are encouraged to make contributions during lessons.
- 34 The school's provision for moral development is very good and it is an orderly community in which the vast majority of pupils clearly know right from wrong. Moral themes feature in many aspects of the curriculum and are an integral part of the school ethos. The pupils are encouraged to develop good moral values through the behaviour policy and through the good examples set by teachers. The staff effectively promote a sense of fairness among pupils and is very successful in teaching them to be tolerant of each other.
- 35 The provision for the social development of pupils is very good. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their actions and to work and play together with respect and tolerance. From the start of their time in school pupils are provided with good social development opportunities,

with the staff providing good role models. The playground environment has been improved to provide an adventure area that helps to develop pupils' social skills. The good range of extra-curricular activities effectively supports pupils' social development, as do the opportunities for older pupils to take part in residential visits. Pupils listen to and respect the opinions of others, as was seen during the introductions and round up sessions of most lessons. Pupils are given many opportunities to work collaboratively in groups, such as when pupils in Year 6 science devise a fair test to find out about filtration.

- 36 The provision for the cultural development of pupils is satisfactory. Pupils learn to appreciate aspects of their own culture by visits to places such as Fountains Abbey and Skipton Castle. They also have opportunities to work with visitors that include poets, authors, theatre groups and musicians. In art lessons pupils are able to learn about famous artists and the styles in which they paint. The last inspection report indicated that the pupils' appreciation of the diversity and the cultures of others was less well developed. The school has improved provision and now gives pupils suitable opportunities to learn about other cultures traditions and beliefs. There is currently close collaboration with a school in Leeds that has pupils of other cultures, and this link is giving pupils an insight into their lives. Pupils have been able to see performances of a multi-cultural dance group and an Indian music company. There is recognition by the school of the need to further develop this aspect of pupils' education.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

- 37 Pupils feel confident and secure within the caring community of the school and parents value the good levels of care, which the school takes of their children. Staff know pupils well and pupils know that they have someone to turn to when they are hurt or upset. The school has good procedures for helping new pupils settle down happily in school and parents speak highly of the way the school makes this important transition easy for their children. The school takes adequate steps to ensure the health and safety of its pupils and makes good provision to ensure their welfare. At present, however, there is insufficient supervision in the playground at the midday break. There is only one midday supervisor on duty and although the school has staff with first aid qualifications on hand to take care of anyone who is hurt, there are times when the midday supervisor needs to take a pupil indoors and the playground is left unsupervised for short periods. The school recognises that this is an unsatisfactory situation and has been seeking to employ another midday supervisor.
- 38 Since the last inspection the school has improved its procedures for recording accidents and these are now satisfactory. Two staff members have up to date first aid qualifications. Staff show a good awareness of the importance of safety. However the school's risk assessment procedures are unsatisfactory. A risk assessment of the premises has not been carried out since the end of 1998. The school and its governors should review procedures for ensuring the safety of the school environment and of school activities. The school has sound procedures for child protection.
- 39 The school has effective procedures for promoting good behaviour. Teachers have high expectations of good behaviour and pupils are encouraged to work hard and behave well through the teachers' effective use of encouragement and rewards. In the case of the very few pupils who have behaviour difficulties the school receives useful help from behaviour support staff and monitors their progress carefully. The school has a clear and effective policy for dealing with the rare incidents of bullying which occur. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on the impact of their behaviour and actions on others, for example through assemblies, circle time and in masses and services of reconciliation.

- 40 There are good systems for assessing and monitoring individual pupils' attainment and the progress that they make as they pass through the school, which shows significant improvement since the last inspection. A whole school system of assessment and record keeping has been put in place so that all pupils have individual profile sheets that are used by teachers to determine pupils' levels of attainment in English and mathematics. These are gradually being extended to other subjects on a rolling programme. The senior management team analyses the optional and statutory National Curriculum tests to identify areas of weakness and then set manageable targets for improvement for groups and individual pupils. All this good practice has a positive impact on the learning of the pupils and makes a positive contribution to their improving levels of achievement. Assessment information for pupils with special educational needs is also used effectively to plan future work. Baseline assessment is in place and the information from these assessments is used effectively to plan subsequent learning experiences.
- 41 The school supports and monitors pupils' personal development effectively, for example through formal and informal discussions between teachers and parents. Teachers' good knowledge of pupils is demonstrated in the comments written in most of the annual school reports, although some typed reports contain the same information about every pupil. Overall the monitoring of attendance and punctuality is satisfactory. However in the past school year some parents took their children away from school for more than ten days on annual holidays and these extra days have been incorrectly counted as authorised absence.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

- 42 There is an effective partnership between parents and the school. Parents strongly support the school and a large majority of parents have very positive views about it. They particularly value the good atmosphere and positive ethos of the school, the good care it takes of pupils, and pupils' good standards of work and behaviour. Inspection findings support these positive views. The results of the parents' questionnaire results show that a minority of parents have negative views about some aspects of the school. The leadership and the range of activities provided outside lessons were two of the issues mentioned. Some parents also express concern about levels of consistency in the amount of homework given. The leadership of the school did figure as a weakness at the time of the last inspection but the establishment of a senior management team comprising the headteacher, deputy headteacher and the Key Stage 1 coordinator, has been influential in moving the school forward. The inspection team see this current position as strong. Pupils are provided with a good range of challenging extra-curricular activities, which they enjoy. For example older pupils have the opportunity to develop musical skills and to learn to play bridge. With regard to homework the school has a good quality policy outlining the homework provision for each school year. However the school agrees that at the moment this is inconsistently applied.
- 43 Overall the quality of information provided for parents by the school is satisfactory. Parents receive regular newsletters and class teachers provide letters giving information about the curriculum. Parents say that they find it easy to approach the school if they have any concerns. However a few parents at the meeting held before the inspection said that the school is sometimes slow to inform them about matters, which concern them. Some parents said that they felt that information in annual reports about pupils' progress could be improved and inspection findings support these views. The majority of reports are carefully written and are based on

teachers' good knowledge of pupils. For the core subjects they outline pupils' strengths and weaknesses and generally suggest areas for improvement. The reports written by a minority of teachers are unsatisfactory, being over reliant on computer banks of statements, to the extent that in some cases comments made about personal development and also about foundation subjects are identical for different pupils.

- 44 Parents' involvement in their children's work and in the life of the school has a positive impact on pupils' learning and on the school environment. Many parents give skilled help in the classroom, particularly by helping with younger children and listening to readers. The help of parents with musical and artistic skills has a very positive impact on pupils' education. There is a well-organised and thriving parents' association, which has, on its own initiative, undertaken an ambitious project to enhance the outdoor play provision. The first stage of the project was completed during the summer holidays when parents worked together to create a new activity play area and to paint cheerful murals on the walls. Parents also support the school's work by listening to their younger children read on a regular basis and by supporting their children's homework.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

- 45 The school is well led and managed. The headteacher ably assisted by a good senior management team provides strong leadership, and with the effective support of the governing body, provides clear direction for the development and improvement of the school. Together they have created a good learning environment where teaching and relationships are good and the pupils feel secure and valued. There is a positive ethos to the school, centred upon its Catholic nature, which gives equal importance to attaining high educational standards, personal achievement and equality of opportunity for all.
- 46 Governors are committed to the success of the school and take their responsibilities seriously. They make a good contribution to its effective running. They have a clear knowledge of its strengths and weaknesses, and the chair of governors – the headteacher of the High School to which most pupils transfer – works closely with the senior management team to keep the school's work under constant review. The working sub-committees report back to the full governing body regularly. The governors for literacy and numeracy and special educational needs are appropriately informed and support the work of the school well. Subject Coordinators present effective reports to the governors outlining their work to ensure that pupils' progress is closely monitored and good standards are maintained. The governing body fulfils all its statutory requirements.
- 47 The role of subject coordinators has been firmly established and is driving the school forward very purposefully. The implementation of the National Literacy Strategy has been effective in maintaining good standards in English and the National Numeracy Strategy is also having a similar effect upon the standards in mathematics. Subject coordinators have detailed files, all compiled to a set format, which are explicit about the role and responsibilities of the coordinator. Monitoring of teaching and learning is being systematically undertaken in Literacy and Numeracy lessons. These procedures are good, but at the moment they are restricted to work in these two areas.
- 48 All subjects have appropriate schemes of work, developed through effective involvement of the staff. Members of the senior management team work alongside all subject coordinators to ensure that there are good levels of teamwork and the development of a shared understanding of what needs to be done to develop and improve in each subject. Planning documents are

effective and monitoring procedures are largely sound. There is, however, some inconsistency in the quality of some plans. A lack of clarity about precisely what it is the pupils are expected to learn leads to some pupils – notably the higher attaining pupils – not always being effectively challenged in the work they are expected to do. Short term planning of good quality does exist in the school, particularly in the Reception and Year 1 classes, and in the two classes for the older pupils in Key Stage 2. Access to the quality of these plans, together with monitoring of teaching and learning in other subjects beyond the current observations of literacy and numeracy, has the potential to improve these unsatisfactory features. The extension of the monitoring role in such a manner is identified as a priority in the School Development Plan.

- 49 The school operates an appropriate programme of professional development. Interviews are undertaken which match an individual's career development needs within the identified needs of the school. Newly qualified teachers are given a good level of support and are confident in knowing whom to turn to if they require assistance.
- 50 The school development plan is a detailed working document. It extends over a three year period, and contains clear links to cost implications. Targets are set and efficient systems are in place for monitoring the extent to which priorities are achieved. Potential improvements for each curriculum area are identified in the plan. Term by term commitments is clearly identified, together with a list of responsibilities and cost implications.
- 51 The school has made very good attempts to attract additional finance. The 'Building Bridges' project has been particularly successful. Working alongside other schools in the community the school has been part of a joint project, which has seen many good quality resources directed towards the school. The ICT and music provision have, at the present time, been the main beneficiaries of these very good initiatives. Otherwise, resources are adequate and put to good use. Resources are appropriately audited by subject coordinators and are accessible to all. The school's library provision is adequate, but the nature of the building makes it difficult for pupils to use the library facility effectively.
- 52 The accommodation is adequate. It is maintained to a high order of cleanliness. A recent project to build a covered area to allow pupils in Key Stage 1 to pass through to the school hall without going outside is a positive feature when taking into account the needs of the pupils concerned and their safety. The Parents' Association made a particularly good contribution to the grounds of the school with their recently completed project to upgrade the schools hard play space. The lack of a carpet in the Year 1 classroom is weakness, with young pupils spending substantial periods of time on a cold tile floor. Small mats and cushions are provided to improve this less than ideal situation. Similarly, the Reception classroom is an awkward shape, which occasionally is unhelpful and does not enhance the work of consistently good quality, which is undertaken there. Outside paintwork is in need of redecoration – an item planned for action in the near future.
- 53 The school's financial planning is good and the budget is managed well. The school receives a moderately low amount of money per head, when compared to other schools, but it supplements this well with finance obtained through successful bids to other providers. Its finances are used prudently and the governors are effective in ensuring that they obtain good value for the money they spend. A modest under spend during the 1998/99 year has been used appropriately and the forecast for the current financial year is for a very small overspend.
- 54 The financial and administrative procedures are good. A computerised system of accounting provides accurate information about the school's financial position. A very recent auditor's

report from the LEA indicates that all appropriate checks are in place. Curriculum coordinators are aware of the budget allocations to their subjects and know where their subject lies within the overall financial priorities of the school. Governors ensure that the principles of best value are applied very well when prioritising spending decisions. They ensure that their decisions have a positive effect on the standards the school achieves.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

55 There are no major weaknesses in this school. However, to improve the current provision still further the Governors should include the following in their action plan:

- (1) Improving the quality of the work offered to some higher attaining pupils, particularly in Years 2, 3 and 4, by ensuring that they are provided with sufficiently challenging tasks to take their learning forward.
- (2) Removing the inconsistencies in aspects of short term planning in some classes, by ensuring that all teachers have a clear understanding of pupils' learning objectives, so that all pupils will be clear about exactly what it is they have to learn.
- (3) Extending the good quality monitoring of teaching and learning in classrooms, currently restricted to observations of Literacy and Numeracy lessons, to include other subjects. This is already identified in the school's development plans.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	47
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	53

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0%	10%	43%	43%	4%	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)	N/A	181
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	N/A	7

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	N/A	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	N/A	18

English as an additional language

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	0
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	8

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	96.2%
National comparative data	94.1%

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	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
	1999	16	13	29

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	15	13	15
	Girls	12	12	12
	Total	27	25	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93	86	93
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	86(84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	15	14
	Girls	12	13	13
	Total	26	28	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	90	97	93
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

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
	1999	9	15	24

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	7	7	8
	Girls	15	11	13
	Total	22	18	21
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	92	75	88
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	7	7
	Girls	15	11	13
	Total	23	18	20
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	96	75	83
	National	68 (63)	69 (65)	75 (72)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	1
Indian	1
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	149
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	1	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR– Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	7.9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.9
Average class size	25.9

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	35

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	1998 / 1999
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	£
Total income	279 619
Total expenditure	258 599
Expenditure per pupil	1462
Balance brought forward from previous year	21 200
Balance carried forward to next year	42 220

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate 41.4%

Number of questionnaires sent out	181
Number of questionnaires returned	75

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	59	40	1	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	48	43	9	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	44	51	3	1	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	41	44	8	4	3
The teaching is good.	67	29	3	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	52	35	9	4	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	69	24	7	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	64	33	3	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	47	36	12	3	3
The school is well led and managed.	39	36	20	3	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	53	35	9	1	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	13	44	19	9	15

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

- 56 The majority of children enter the reception class with above average levels of attainment for their age. Most are on line to achieve the nationally expected early learning goals by the time they are five years of age. Evidence for these judgements comes from the baseline assessment carried out as children start school and the recording of their progress throughout the reception year.
- 57 Children enter the reception class in the September of the year in which they are five. Older children attend full time from September and younger children are part time until the October half term. Parents are invited to attend a meeting in the summer term prior to entry at which daily routines and the curriculum are explained. The children then attend for two half-day sessions to familiarise them with the school environment and to help build a relationship with the teachers. This ensures that the children feel safe and secure when entering school. This is a good induction programme. There are close links with nursery schools, particularly the pre-school at St. Mary's Church. Parents are welcomed as partners in their children's learning and a large number give valuable help in the classroom.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

- 58 Children show good social behaviour when they enter the reception class and, by the time they are five, most children achieve the standards expected in this area of their learning. They quickly form positive relationships with the staff and other children and are happy and secure in school. They settle quickly, adapt to the school's routines and learn to comply with the code of acceptable behaviour. The teaching is good and pupils quickly learn to sit still, listen attentively and take turns. All staff is patient and consistent in their approach to developing the children's social awareness, know the children well and are sensitive to their needs. The children's independence and confidence are promoted in a caring way and they are encouraged to work and play together. There is a friendly but firm control and any inappropriate behaviour is quickly corrected. The teachers and other adults provide very good role models for social relationships.

Communication, Language and literacy

- 59 The attainment of the majority of children on entry to the reception class is good in this area of their learning. Most achieve the early learning goals by the time they are five years of age. They listen carefully to the teacher and take turns when speaking. Very good questioning skills by all staff enable the children to develop a wide vocabulary. During 'Show and tell', children are encouraged to ask sensible questions, which extends their knowledge of the world around them. This is reinforced through role-play related to learning in all areas of the curriculum. Work is planned according to the National Literacy Strategy guidelines, appropriately adapted, and whole class shared reading sessions are having a good impact on children's progress and achievement. The children enjoy books. They recognise that print has meaning, and use both pictures cues and word recognition. The text 'I went to school this morning' concentrated on introducing the children to correct vocabulary i.e. ' letters', ' words' and 'sentences'. A very good phonic programme develops reading and assists in the early stages of writing. The marks children make are valued as 'writing' and they make good progress in employing letters to convey the intended meaning, gradually using whole words. The teacher makes good use of a

badger puppet to encourage the children to learn the letter sounds. A wide variety of strategies are used to encourage the children to form their letters correctly. During the session a small group of children were the focus for assessment as part of the early baseline assessment procedures that take place during the first seven weeks.

Mathematics

- 60 The attainment of the majority of children in mathematics is good and they go on to achieve the desirable learning outcomes by the time they are five years of age. They achieve well and as a result of the good teaching they receive, they make good progress in relation to their prior learning. Work is well planned using the relevant sections of the National Numeracy Strategy. Through well-structured play, practical activities, number songs, rhymes and counting games many children recognise the numbers up to 10 and a majority of higher attaining children can count beyond 20 using the unifix cubes. Whole class activities include adding one more by getting children 'onto the bus'; a puppet maintains the children's interest when counting forwards and backwards to 10 and identifying missing numbers in a number line to 10. During group activities, designed for the varying abilities of the children, good adult support ensures that knowledge is consolidated. The majority of children use mathematical language confidently and already recognise and name circle, triangle, rectangle and square shapes

Knowledge and Understanding of the World

- 61 The children make good progress in this area of their learning and the majority achieve well. They spend time every day correctly sequencing the days of the week and considering the weather, symbols of which are entered onto a chart. The topic 'Myself' helps children, through discussion, to find out about the past and present events in their own lives and in those of their families. At present they are considering their own bodies and learning the names of the different parts. They are beginning to learn about themselves and through observation discern similarities and differences of others, for example the colour of hair and eyes. A practical activity of drawing around one or two children in a variety of poses gives them some indication of their size and the limbs needed to run and stretch. They developed this further by making moveable card puppets. The children are taught how to use the computer and the teacher ensures that the correct vocabulary is used such as 'mouse', 'keyboard' and 'drag'. The higher attaining children successfully use 'drag' to dress the teddy. Good questioning by the staff encourages the children to think for themselves and this, together with a variety of stimulating and challenging activities, is having a good impact on the children's learning.

Physical Development

- 62 The children show a good awareness for their own and others' safety when playing in the small outdoor area. The parents have spent time painting an activity 'snake' on the ground for counting, shape and letter development which the children enjoy using. However, there is no large wheeled apparatus or climbing equipment for this area. Physical education lessons are planned to take place in the hall and, although no lessons were observed during the inspection, the planning follows a good pattern and moves children progressively towards the desirable outcomes. At present they are being encouraged to move confidently and imaginatively with increasing control and an awareness of space and others. They also use the large mats well and are taught to handle these safely. They have many opportunities to handle tools such as scissors, pencils, crayons, paintbrushes and glue sticks. The majority of children manage them well and are developing good control. Regular practice using jigsaws and small construction kits is also having a good impact in developing the children's dexterity. Every opportunity is taken

by the teacher and other adults to demonstrate good practice and to promote pupils' skills effectively. The children are on course to meet the expected outcomes by the age of five years of age.

Creative Development

- 63 Children make good progress in this area and by the age of five the majority achieve the desirable learning objectives. The children use a range of media to explore colour and texture, paint pictures and make collages and three-dimensional models. Through the topic they use a wide variety of techniques, which develops their knowledge of joining, printing and colour. Creative skills are also used effectively to make large 'feely' cut-outs of numbers in order to develop the children's mathematical knowledge. A pictograph is used to help them observe the similarities and differences of eye colour. They can sing nursery rhymes and number songs tunefully. A commercial scheme successfully develops their response to music. In a particularly good lesson children sang with real joy and enthusiasm as they joined in with the tape.
- 64 The quality of teaching for the under fives is consistently good and enables the children to make good progress and to achieve well. The teacher and support staff provide an appropriate range of activities to meet the needs of the children and all have good questioning techniques. The policy and scheme of work are good and are the result of effective collaboration between the class teacher, co-ordinator and the early years governor. Any children who appear to have special educational needs are identified as quickly as possible and are well supported, enabling them to make a good start at school and good progress in their learning. Curricular planning is based on the required six areas of learning recommended nationally for this age group and the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are used well to promote these areas of the children's learning. There is a seamless progression into the National Curriculum programmes of study when the children are judged to be ready. The baseline assessment carried out during the first few weeks provides a good starting point for the children's learning and the continued assessment tracks individual children's progress helping the teacher to adjust planning if necessary. There is a good awareness of the needs of the children within this age group with staff discussing and planning together the work to be taught so that all know exactly what is expected of them. The Early Year's co-ordinator is the Year 1 teacher and supports colleagues well. The action plan aims to promote the importance of the Foundation Stage of learning and all curriculum documentation will contain a relevant section.
- 65 There is a happy working atmosphere within the class with all staff and adults working well to enable the children to be secure and confident and make good progress in their learning.

ENGLISH

- 66 The school's average National Curriculum points score, for pupils aged 11 in 1999, was well above the national average in English, and above average in comparison with similar schools. The percentage of pupils gaining the higher levels was well above the national average. This represents a very good level of achievement. Over the last four years, standards of attainment in English have been consistently at a very high level, except in 1997 when they fell to an average standard. Results have risen broadly in line with the national trend. At the age of 11, girls attain slightly higher standards than boys, and in most years both boys and girls attain standards, which exceed the national average. A small cohort with a higher than average number of pupils with special educational needs is reflected in the 2000 results, although these are still above the national average.
- 67 The school's average points score for pupils aged 7 in 1999 was also well above average in reading and broadly in line with the national average in writing. In comparison with schools of a similar nature, standards were well above the national average in reading but below average in

writing, in 1999. The percentage of pupils gaining the higher levels was well above the national average in reading but below the national average in writing. No pupils gained the higher level in writing. Over the last four years, standards have been consistently well above the national average in reading, and above average in writing. There has been no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls, and although standards have been generally better in reading, the attainment of both boys and girls has been above the national average in both reading and writing. Results of the 2000 tests indicates that very high standards have been maintained in reading, and there is an improvement in writing, with 16 per cent of the pupils gaining the higher level in writing.

- 68 Pupils currently in Year 2 and Year 6 are attaining standards, which are above those expected for their age, and are achieving well.
- 69 A firm basis for learning is set within the reception class and the Year 1 pupils benefit and build from this, making good progress. They listen carefully to their teacher and other adults. As they progress through the key stage, most pupils develop confidence in expressing their own views and learn to listen and respond appropriately to others. The introduction and plenary sessions that are used in most lessons encourage pupils to share their knowledge and also enables teachers to assess their pupils' learning. For example, in a Y5 history lesson, pupils debated whether it would be better to live in Athens or Sparta after examining the life styles. Pupils are also confident to speak in front of the whole school during assemblies.
- 70 Pupils make very good progress in reading and achieve well in both key stages. Throughout the school, they readily participate in shared reading and guided group reading sessions where they learn to enjoy and experience a wide variety of texts. In Key Stage 1, they learn to appreciate books and listen to stories with interest, although their knowledge of authors is limited. Higher attaining pupils develop good word recognition skills. Through a well-planned phonic programme, the pupils become increasingly aware of letter sounds and blends and higher attaining pupils use this knowledge to read unfamiliar words. Good emphasis is placed on predicting skills and identifying patterns in spellings and rhyming words. All pupils take reading books to share with adults at home and the good standards reflect the importance the school and parents place on developing this aspect of literacy. In Key Stage 2 pupils enjoy the shared and guided reading sessions in the Literacy Hour. They read a wide variety of texts and in Years 5 and 6 the concentration given to understanding and using powerful adjectives in poetry is reflected in their own writing. Teachers also act as good role models to encourage pupils to read with expression to make their performance more interesting to the audience. Most pupils enjoy reading and are fluent. They can relate the main plot and characters and the higher attaining pupils discuss why they prefer certain chapters. For example, when reading 'The Golden Goblet' by J.K.Rowling a pupil referred to a section 'crammed with exciting events'. All pupils can extract information from non-fiction books and know and use the content, index and glossary pages. They also know that the 'blurb' gives an outline of the story. Reading skills are successfully transferred to other curriculum areas.
- 71 Pupils make good progress in writing and achieve well. In reception, children make marks and begin to relate them to actual words. This very good start enables pupils in Key Stage 1 to build and develop key words to write simple sentences. Teachers place a good emphasis on developing the pupils' spelling ability through the very clear phonic programme concentrating on word building and the more advanced spelling patterns and rules as pupils progress throughout the school. By the end of the key stage pupils show a growing competence in writing sentences independently with capital letters and full stops. They can also sequence stories and practice writing instructions. They are beginning to use adjectives to make their stories more

interesting. In Key Stage 2 pupils write with increasing competence. They use 'brainstorming' to sketch outlines for stories, write character studies and can identify parts of speech. In their descriptive writing, sentences are detailed and punctuated correctly. During analysis of poetry they can articulate personal responses and show why and how a text can affect the reading. This was seen in Years 5 and 6. An excellent class poem in Year 5 contained some very evocative lines, which pupils wished to place in their 'precious box'. For example 'one silver promise', 'an Indian sunset on the edge of the ocean' and 'the shimmer of the most distant star'. In Year 6, close analysis of poetry by Ted Hughes encouraged pupils to identify the devices and patterns authors use to capture the reader's interest. The majority of pupils present their work tidily. Handwriting is developed progressively and letters are well formed in the early years with most pupils using a uniform cursive style by the end of Key Stage 2.

- 72 Pupils use their literacy skills well in other subjects. They record their findings in science logically and can read and understand work contained in the worksheets. In history and geography the older pupils are competent at using secondary sources to extract information and use this to write accounts of events and characters from the past and to describe other countries.
- 73 Pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to work are good. They enjoy learning and are always ready to begin on time. By the end of Key Stage 2 most pupils listen well, take turns to contribute and are interested in what their teachers and other pupils have to say. Relationships are good and pupils value the ideas put forward by their classmates. The majority take pride in their own work and readily acknowledge when others achieve well. Behaviour is usually good and progress is good. Pupils with special educational needs also make good progress in relation to prior attainment. Teachers prepare and use individual education plans that are designed to address areas of need and all adults give sensitive support during lessons.
- 74 Overall the quality of teaching is good, particularly in Year 1 and in Years 5 and 6, with 50 per cent being satisfactory and 50 per cent good in each key stage. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen in this subject.
- 75 The majority of teachers display good questioning techniques and have a secure knowledge and understanding of the subject. They understand and are using the National Literacy Strategy well to provide a secure framework for their long, medium and short term planning. This is an improvement on the previous inspection when planning was deemed to be unfocussed with activities lacking purpose. However some teachers, notably in Years 2 and 4, are not providing enough challenge for higher attaining pupils. This is reflected in the lack of clarity of learning objectives in the short term planning. In the best lessons, teachers are skilled at questioning pupils when they share texts at the beginning of the session, drawing on what pupils already know and challenging them to seek for further patterns in poetry and considering what is special or unusual about the work of some established authors. The everyday use of words such as 'grapheme' in reception and 'stanza', 'prefix', 'suffix', 'imagery', 'simile' and 'character' in other classes enable pupils to develop their own technical vocabulary and promotes richness in their writing. Progress is good in those lessons where pupils are well supported during group activities and they are clear about what they are expected to do. Occasionally, the time spent at the beginning of the lesson on whole class discussion is too long resulting in pupils becoming inattentive with little time allowed for writing. However, extended writing is well developed. The pupils have 'rules for drafting' and are utilising them well. The marking of pupils' work often show targets to enable improvement but this is not consistent throughout the school. Plenary sessions are mostly used effectively to share examples of good work or to reinforce teaching points.

- 76 The quality of the curriculum is good. The National Literacy Strategy is having a positive effect on raising standards. Pupils are given the opportunity to develop their literacy skills in a systematic and structured way, ensuring that learning is continuous and progressive. The co-ordinator leads the subject very well and is clear about the responsibilities involved in this being an area identified for improvement from the previous inspection. Together with the headteacher, colleagues and Literacy Advisor she has monitored lessons to raise the quality of teaching. Planning is also monitored to ensure progression, equality of access and opportunity. Rigorous analysis of attainment is carried out of all national and school based tests. This is used well to design detailed action plans to raise standards in each key stage. Notably, writing was the focus in 1999 and strategies were used to good effect, with a significant percentage of Key Stage 1 pupils gaining the higher level in writing in the 2000 tests. Resources for the teaching of English are satisfactory overall. The school has a good selection of books for use during the Literacy Hour. Classroom libraries and the school library are less well provided for. The school is rather limited for space and the library is situated in a corridor, which is not ideal. Teachers select appropriate books in support of topics and this enables pupils to carry out effective information retrieval skills within the classroom. The school is aware that pupils' library skills are not being developed as well as they might and plans to use the local public library in order to promote this aspect of their learning. The school is particularly good at utilising grants to enhance the pupils' learning. A project called 'Building Bridges' enables older pupils to link up with another school in the independent sector using computer links. This provides extremely useful co-operation in developing the poetry skills of pupils and has resulted in them sweeping the board in a competition run by the Arts and Sacred Places Trust. Other grants have been well used to enhance pupils' learning.

MATHEMATICS

- 77 The school's average National Curriculum points score for pupils aged 11 in 1999 was above the national average, and in line with the average for pupils in similar schools. The percentage of pupils gaining the higher levels was well above the national average. This represents a good level of achievement. Over the last four years, standards of attainment in mathematics have shown some fluctuations between average and very high, but results have not fallen to a below average standard. Results have risen broadly in line with the national trend. At the age of 11, boys attain slightly higher standards than girls, and in most years both boys and girls have attained standards, which exceed the national average.
- 78 The school's average points score for pupils aged 7 in 1999 was also above the national average and in line with the average for pupils in similar schools. The percentage of pupils gaining the higher levels was close to the national average. Over the last four years standards have been consistently above the national average, peaking in 1998. Over time, girls have tended to out-perform boys, but the attainment of both boys and girls are above the national average.
- 79 Pupils currently in Year 2 and Year 6 are attaining standards, which are above those expected for their age and are achieving well.
- 80 The school sets appropriate targets for pupils at the age of 11. Records of the 2000 tests show that the target was not quite achieved. The cohort of pupils in the year group was small and consequently one pupil represented a large percentage of the total. The group contained a higher than average number of pupils on the register of special educational needs, which explains what appears to be a relatively moderate target. For the 2001 cohort, the school has published an ambitious target and at this stage appears to be on course to achieve it.

- 81 By the age of 7, pupils' attainment in numeracy is good. Pupils can count accurately and show a developing understanding of place value. Pupils in Year 1 are able to count accurately forwards and backwards, knowing which number to land on using a number line. Pupils in Year 2 know the multiplication tables of 2 and 10 by heart and know that numbers can be added together in any order to achieve the same answer. Pupils' previous work shows that they gain a secure understanding of elements of shape and space, and that they have experience of handling simple data. They are able to divide numbers by 2, 5, and 10 without leaving a remainder.
- 82 By the age of 11, pupils display good levels of confidence in their mathematical skills. They are able to recall numbers bonds and multiplication tables at pace. They can round numbers up and down effectively, and are adept at using numbers with up to three decimal places. They use a wide range of mental strategies and are able to explain what they are doing clearly and with good understanding. Pupils in Year 5 and 6 work effectively with fractions, knowing what the numbers mean and showing an ability to convert fractions to decimals. Pupils in Year 6 also show a clear understanding of the relationships between percentages.
- 83 Pupils throughout the school show an ability to use their understanding of mathematics in other subjects, for example in history, with good use of time lines, and in geography with the use of coordinates. In music, pupils show a good sense of pulse and beat when they are singing, and an appropriate knowledge of shapes and angles when model making.
- 84 Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to their prior attainment. Individual educational plans are appropriate to the needs of these pupils who are frequently engaged on similar mathematical tasks to those of their peers. There are, however, some occasions when the higher attaining pupils are not sufficiently challenged by the work they are given to do. In Year 2, for example, where mental calculations lack rigour for able pupils, and in Year 4, where the partitioning of two digit numbers across tens was well below the capability of pupils whose Year 3 reports indicated they were capable of a much more demanding task.
- 85 The quality of teaching is good in both key stages. This represents an improvement on the position reported when the school was last inspected. It is consistently good in Year 1, following on from the well-planned number work undertaken in Reception. It is also consistently good in Year 5 and Year 6, and this has a positive impact on the good results pupils achieve in mathematics by the time they leave the school. Teaching is satisfactory in mathematics lessons in years 2, 3 and 4. The school has successfully adopted the National Numeracy Strategy, which is also having a positive effect on pupils' progress. Lesson planning is generally thorough and in most classes pupils have a clear understanding of what it is they are expected to learn. This is not always the case in Years 2 and 4, particularly with the older group who are sometimes occupied with mathematical tasks rather than challenged by them. In these classes there is a need for teachers to be clearly aware of what a pupil already knows and for lesson planning to focus accurately on what it is pupils need to do next to take their learning forward.
- 86 Information and communications technology (ICT) is used appropriately to support mathematics, particularly in Year 6, but it is not yet fully developed in a structured way to fully support the subject. Computers are available in all classrooms and many are new and of good quality. There are, however, missed opportunities for pupils to use computer technology in some lessons and some teachers are not yet making the most use of the facilities available. Other resources are adequate and put to good use. Pupils' progress is carefully monitored and there are detailed

analyses undertaken to ensure that the mathematics curriculum is fully covered and pupils are well prepared to take the national tests.

- 87 The leadership and management of the mathematics provision is good. The mathematics coordinator is capable and enthusiastic. Working together with the deputy headteacher they form an effective team. They have a good knowledge of the standards the pupils are attaining and have successfully introduced a planned programme to monitor the teaching of mathematics in classrooms. Detailed records are kept. This gives a developing picture of the quality of teaching in mathematics and the quality of learning on the part of the pupils. It is a good initiative – also being undertaken to monitor literacy teaching – which has the potential to be helpful if extended to other subjects, something the school is planning to do. The monitoring needs to have sufficient rigour to identify weaknesses, for example, in the lack of challenge available in some classes to higher attaining pupils, and to identify where good practice exists to share that expertise with other colleagues.
- 88 Overall, the current mathematics provision is good, and this represents a significant improvement on the position reported when the school was last inspected.

SCIENCE

- 89 The school's average National Curriculum points score for pupils aged 11 in 1999 was above the national average in science, and below the national average for similar schools. The percentage of pupils gaining the higher level was close to the national average. Over the last four years, standards of attainment in science have shown some fluctuations between below average and well above average. Results have risen broadly in line with the national trend. Over time there has been little difference between the performance of boys and girls. The results of the tests for the year 2000 show that above average standards have been maintained. The attainment of the majority of pupils currently in Year 6 is above that expected for their age.
- 90 The 1999 teacher assessments for 7-year-old pupils indicates that an above average percentage of pupils are at the expected overall level in science, although the percentage of pupils assessed at the expected level in Life and Living processes is very high compared to the national average, but the percentage of pupils assessed at the expected level in experimental science is broadly in line with the national average. The percentage of pupils assessed at the higher level is in line with the national average. In comparison with similar schools the pupils' results were below average.
- 91 The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, but is particularly strong in Years 5 and 6. The pupils in Years 1 and 2 are given many opportunities to develop their knowledge and understanding by being involved in practical activities. Within these activities the pupils are effectively taught the basic skills of making close observations and of recording their findings in a variety of ways. This is evident in the work of pupils in Year 1 when they are using mirrors to look closely at their eyes during an activity on the topic of the senses. These pupils show a good knowledge and understanding of the stages in the life cycle of human beings and are able to use correct scientific vocabulary. As pupils pass through Year 2 they learn how to handle simple scientific equipment correctly, such as being able to take accurate measurements from a thermometer. In one lesson, where pupils look at how they change as they grow older, the activities lack challenge for the more able pupils and consequently they do not achieve as well as they are able. This aspect of providing work that is more challenging for the more able pupils is one that the school recognises is in need of improvement in some classes. When involved in investigations pupils show they can work well. They are well behaved, curious and show a great

deal of enjoyment in their work. Consequently, they have a high work rate, produce a good amount of well presented work and by the time that they are seven can carry out a simple fair test with some help from the teacher. This shows encouraging progress, since teacher assessments indicate a relative weakness in aspects of experimental and investigative science.

- 92 As they pass through the school the pupils continue to develop their learning by being involved in practical investigations, such as the one for pupils in Year 3 when they were learning about the strength of different materials. The teacher shows secure subject knowledge that enables him to use questioning effectively to find out what pupils understand and can do before they begin their activities. The rate of progress slows in Year 4 as a result of the slow pace of lessons and a lack of suitably challenging work, especially for the more able pupils. The teaching in Years 5 and 6 is very good, and in these classes pupils are able to make good progress and achieve well. In these classes teachers being able to clearly explain to the pupils the purpose of the activities. As a result they have a good understanding of what is expected of them. In a lesson for pupils in Year 5 on pollination and fertilisation in plants the activities are very motivating and the teaching extremely effective in developing pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills. The teacher skilfully allows pupils to show initiative and take responsibility for their own learning. This is also the case in a very good lesson for pupils in Year 6, on devising a fair test to find out about filtration, in which they showed high levels of collaboration when carrying out their tasks. In this lesson, as in others, the pupils' attitudes to learning are positive and their behaviour good. They enjoy their work and respond with interest and enthusiasm. The teachers prepare their lessons well and provide relevant resources to enable pupils to develop their skills in carrying out a fair test. Pupils are effectively learning how to use a wider range of scientific equipment and by the time that they are eleven their skills of carrying out investigations are well developed, which shows considerable improvement since the last inspection. In Year 6, the pupils put together a glossary of scientific terms to extend the vocabulary that they can use to explain their work. Through the school there is limited use of pupils' skills of using information technology to enhance their work in science and this is an area for further development. In general the teachers have good classroom management and organisational methods that ensure that the pupils have a high work rate. Pupils make good use of their literacy skills in their investigative report writing in science. They also show that they are able to make good use of their numeracy skills to take careful measurements, including temperature readings from thermometers, during their experiments.
- 93 The progress of pupils with special educational needs is good as a result of the well-structured support that they are given. Pupils are encouraged to develop their speaking and listening skills and are able to make effective contributions to class discussions during science lessons.
- 94 The curriculum that is offered to the pupils is good, with many opportunities for them to be involved in practical investigative activities. There is effective management of the subject that has been able to identify strengths and weaknesses within the subject and set manageable targets for improvement. The planning procedures have been improved since the last inspection and there is now a good structure of long and medium term planning in place to ensure continuity and progression of learning in the subject. Short term planning is taken from the scheme of work and details the key learning objectives and skills to be taught. There are times, in some classes, when these objectives are not precise enough and as a result the work given to pupils lacks sufficient challenge. The accommodation is satisfactory and resources are adequate, being well-managed and readily accessible to staff and pupils.

ART

- 95 At the age of 11 the pupils attain average standards. Pupils are presented with a suitable range of activities and develop satisfactory skills in the use of different media. Art contributes in an appropriate way to pupils' cultural development, with pupils having experience of a range of artists and sculptors.
- 96 Pupils aged 5 to 7, develop satisfactory skills in using a range of media. They learn to control drawing tools such as pencils, crayons and pastels and develop skills using line, shading and tone when creating their pictures. Pupils in Year 2 successfully mix single colours using powder and paint to create vivid colours when making pictures in the style of aboriginal art. During these activities they show enjoyment, share resources well and talk positively to each other about their developing pictures. Pupils aged 7 to 11, work with a wider range of materials and work is often linked to other subjects. This is seen in a lesson for pupils in Year 5 when they were experimenting with designs for a container that linked with their literacy work on the poem 'The Magic Box'. In this lesson the pupils made careful use of the pastels and showed appropriate appreciation of how to make a 3-D effect on the paper. Pupils in Year 4 show suitable ability to enlarge drawings of themselves and their families from A3 size to A4. By the time that they are 11 the pupils can reflect on their work and suggest improvements, and their observational drawings indicate suitable pencil and brush control and attention to detail.
- 97 The quality of teaching is satisfactory with teachers demonstrating a secure understanding of the subject. Lessons are carefully planned with clear learning objectives that effectively build on previous learning. Teachers demonstrate a confidence and interest in the subject, which enables them to make interesting demonstrations, thereby assisting the pupils to perform in an appropriate fashion. They use direct instruction to help pupils and proper use is made of feedback and questioning to challenge pupils and develop their learning. As a result pupils' are enthusiastic and interested in the subject and make satisfactory progress in developing their skills.
- 98 There is satisfactory leadership of the subject that has identified areas for development. One of these is to compile a file containing examples of work reflecting all the skills and aspects covered in the National Curriculum programmes of study. Monitoring of standards and progress in the subject, however, is at an early stage of development but the school is aware of the need for this to take place. Standards in art have been appropriately maintained since the last inspection. Resources are adequate and used satisfactorily by staff.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

- 99 Due to timetabling arrangements there was opportunity to observe only one lesson and there is insufficient evidence on which to make a secure judgement on the standards being attained in the subject or the quality of teaching. Therefore it is not possible to judge the degree of improvement since the last inspection.
- 100 In the one good quality lesson for pupils in Year 6 the teacher effectively allows pupils to use their knowledge of fair testing from science to help them investigate the strength of structures in a topic on shelters. The subject curriculum is satisfactory with appropriate opportunities for pupils to develop their designing and making skills. This is evident in the work of pupils in Year 4 and 5 who have designed and made books with moving parts. There are satisfactory links with other subjects such as science when pupils make quiz boards using their knowledge and understanding of simple electrical circuits. The scheme of work supports progression and continuity of pupils' learning. There are adequate resources that are appropriately stored.

GEOGRAPHY

- 101 Due to timetabling arrangements only one lesson was observed during the inspection and there is insufficient evidence on which to make a secure judgement on the standards being attained in the subject or quality of teaching. Therefore it is not possible to judge the degree of improvement since the last inspection.
- 102 The curriculum is satisfactorily based on the curriculum 2000 documentation, with suitable opportunities for pupils to develop their geographical knowledge and skills. This is evident in the work of Year 2 pupils who are comparing the similarities and differences between Britain and Australia. The work is made interesting by receiving letters from Barnaby Bear who is attending the Olympics. The school has successfully bid into the 'Building Bridges Project' which has enabled the Year 5 and Year 6 pupils to use technology to link with an independent school and share knowledge of local rivers and the water cycle. A group of Year 6 pupils enthusiastically recounted how they were able to converse with this school through computer video communication. The scheme of work suitably supports progression and continuity of children's learning. There are adequate resources for this subject although software resources are limited.

HISTORY

- 103 Due to timetabling arrangements, only one lesson was observed in Key Stage 1 during the inspection and there is insufficient evidence on which to make a secure judgement on the standards attained in the subject by the pupils aged 5 to 7. Pupils make appropriate progress in Key Stage 2 and they attain the standards expected by the age of 11.
- 104 In the lesson observed in Year 1, most pupils, when supported by the teacher, are able to compare and contrast toys from the past with present day artefacts. They identify the materials used by looking at past and present teddy bears, cars and moneyboxes. They can successfully separate them into 'then' and 'now' categories. In Key Stage 2, the upper juniors use information retrieval skills well to gain information from secondary sources about the lifestyles of Athens and Sparta. The Year 6 teacher constantly refers to the large time line display in order to help pupils develop their chronological awareness. In Year 5, pupils select which city they would like to live in and give reasons for their choice. Good links are made with modern day lifestyles.
- 105 Pupils make satisfactory use of literacy and numeracy skills. They record their work in a variety of ways through drawings, completion of appropriate worksheets or writing their own account of what it would be like to live in a different time. Speaking and listening skills play an important part in developing the pupils' knowledge of this subject. The majority contribute well to lively whole class discussions in which they are able to express their own views and listen to those of others. There is insufficient evidence to judge the quality and amount of writing that pupils achieve in history.
- 106 In discussion with a group of Year 6 pupils, it would appear that the majority of them enjoy the subject. The majority are still insecure in placing the events studied in correct order of time, a weakness from the previous report. The majority of pupils in lessons are well behaved and listen well to the teacher. Pupils become restless when the work is less interesting and lacking

in challenge. Work is usually well presented and older pupils work with a good level of concentration.

- 107 Good quality teaching was seen in the Key Stage 1 lesson. Teaching was good overall in Key Stage 2 with two lessons being good and two satisfactory. In the best lessons the learning objectives were clearly shared with the pupils at the beginning of the lesson. Resources were varied and interesting and the level of activity contained appropriate challenge for all abilities. Successful lessons have good pace and lively exchanges between the teacher and the pupils. In the less successful lessons, pupils spend too much time listening and they become disinterested and bored.
- 108 The coordinator leads the subject satisfactorily and supports colleagues when required. There is a policy and scheme of work that follows the curriculum 2000 documentation. It supports pupils' learning appropriately. The key stage co-ordinators review all planning. Resources are satisfactory.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

- 109 There was limited use of computers by pupils and little direct teaching of information communication technology (ICT) observed during the inspection and there is insufficient evidence on which to make a secure judgement on the standards attained in the subject or the quality of teaching. However, it is evident that pupils' skills in word processing are more advanced than in other aspects of the subject. When the school was last inspected satisfactory provision was reported and this overall position has been maintained.
- 110 During the last year there has been a significant improvement in the number and quality of computers in the school. This was made possible by a successful bid into the national 'Building Links' project, which enabled the school to purchase twelve new computers. During this project the school worked collaboratively with an independent school in Leeds on work in English, geography and science using ICT links such as video conferencing. The school recognises the need to train teachers to use the new personal computers more effectively to support pupils' learning. In the few lessons seen the teachers had secure subject knowledge to enable them to teach basic skills in the subject. In lessons for pupils in Years 1 and 2 they learned how to use the mouse and keyboard correctly, while year 5 pupils learn cut and paste techniques to alter a text in history. Pupils are confident when using computers as a word processor to present their stories and poems in English. They show an ability to change the font, style colour and position of their writing to make it more interesting. By the time that they are eleven pupils are able to use ICT to enhance some of their work in English, mathematics, science, history and geography. However, such opportunities are limited and pupils need to spend more time on computers and to be more effectively taught how to use ICT to organise and present their ideas in other subjects. Pupils' attitudes are positive and when given the opportunity to work in pairs on the computer they collaborate well.
- 111 There is satisfactory management of the subject by a co-ordinator who is able to support and advise her colleagues. The curriculum offered to the pupils is satisfactory but pupils need more opportunities to be involved in data handling and problem solving activities. The scheme of work is effective in ensuring continuity and progression of pupils' learning. Resources are adequate and are being improved by the introduction of software that will enable ICT to be better used in other subjects.

MUSIC

- 112 Due to timetabling arrangements there was opportunity to observe only three lessons and consequently there is insufficient evidence on which to make a secure judgement on standards attained or the quality of teaching in the subject. However, it is evident from acts of collective worship that pupils are skilled in singing and by the age of 11 pupils are confident when performing in front of an audience. Teachers, and especially the two parents who very effectively support the school's musical activities, provide confident demonstrations of singing activities, which enable pupils to achieve well
- 113 In lessons for pupils in Years 5 and 6 the teachers show good subject knowledge by the way they are able to effectively demonstrate the techniques that pupils need to use when playing their musical instruments. In school assemblies the pupils sing tunefully and with enthusiasm and obvious enjoyment. Pupils in Year 3 are frequently offered opportunities to learn the recorder and older pupils can learn a variety of musical instruments, including violin, guitar, flute and clarinet, from peripatetic teachers. Pupils are given the opportunity to take part in a range of musical performances such as the Christmas and end of term concerts. The school choir sings carols to residents of a local nursing home. Inclusion in a 'Performing Arts Project' in which pupils will take part in a major celebration of dance, drama and music in Ripon Cathedral is further strengthening the provision for music. There is a co-ordinator with secure subject knowledge who is able to effectively support and advise her colleagues in their musical activities. The accommodation is satisfactory and there are suitable resources.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

- 114 Standards in physical education are satisfactory throughout the school and all pupils, including those with special educational needs achieve appropriately. Only a relatively narrow range of activities were observed during the inspection, essentially outdoor games and gymnastics. However, evidence from teachers' planning indicates that an appropriate range of activities is offered. Standards were reported as in line with national expectations at the time of the last inspection and this position has been maintained.
- 115 By the age of seven, most pupils listen carefully to instructions, move about with care and show a good level of awareness of space and direction. Pupils in Year 1 know the difference between walking and running and can bounce on the spot from a standing and crouching position. In Key Stage 2, pupils in Year 3, in an outdoor lesson follow instructions carefully, working in pairs and small groups. They can catch and throw accurately. Similar activities were observed also with pupils in Year 6, when the actions were refined and developed. Differing speeds of throw, with precise movement and stopping formed part of a well-structured lesson.
- 116 In all lessons, pupils are encouraged to warm up effectively. These 'warm ups' demonstrated good development, with simple stretching exercises in Year 1 to a detailed and systematic programme of warming up to both the lessons observed in Key Stage 2. Teaching, whilst satisfactory overall, shows good features in Year 1 and in Year 6. What the pupils are expected to do is carefully explained in each lesson and all lessons are planned well. Activities undertaken provide the pupils with an appropriate level of challenge and pupils taking part do so with verve and enthusiasm in most lessons. Opportunities are given for pupils to evaluate their own performance and that of others. The Year 3 lesson, although satisfactory, was undertaken at a rather more moderate pace, with some overlong periods of time devoted to the explanation

of what to do next. Instructions are, however, clear and most pupils participate fully. Overall, the pupils show positive attitudes to physical education and a good degree of enjoyment.

- 117 The subject is well led by an appropriately qualified and enthusiastic coordinator. Informal support is given to teachers where necessary and the coordinator has a good file of comprehensive information to assist her as she approaches her new task. Resources for the subject are adequate and put to good use. Many pupils learn to swim in school time and reach good standards. An appropriate range of sporting activities, which take place after school and which have a positive impact on the overall provision, supplements the curriculum. The school also provides the pupils with access to outdoor adventure activities, which further improves the pupils' skills of leadership and personal development as well as their physical skills.