

INSPECTION REPORT

SOUTHFIELD JUNIOR AND INFANT SCHOOL

Doncaster

LEA area: Doncaster

Unique reference number: 106723

Headteacher: Mrs G Geraghty

Reporting inspector: Mrs Lesley P A Clark
25431

Dates of inspection: 20 – 23 November 2000

Inspection number: 224531

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:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Tranmoor Lane Armthorpe Doncaster South Yorkshire
Postcode:	DN3 3BN
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr A Jagger
Date of previous inspection:	8 July 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Lesley Clark (25431)	Registered inspector	Mathematics	What sort of school is it?
		Science	The school's results and pupils' achievements.
		Music	
		Physical education	
		Foundation stage	
Mickie Jacobs (13808)	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development.
			How well does the school care for its pupils?
			How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
			How well is the school led and managed?
Richard Perkin (14591)	Team inspector	English	How well are pupils taught?
		Religious education	
		History	
		Art and design	
Ralph Walker (19708)	Team inspector	Information and communication technology	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
		Design and technology	
		Geography	
		Special educational needs	
		Equal opportunities	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Southfield Junior and Infant School is smaller than average with 200 pupils on roll. The school is situated in the former mining village of Armthorpe, near Doncaster, where unemployment is relatively high, as is the extent of social disadvantage. The school serves a wide area of mixed private and local authority built housing and a significant proportion of pupils attend from further afield. The number of adults with higher education qualifications is very low. The school has increased in size since the last inspection and has one class for each year group. There has also been significant change in the teaching staff since the last inspection. As a result of a successful bid to the New Opportunities Fund, the school runs a drama club in conjunction with a Doncaster theatre to improve standards of oracy. Four per cent of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals, which is very low. Thirteen per cent of pupils have special educational needs, which is below average, and two per cent have statements of special need, which is above average nationally. Two per cent of pupils come from ethnic minorities; there are no pupils with English as an additional language. Attainment on entry to the school is below average. The school has no nursery though the majority of pupils have attended nurseries in nearby schools.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an outstanding school. As a result of very good teaching throughout the school and excellent leadership and management, pupils achieve highly and attain above average standards overall. There have been very good levels of improvement since the last inspection. The school gives very good value for money.

What the school does well

- Eleven-year-old pupils attain well above average standards in science and music; standards are above average in English, mathematics, art, geography, history and physical education.
- The quality of teaching and learning is very good in all classes.
- The school is exceptionally well led by the headteacher, with the wholehearted support of all the staff and an effective governing body.
- Pupils have excellent attitudes to learning. They work very well together and teachers foster their independence by encouraging them to work outside the classroom on the computer, practise music, write or draw in their free time.
- The school makes excellent provision for pupils' spiritual, personal, social, emotional and cultural development through a very rich and varied curriculum and pupils learn to value and respect others' feelings and beliefs, for attention to spiritual development infuses the whole provision.
- Excellent financial management underpins the school's educational priorities.

What could be improved

There are no key issues but the following minor areas for improvement should be considered.

- Improve the outdoor facility for children in the reception class.
- Make more imaginative use of the outside play area for all pupils.
- Ensure that the quality of reports to parents is consistent across the school and that those in the reception class refer to the areas of learning for children at this stage.

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 July 1996. Improvement overall has been very good. Standards have been maintained in most subjects; they have improved in English and mathematics and are improving rapidly in information and communication technology. The quality of teaching and learning is now very good. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection, where there was some unsatisfactory teaching and little teaching that was very good. Pupils with special educational needs now make very good progress. Leadership and management are much improved, for the co-ordinators and governing body now play a full part in managing the school. There has been good improvement on the issues of

the last inspection: the curriculum is now very good, monitoring of teaching and learning is excellent and there has been satisfactory improvement to resources. Parents are much more closely involved with their children's learning than previously.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
English	A	D	B	B	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
Mathematics	B	E	C	C	
Science	A	D	A	A	

This table shows that pupils' performance in the year 2000 national tests for eleven-year-olds was above average in English, close to the average in mathematics and well above average in science both nationally and compared to similar schools. Trends in national test results are broadly in line with the national trend. Inspection judgements are that pupils attain above average standards in both English and mathematics and well above average standards in science. They achieve very well, for the attainment of the majority of pupils is below average when they begin school. Levels of achievement are particularly high in science and music, reflecting pupils' interest and curiosity and the very high quality of teaching they receive. Standards in information and communication technology and religious education are in line with those expected for eleven-year-olds. The very recent addition of a new computer suite is improving considerably the direct teaching of computer skills and the opportunities for pupils to learn. Standards are above average in all other subjects apart from design and technology where no lessons were seen and no judgements were made. Standards in singing are particularly high and music plays a vital role in the school in bringing together staff and pupils with a shared spirit of community. The school sets itself high standards, and fulfils realistic targets.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Excellent; pupils show a lively interest and enthusiasm for all aspects of school life. Pupils feel valued and want to give of their best. They clearly enjoy coming to school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good; pupils behave very well and are truly considerate. They work and play together very well and older pupils often look after younger ones. Pupils as well as adults feel that there is no bullying or oppressive behaviour at school.
Personal development and relationships	Very good; relationships are warm and friendly and mutually respectful. Pupils and teachers work happily alongside each other, sharing expertise in information and communication technology, for example.
Attendance	Good; attendance is better than average and pupils attend punctually.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching and learning are very good. In all, 19 per cent was excellent and 50 per cent was very good and 31 per cent was good. Teaching in all classes is of a very high standard and no lessons were observed that were less than good. Literacy and numeracy are very well taught and teachers are particularly good at developing the basic skills of reading, writing and number. Lessons have a very brisk pace and resources and support staff are used very well. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is very good and they make very good progress, as do gifted and talented pupils.

The school meets the needs of all pupils very well. In the reception class, basic skills in all the areas of learning, especially literacy and numeracy, are taught very effectively and so children learn very well. The very interesting teaching methods and the excellent management of these young children ensure that they work and play with great interest and concentration. The infant and junior teachers' very high expectations, allied to very stimulating teaching methods, ensure that pupils respond very well to the challenges offered them, develop very good habits of independence and work very productively. These high levels of learning are enhanced by the way in which teachers share the learning objectives for the lesson with the class. Throughout the school, teachers adjust their teaching very well in response to day-to-day assessment, resulting in very high levels of pupils' interest and concentration. Homework is used very consistently and effectively to enhance the learning that takes place in the classroom.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good; an extremely rich curriculum that meets all statutory requirements, enhanced by very effective strategies for teaching the skills of literacy and numeracy. It is very well planned so that all subjects receive a balanced amount of time and the provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is excellent. A very carefully considered approach to equal opportunities is consistently implemented through open discussion and teaching in assemblies.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good; the provision for pupils with special educational needs and for gifted and talented pupils enables them to achieve successfully.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Excellent; provision for pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development underpins all teaching and learning. In collective worship, religious education and all areas of the curriculum, pupils are helped to appreciate the uniqueness and special qualities of individuals, to reflect on serious spiritual and moral concerns and to respond with joy and pleasure to music, literature and art, and to simple everyday experiences.
How well the school cares for its pupils	There is very good care of all pupils. They are given very good support and guidance both academically and personally. Their progress is very closely monitored so they receive the teaching and support to enable them to succeed.

How well the school works in partnership with parents	There are very good links with parents, who are very supportive of the school and all its work. They think highly of the headteacher and the staff and value the education given to their children. Parents are very well involved through consultation. The school finds imaginative ways to involve parents in their children's learning. The partnership with parents of pupils with special educational needs is also very good. Some end-of-year reports are descriptive rather than evaluative and reports for reception children refer to subjects of the National Curriculum rather than areas of learning for this stage.
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HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Excellent; the school is exceptionally well led and managed by the headteacher. All teachers have subject responsibilities which they fulfil extremely well. The school's practical approach results in highly efficient and simple organisation, which very effectively achieves the school's worthwhile aims.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good; the supportive governing body is increasingly effective in carrying out its responsibilities. It has a very clear idea of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and has set up appropriate committees to deal with these.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Excellent; pupils' attainment is analysed and evaluated in every subject and co-ordinators draw up plans to develop the teaching and learning in their subjects. All teachers are fully involved in observing each other's lessons.
The strategic use of resources	Very good; the financial planning is excellent and the school uses its resources very well. Financial control and day-to-day running of the school are very good. Educational decisions are very firmly linked to the best possible value.

The school has a highly qualified teaching staff, ably assisted by support staff who help pupils individually and in groups. All the staff work well with parent and volunteer helpers. The accommodation is satisfactory. Outside play areas for all pupils, including children in the reception class, require development in order to promote imaginative play. Whilst the grounds are extensive, the hard surfaced play area is cramped for all pupils and there is no proper outdoor area for the youngest pupils. The school is aware of the issues surrounding accommodation and has made a start to address them. The caretaker and her team keep the school maintained and cleaned to the highest standards. Resources for learning are adequate for all subjects except design and technology, where they are barely adequate.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents feel very comfortable about approaching the school with questions or problems. • Their children enjoy coming to school. • They are very well taught. • The school expects their children to behave well and to achieve their best. • The school is helping their children to become more mature and responsible • The school is well led and managed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quite a large number of parents feel that the range of activities outside lessons could be improved. • Some parents would like more information about how their child is getting on at school.

The majority of parents who responded to the questionnaire were whole-heartedly in favour of the school. The inspection team agrees with their positive views. Although some parents have reservations about the school's provision for extra-curricular activities, the school provides rich cultural experiences within the curriculum with additional provision for music and physical activities and special weeks like the Arts festival held last year. The number and range of activities after school are limited, but those that are available are of high quality, such as the newly formed drama club run by professionals from a local theatre group and the recently established computer club. The quality of information in the form of reports to parents is variable and could be improved. In all other respects, however, the school keeps parents very well informed through newsletters and questionnaires to ascertain their views.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

- 1 Pupils' attainment in the year 2000 national standardised tests for eleven-year-olds was above average in English, close to the average in mathematics and well above average in science both nationally and compared to similar schools. Trends in national test results are broadly in line with the national trend. Inspection judgements agree that pupils attain above average standards in English and well above average standards in science. Attainment in mathematics, however, is judged to have improved and is now above average. Pupils achieve very well, for the attainment of the majority of pupils in language, communication, literacy and mathematics is below average when they begin school. They are very well taught in the reception class and most children attain the level expected of their age by the time they begin Year 1. Pupils receive very good teaching throughout the school and consequently attain above average standards in most subjects by the age of eleven.
- 2 Standards are higher overall than they were at the time of the last inspection. They are significantly higher in English and in mathematics. They are similar in science but achievement in science throughout the school is of a consistently high level. There are several reasons for this overall improvement. In English and mathematics, standards are higher because of the very effective implementation of the literacy and numeracy strategies and in science much-improved resources are now sufficiently extensive to allow pupils to undertake a wide range of practical work and this has helped to maintain the high levels of attainment. All three subjects have excellent leadership and management and this ensures a consistent approach, which further contributes to improved standards since the last inspection. Greatly improved procedures for assessing and evaluating pupils' work mean that pupils receive appropriate individual targets and groups receive additional support, based on accurate information. This, added to the very good teaching of all three subjects, has made a major contribution to standards. Parents also contribute to the higher standards, particularly in reading; through the very good arrangements for homework, the reading diary and the part some of them play in the classroom. Teachers are developing ingenious ways to involve parents in mathematics, which is also contributing to a greater awareness of the importance of this subject. Literacy, numeracy and science are very well taught through other subjects.
- 3 Standards in information and communication technology and religious education are in line with those expected for eleven-year-olds. The very recent addition of a new computer suite is improving considerably the direct teaching of computer skills and the opportunities for pupils to learn. Since the last inspection, both provision and standards have improved in information and communication technology. Pupils by the ages of seven and eleven meet national expectations and they achieve well. The curriculum is well planned and pupils' development of skills is carefully structured. In religious education, pupils' attainment is in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus for seven and eleven-year-olds. This maintains the standards seen at the last inspection.
- 4 In design and technology there was insufficient evidence to make a judgement on pupils' attainment and achievements but in all other subjects standards are above average. Achievement is particularly high in science and music, partly as a result of the exceptionally good teaching pupils receive and partly because pupils seem to find these two subjects exceptionally interesting. The quality of pupils' singing is particularly good. Both music and information and communication technology benefit from teachers' and

pupils' shared enjoyment of these subjects. The school sets itself high standards. It knows its pupils' capabilities very well and sets realistic targets, which it meets.

- 5 Pupils enter school with below average attainment; they achieve very well, for most pupils reach above average standards by the time they leave this school. Pupils who are gifted or talented receive ample opportunity to pursue subjects further. They, like other pupils with special educational needs, are trusted to work independently using the library or the computers as further aids to learning. Lesson planning takes great care to provide for these different groups of pupils. The school monitors carefully the attainment of boys and girls and takes appropriate steps to minimise differences. A measure of the school's success is the very good progress all pupils make as a consequence and the lively interest they continue to take in their work.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

- 6 Pupils have a very lively interest in and enthusiasm for all aspects of school life. They behave very well and are truly considerate. Relationships are warm and mutually respectful. Attendance and punctuality are good.
- 7 Pupils in all year groups show real enthusiasm and interest for their work and everything they do in school. Year 6 create Haiku poems with evident enjoyment. Pupils are eager to answer questions and to contribute their ideas in lessons. Year 4 pupils enjoy their recorder lessons so much that they readily accept their teacher's offer to be able to practise in their break and at lunchtime. Pupils often ask permission to continue their work at lunchtime, especially if it involves using the computers. Pupils at both key stages thoroughly enjoy music and singing in which they participate with gusto.
- 8 Pupils behave very well at all times. They are very attentive in lessons. They work and play together very well. They are kind and thoughtful and cheer each other up if, for example, they have lost a pet. Pupils are very considerate. Teachers often group higher attaining pupils with those who find learning more difficult, for example, in information and communication technology and they really help and encourage each other. On the playground, pupils mix well together, with older pupils often playing with younger children. Older pupils understand that the current limitations on playground space restrict their play options, such as football, because of the danger of knocking over small children. Pupils are as confident as parents and teachers that there is no bullying or harassment of any sort. Any occasional incidents when pupils fall out or are unpleasant to each other are quickly dealt with and forgotten. There are no exclusions.
- 9 Pupils' personal development is very good. They feel valued when their opinions and ideas are asked for about developments in school. Relationships between teachers and pupils are warm and constructive. The strength of relationships is such that four teachers help pupils at the computer club, encouraging and motivating them to extend their information and communication technology skills. Pupils show respect for and confidence in all adults that work with them, including lunchtime supervisors, to whom they relate happily. They collaborate well in small groups, as in a Year 5 lesson in geography when they produce lively work about their trip to Whitby. Occasionally, younger children find sharing and taking turns difficult, for example, when working in pairs in information and communication technology. Pupils also work diligently when they are asked to be independent. They are often trusted to leave the classroom to work on computers. Pupils listen very well to teachers and to each other. They respect everyone's right to voice an opinion. Year 6 pupils describe their own talents and how success makes them feel. They value their structured discussion sessions as an opportunity to discuss and share their problems. Year 3 pupils are able to talk with

stunning maturity about how what they say to someone can make that person feel happy or sad.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

- 10 Teaching and learning are very good throughout the school, confirming the parents' opinion. In one lesson in five, teaching is excellent and in another half of lessons, it is very good. Teaching and learning was good or better in all the lessons seen. This marks a significant improvement since the last inspection, where there was some unsatisfactory teaching and little teaching that was very good. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is very good and teachers are particularly good at developing the basic skills of reading, writing and number.
- 11 The successful implementation of the national literacy and numeracy strategies has provided increased training for teachers and a framework to make best use of their skills. Further improvements have been brought about by the careful monitoring of teaching in some subjects and through the targets set for individual teachers as part of their very effective staff development programme. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is very good and they make very good progress, benefiting from very good planning for their needs and from high quality support. Pupils with statements of special educational needs are very well supported by effective individual education plans that enable them to progress in appropriately small steps. Higher attaining pupils and those who are gifted and talented also make very good progress; teachers provide stimulating and challenging activities for them and allow them an appropriate measure of independence. In music, for example, gifted instrumentalists are given opportunities to take on solo parts that challenge them and give them a chance to shine. Most pupils achieve very well during their time in the school because of the very high standards of teaching.
- 12 Teaching in the reception class is supported by very good knowledge and understanding of the needs of young children. This ensures that basic skills in all the areas of learning, especially literacy and numeracy, are taught very effectively and the children acquire appropriate knowledge, understanding and skills very well, making good progress during the year. The very interesting teaching methods used and the excellent management of these young children ensure that they work and play extremely hard and have very high levels of interest and concentration.
- 13 From the time pupils begin in Year 1, they further develop their skills, knowledge and understanding very well because of the teachers' very effective teaching of basic skills, particularly in literacy and numeracy. Year 2 teachers provide useful frames and structures to support pupils' writing; for example, a template for a book review includes headings for the various aspects that the pupil is expected to include, such as a brief summary of the story. Teachers are skilled at operating very brisk mental mathematics sessions that develop pupils' skills and confidence in using numbers very effectively. Basic skills in other subjects are equally as well developed. For example, in music, infant pupils learn very early to keep a steady beat and to sing clearly and tunefully. They learn to mix colours independently in their art lessons and older pupils learn to use different kinds of pencils to record their observations accurately and with appropriate shading.
- 14 Teachers' excellent skills of classroom management, based on very positive relationships with their pupils, result in very high standards of behaviour and in extremely high levels of intellectual and creative effort throughout the school. Teachers' very high expectations, allied to very stimulating teaching methods, ensure that pupils respond very well to the challenges offered them, developing very good habits of independence and working very productively. For example, pupils in Year 1 were presented with a

range of activities about children's games that were played in the past; the two groups working independently on playing marbles and tiddlywinks. They worked (and played) very hard, quickly learning the rules and following them with very good levels of behaviour and discipline. The teacher's challenging questions about the games brought out perceptive answers from these young pupils. Older pupils undertook independent research about racial issues in the years following the arrival of the *Empire Windrush* in 1948, using reference books and the computer to discover new information, which they evaluated and reported sensibly and maturely.

- 15 Teachers make very good use of time and resources and deploy support staff most effectively; this ensures that lessons have a very brisk pace and that there are very high levels of productivity in all classes. In a Year 6 literacy hour about writing poems in a Japanese form, for example, pupils responded well to the brisk pace and the opportunities to be creative; they made good use of reflection time, thinking about what they were going to write before putting pen to paper. Their enjoyment in tackling the challenge presented by the complex poetic form was palpable; above-average pupils enjoyed the challenge and lower attainers achieved success because of the very good support they received from learning support assistants. The lower attainers shared their poems with the class and received the plaudits of teacher and pupils alike. Because of the supportive atmosphere, pupils were willing to take risks and consequently produced original ideas without fear of them being 'wrong'.
- 16 These high levels of learning are enhanced by the way in which teachers, particularly in junior classes, plan thoroughly for all levels of ability and share the learning objectives for the lesson with the class; pupils are clear about what they are expected to learn and how they are expected to do it. Throughout the school, teachers adjust their teaching very well in response to day-to-day assessment, resulting in very high levels of pupils' interest and concentration. Homework is used very consistently and effectively to enhance the learning that take place in the classroom; the involvement of parents in the work that pupils do at home is also beneficial to learning.

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

- 17 The school fully meets all statutory requirements for the curriculum and has developed a broad, balanced and imaginatively conceived range of learning opportunities for children. Intellectual, creative and personal and social skills are very well promoted. The school has very carefully considered how best to organise the various subjects within the timetable to achieve effective learning in all areas. An excellent long-term planning document guides teachers' planning. Decisions have been carefully made to adjust the balance of subjects from year to year and to give particular prominence to music and physical education. Additional time is given to these subjects to promote creativity, teamwork and the satisfactions gained through working together on expressive activities. Although some subjects have been squeezed for time, judicious timetabling - for instance, starting a lesson in the last half-hour of the morning and completing it with a full hour in the afternoon - ensures that learning of a high quality occurs because there is sufficient time for practical activities. Personal and social education is excellently built into the whole curriculum programme. The key issue in the last inspection about detail in planning has been thoroughly tackled by the school and considerable progress has been made overall in planning and implementing the curriculum. The school has a clear policy for promoting equal opportunities and is highly effective in giving all children every opportunity to succeed.
- 18 There is good provision for children under the age of six in the reception class. Good use is made of current national guidance in planning. A variety of stimulating learning

experiences is presented to children to foster positive attitudes towards learning. The curriculum is very well organised to cover all the areas of learning through imaginative and interesting activities. For part of each day, children choose what they would like to do and respond very well to the independence and responsibility entrusted to them. Although the lack of outdoor play facilities limits some aspects of the curriculum, teachers use the facilities in the school hall very well to promote children's physical development. The curriculum is well planned to incorporate several areas of learning within single activities.

- 19 Teachers have worked hard to implement the national strategies for literacy and numeracy and have been very successful. This has had noticeable effects on standards in English and mathematics and pupils' confidence has been enhanced. Flexible strategies are adopted to target particular areas of concern, for instance, writing and speaking and listening. Good use is made of drama in English to develop pupils' skills in oral communication. Literacy and numeracy skills are developed well in other subjects of the curriculum. Good use is made of children's computer skills in presenting, for instance, work on the Second World War, geography work about a field trip to Whitby and the results of a local traffic survey.
- 20 Provision for personal, social and health education is excellent. A well thought out programme examines issues relating to health, drugs and sex, and develops pupils' appreciation of citizenship. Planning is very good and teachers handle issues frankly and sensitively. Regular use of structured discussion times contributes positively to raising individual self-esteem as well as extending appreciation of and tolerance towards others.
- 21 The school makes very good provision for pupils with special educational needs. Teachers are careful to include pupils with special educational needs in all class activities. They make sure that the tasks set for pupils improve their confidence and enhance their learning. They take good account of pupils' individual education and support and monitor the pupils' learning effectively. The national Code of Practice is fully implemented and all teachers and support staff have high expectations and work hard to help these children achieve. Pupils who are gifted or talented are equally well provided for and lesson planning includes work to extend their talents.
- 22 Although the number and range of activities after school are limited, those that are available are of high quality. Furthermore, the school makes especially good provision within the curriculum for music and physical activities and organises special weeks like the Arts festival held last year. The computer club and summer games activities like Kwik cricket, basketball, rounders and tennis properly enrich pupils' interests. In the arts week, pupils experienced drama, storytelling, poetry, dance and painting, being led in workshops by professionals visiting the school. The newly formed drama club run by professionals from a local theatre group as well as members of staff promises exciting new possibilities for children and seeks to mount two productions a year. Within the curriculum, all junior children learn the recorder, and there is a weekly orchestra which gives termly concerts to parents. The school is also aware of the importance of allowing young children time with their parents after school and allowing junior children time to complete their homework. Thus, although some parents have reservations about the school's provision for extra-curricular activities, in fact the school provides rich cultural experiences and is mindful of the children's best interests.
- 23 There are good links with the community. Pupils' learning is enriched by visits to a local environmental centre and trips to local shops and religious buildings. Visitors to the school help children become aware of other cultures and of people's experiences earlier in the 1900s. The school has positive relationships with other schools in the area and

pupils and parents are very well supported both when children enter the school and when they move on to secondary level.

- 24 The provision for pupils' personal development, particularly their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is excellent and is a strength of the school. The school is a very happy community, which has high aspirations for its pupils. This has a very positive impact on pupils' attitudes and behaviour, which are very good. Parents overwhelmingly say that their children like school and that they are being helped very well to become mature and responsible. Pupils, including those under the age of six, are helpful, courteous and respectful and gain in confidence and self-esteem as they progress through the school. This is particularly noticeable with regard to those children who have special educational needs.
- 25 The fostering of spiritual development is excellent. In collective worship, religious education and all areas of the curriculum, pupils are helped to appreciate the uniqueness and special qualities of individuals, to reflect on serious spiritual and moral concerns and to respond with joy and pleasure to music, literature and art, and to simple everyday experiences. In the week of the inspection, pupils were challenged to think about issues of racial intolerance and its consequences and to express their ideas and feelings about worship and God. Behaviour in assemblies is excellent and the quietness and calm creates an appropriate climate for reflection and worship. Prayers, some written by children, are responded to respectfully. Pupils develop their understanding of Christianity well and by the time they leave school have a secure understanding of Judaism and Islam. Overall what was most striking was the quality and sensitivity of views pupils expressed, particularly in the secure environment of their own classrooms; and the sheer pleasure, enthusiasm and delight in their music making, whether singing or playing instruments.
- 26 The fostering of moral and social development is excellent. Teachers know their children very well and are skilful in helping them understand right from wrong and to take responsibility for their actions. All adults working in the school provide good models for moral and social behaviour, and teachers are very effective in drawing out the moral issues in relation to incidents that arise. Children are helped very well to appreciate the importance of rules in an orderly community and to contribute to the formation of class rules. They recognise how we depend on one another and need to respect the different views, attitudes and talents we all have. The school is particularly effective in promoting anti-racism. It has a very good behaviour policy and its implementation is excellent. Consequently, children's behaviour is of a very high order. Good opportunities are provided in lessons for pupils to gain in the skills of co-operation and discussion, and to develop initiative and independence in their own learning. Year 6 pupils are partnered with children in the reception class to help them feel welcome in the school and find their feet. All pupils are provided with opportunities to exercise responsibility.
- 27 Provision for children's cultural development is excellent. Rich opportunities are provided in all areas of the curriculum for children to develop knowledge and understanding of their own and other cultures. Appreciation of the arts is particularly well promoted in regular music, dance and drama activities. The school has recently been successful in its bid for funds to promote drama. Over the next three years, the school will be linked with a local theatre and professional actors will work with members of staff and children in a weekly drama club. In a session observed, pupils were effectively developing their skills in choral speaking, dance and movement. The newly formed computer club is already operating very effectively, allowing children to explore new aspects of information and communication technology and extend their skills in a relaxed environment. It was striking to see three teachers in addition to the teacher who organised the club helping children in this after school activity. Pupils broaden their

appreciation of other cultures in many ways, through visits to churches, synagogues and mosques and the study of different faiths in religious education, and from visitors to the school like a steel band, an Asian family and Chinese dancers.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

- 28 Pupils are very well cared for. They are given very good support and guidance, both academically and personally and their progress and personal development is very closely monitored. The school provides an effective environment where pupils feel confident and valued. There is very good attention to health and safety with regular checks and assessments of risks. Child protection procedures are securely in place. The key issue from the last inspection has been very effectively dealt with. First aid is given with sensitivity and care and good records are kept. When a pupil had an asthma attack, the headteacher calmly decided to take her to hospital as a precaution while parents were contacted. Pupils are known and valued as individuals. In the reception class, children who are joining the school and their parents are given several opportunities to visit and become familiar with staff and the building before starting school full-time. Lunchtime is well organised and relationships with supervisors are happy.
- 29 Attendance and punctuality are consistently good. Pupils come willingly and very happily to school and are mostly on time. Parents understand their responsibility to inform school of reasons for absence and usually do so on the first day. If not, the headteacher contacts them. Registers are clearly marked and collated and the statutory requirements for the recording and reporting of absence are met. Although attendance and punctuality is consistently good, the school continues to remind parents through letters of the importance of regular, prompt attendance. New attendance books for each class are a good way of checking on absence and enable the headteacher to follow up straight away any pupil whose parent has not informed school. Pupils who arrive a few minutes late are quietly reminded by their teacher to try to be on time.
- 30 There is a very strong and effective emphasis on positive behaviour. Teachers are constantly praising and rewarding pupils, who respond well and are polite and helpful, appreciating the recognition. Pupils know that on the rare occasion anyone does really misbehave, they will be given 'thinking time' to reflect on what they have done. Pupils are challenged to think independently. The headteacher delivered a very powerful assembly on racial tolerance in which pupils throughout the school listened to and reflected on a relevant song. Learning to value differences and to consider the feelings of others are also very well taught and discussed in personal, social and health education, as, for example, in Year 3, with a very good link to their studies in literacy of 'Amazing Grace'.
- 31 The way in which pupils' progress is assessed and monitored is a real strength. There are very good systems in place to track and record individual performance and progress in every subject. Pupils who are performing below their potential are targeted for extra support until their work reaches expected levels. Records are passed on to class teachers each year so that they are aware of what pupils know and can do. Pupils understand their individual targets and the descriptions of levels they are achieving. Marking is very constructive, praising pupils and suggesting ways to improve, which they find very helpful. Year 6 pupils in particular, appreciate that they are being encouraged to reach their own best performance. The monitoring of classroom work to ascertain pupils' progress was a key issue at the last inspection. There has been significant improvement in this area.

- 32 Pupils' personal development is monitored more informally, but no less effectively. Teachers know each pupil very well and use that knowledge to provide guidance and support. Pupils are encouraged to express their feelings and opinions and this again gives teachers further insight into any problems or difficulty individuals may be having.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

- 33 Parents are very supportive of the school and all its work. They think highly of the head teacher and all staff and value the education given to their children.
- 34 Parents are kept very well informed. The prospectus and governors' annual report to parents are well written and informative and the prospectus is enlivened with many photographs. Regular newsletters keep parents up to date. In the entrance hall, copies of school policies and information on education are neatly arranged for parents to view. In the infant area, there is a parents' desk with copies of letters and a book for their comments. At parents' evenings, there is no time restriction, so parents feel able to have a full discussion. Parents are informed of their children's targets and so develop good understanding of how to help them at home. Reports to parents are of variable quality. The best really do explain clearly to parents what their children know, understand and can do and set targets for improvement. Reports to parents of children in the reception class are very detailed, though the format is more suitable to the work of older pupils because they report under separate subjects.
- 35 Parents find teachers very approachable and often talk with them at the beginning and end of the school day. Parents are actively encouraged to help in school and those who do so feel valued. They are very well involved in decision making through questionnaires and workshops, as, for example, when the home and school agreement was being devised. Reading records are very well used as two-way communication between home and school. Parents are often asked to be involved in their children's homework in a very imaginative way. For example, Year 6 pupils were asked to find out if their parents knew what Euler's theorem is for numeracy and then to demonstrate at home what they have learnt. A small group of parents is actively involved in the Friends of Southfield and many more help out and support events to raise money.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

- 36 The school is exceptionally well led and managed by the head teacher with the wholehearted support of all the staff. The equally supportive governing body is increasingly effective in its strategic role.
- 37 Leadership and management are outstanding. The headteacher has a long-term vision for the school, which is shared by her deputy, senior management team and other staff. The school development plan is of very high quality and clearly defines the school's priorities for action, how these will be implemented and subsequent actions. The prospectus states, "We want to make your child's school days: memorable, exciting, enjoyable and successful". In everything they do, the school is achieving these aims fully. Every teacher is a subject co-ordinator. They all lead their subject with enthusiasm and thoroughness, knowing they are trusted to do the job exceptionally well. There is a real sense of teamwork.
- 38 The governing body is becoming increasingly involved and effective in supporting the head teacher and her team. Working parties of the governing body have been set up and they are gaining an understanding of the school's strengths and where improvements can be made. A programme of visits has been set up to further develop governors'

interest in the life of the school. They are kept very well informed and have a good understanding of the budget.

- 39 All teachers are fully involved in observing each other's lessons. There is a detailed timetable for co-ordinators to observe teaching. Teachers support each other. They are able to attend courses to further their areas of responsibility and interest and are also given the opportunity to observe best practice in other schools as well as in their own. All teachers have been set targets relating to the school's priorities and to their own professional development for performance management. The confident and enthusiastic way in which new and relatively inexperienced teachers teach and lead their subjects is evidence of the effectiveness of the excellent monitoring, evaluation and development of teaching. These teachers have been given excellent support and encouragement to develop their skills.
- 40 Financial planning is first class. The headteacher has reversed a significant deficit and created a substantial surplus, which is to be put towards improving the building and grounds. The school development plan is properly costed. The headteacher is very good at accessing additional grants and funding. Additional money coming into the school is prudently used for its designated purpose. Day-to-day administration and financial control are very efficiently organised by the secretary who is also a welcoming first point of contact to the school. The most recent audit found systems operating on a sound and efficient basis and all control mechanisms in place. Recommendations for increased effectiveness have been carried out. Considerations of best value, both financial and educational, are very well applied to purchases of goods and services.
- 41 The school is fortunate to have a highly qualified teaching staff who are very good teachers, full of enthusiasm and commitment to what they do. Teachers are ably assisted by support staff who help pupils in classrooms and individually. All the staff work well with parent and volunteer helpers. The caretaker and her team keep the school maintained and cleaned to the highest standards. Resources for learning are adequate for all subjects except design and technology, where they are barely adequate.
- 42 Classrooms are light, bright and airy and display is very well used to celebrate pupils' work and achievement. Some of the rooms are barely large enough for numbers of children and effective delivery of the curriculum. A very good personal and social education lesson in Year 3 was slightly hampered because the room was not big enough for pupils to sit in a circle. The library is very well used and has an attractive layout that encourages pupils to read and research. Excellent use has been made of wide corridor areas to create an information and communication technology suite where pupils are always working. The hall is large enough to take the whole school comfortably for assembly and good use is made of the space for singing and orchestra as well as gymnastics and dance. External accommodation is currently good in terms of actual space but poor in terms of quality and facilities. Governors have approved plans to develop the site. There is no proper outdoor area for the foundation stage, which restricts their creative, physical and personal development. The playground is barren and too small to allow pupils to play with games and other small equipment because of the risk of older pupils accidentally knocking over small children. The school is aware of the issues surrounding accommodation and has started to address them.
- 43 The school has made very good improvement since the last inspection. Standards are high. The teaching is very good; pupils' attitudes and behaviour are extremely good. Financial planning is of the highest quality and all available monies put to the best possible use. The school therefore gives very good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

44 There are no key issues for action. The headteacher, staff and governors should consider the following minor areas for improvement.

- Improve the outdoor facility for children in the reception class.
- Make more imaginative use of the outside play area for all pupils.
- Ensure that the quality of reports to parents is consistent across the school and that those in the reception class refer to the areas of learning for children at this stage.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	54
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	27

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
19	50	31	0	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	200
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	7

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	26

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	4
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	9

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.0
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.4
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	11	20	31

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	11	11
	Girls	20	17	20
	Total	31	28	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (93)	90 (93)	100 (93)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	*	11
	Girls	19	*	19
	Total	30	29	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	97 (93)	94 (90)	97 (93)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	*	13	23

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	19	18	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	83 (62)	78 (58)	100 (88)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	18	19	22
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	78 (69)	83 (62)	96 (85)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	80 (75)

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

* numbers 10 and below not published

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	
Indian	
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	
White	174
Any other minority ethnic group	

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	27.8
Average class size	28.6

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	9.0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	115

Financial information

Financial year	1999-2000
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	£
Total income	362661
Total expenditure	341352
Expenditure per pupil	1699
Balance brought forward from previous year	23369
Balance carried forward to next year	44678

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	200
Number of questionnaires returned	85

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	72	27	1		
My child is making good progress in school.	61	33	5		1
Behaviour in the school is good.	59	39			2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	39	55	6		
The teaching is good.	60	38	1		1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	36	46	18		
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	67	33			
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	68	30	1		1
The school works closely with parents.	46	47	5	1	1
The school is well led and managed.	60	35	1		5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	58	38	4		1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	27	39	23	2	8

Although some parents express reservations about the school's provision for extra-curricular activities, within the curriculum itself pupils are given a rich and varied experience with additional time given to physical education and music. The number and range of activities after school are limited but they are of high quality. The quality of information in the form of reports to parents is variable and could be improved. However, the school keeps parents very well informed through newsletters, termly consultation evenings and questionnaires to seek their views on matters such as homework.

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

- 45 Children achieve well in the reception class. Most children enter school with below average attainment in spoken and written communication, mathematical skills and personal and social development. By the time children transfer into the Year 1 class, most meet the standards expected in communication, language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical and creative development. A very small number exceed these expectations. This is an improvement since the last inspection and is the result of the very good teaching they receive in the reception class.
- 46 There are considerable strengths in the provision for reception children. The curriculum is very well organised to cover all the areas of learning through imaginative and interesting activities. For part of each day, children choose what they would like to do and respond very well to the independence and responsibility entrusted to them. The quality of support given by the nursery nurse is very good indeed and children benefit from the very good teamwork between her and the class teacher. Not a moment is wasted and the management of children is excellent. However, the very good quality of teaching masks the limitations of the accommodation for young children; for example, there is very little space for children to sit comfortably together on the carpet, no room for more than three children to paint at any one time and no suitable outdoor play area where children can ride large wheeled toys. The school is well aware of this and plans are in place to redevelop the entire reception area, including an outside activity space.
- 47 Pupils' personal, social and emotional development is provided for very well and children achieve well, learning to become more independent and socially confident. Wherever possible, the teacher gives children choices and acts on their suggestions. This increases their self-esteem immensely. For example, one child brought to school some 'dinosaur bones', in reality sticks, he had found. That afternoon, a small group devised an elaborate game with toy dinosaurs and their 'bones' in the sand. The very good quality of the teacher's and nursery nurse's questioning develops children's personal and social skills as well as their ability to use speech to convey information. The teacher often repeats what a child says but subtly correcting the tense as the opening part of her reply. At the end of a lesson where children choose their activities, they come together in two small groups, with the child holding the toy having the right to talk and to be listened to. Although some of the children's speech is quite hard to understand, and some lower attaining children find it quite hard to concentrate, the teacher skilfully prompts children to talk, saying for example, that someone 'did some magic this afternoon,' and an average attainer proudly explains how he 'invented the colour purple'. A lower attaining child volunteers that it was another's 'good idea to build an engine'. Children tidy up well and the teacher has regular routines to ensure this is done quickly and efficiently. In these ways, teachers develop children's imagination and their self-confidence and awareness of others. As a result, higher attaining children think to ask the teacher what she has done that afternoon and listen with satisfaction to her pleasant and positive reply.
- 48 Children enter school with below average standards in communication, language and literacy. They achieve well, reaching standards expected of their age group by the time they leave the reception class. Approximately 10 per cent have speech problems and levels of attainment vary widely. The vast majority of children cannot write their names when they start school and a number still have difficulties some eight weeks later. Children are very willing to learn. Through sharing stories, spending time each day when

each child has a special time to tell the others something of interest, children learn that language is important and that print has meaning. Higher attaining children are able to predict words in a story. The displays reinforce the importance of the printed word. Role-play in the optician's shop enables children of different attainment levels to practise their letter recognition in the most natural way, as when 'the receptionist' asks a 'customer' to write down her child's name (a doll in the pushchair) and receives the reply, 'It's me actually'. The very good teaching develops strategies for prediction as well as knowledge of letter sounds and recognition of some. This was seen in a lively teaching session on the targeted letter J. Through rhymes and songs such as 'jelly bean' and using picture clues constantly and effectively, the teacher ensured success in reading the story and understanding it. The planning is thorough and highly effective.

- 49 Children achieve well in mathematics and, from an initial limited understanding of number, reach expected standards by the end of the reception year. Most children, at this early stage of the year, have difficulty working out how many more they need to make one more than five. The teacher is very good at making mathematics fun. The children greeted 'Furry Boo', a dog who can't count and who 'muddles up numbers', with great enthusiasm. They were not at all sure he would be good at shapes. Four average attaining children were very pleased to identify a cube. With the aid of 'a magic bag', higher attaining children helped to order cubes of different sizes and most were able to detect mistakes. Children's attention was captivated in an excellent lesson, which began with the children selecting the shape through which the teacher should blow bubbles. As the bubbles were released into the air, children tried to quickly count them. This involved them in approximating and also in seeing 'more' and 'less'. Lower attaining children guessed quite wildly whereas higher attainers could quickly gauge a close approximation. Activities to develop children's mathematical understanding are chosen with care. For example, the photographs of the local church visited by the children were used very well indeed to develop children's awareness of shape. A lower attaining child, who couldn't write when she came to school, proudly showed how she had used rectangular and triangular cuboids to draw the church tower and gabled porch. The children listened with great interest. When looking at shapes in Christmas cards, one average attainer noticed that a Christmas tree is 'like a cone' and another chose to make a 'sphere shaped bauble' out of a malleable material. Children are able to choose songs with numbers in them and have clear preferences. A higher attaining child chose Twinkle Twinkle Little Star on the grounds that it had a diamond shape in it.
- 50 Children's knowledge and understanding of the world increases rapidly so that at the end of the reception year they attain the standards expected. They are keen to give their own ideas on a book the teacher reads with them. Higher attaining children can recognise feelings by the expressions on characters' faces and they talk about their own experiences with younger brothers and sisters and the difficulties in sharing toys. The very good quality of teaching and planning enables children to achieve well. Activities such as making a map of their walk to local shops, including road and street signs, or painting pictures of different buildings, develop their knowledge of their immediate surroundings. Using different types of construction materials, children make vehicles or construct a model. Average and higher attainers talk animatedly together whilst lower attaining children work alongside each other. Children learn that wet sand is different from dry and ask many questions to help them to understand.
- 51 Although the lack of outdoor play facilities limits some aspects of the curriculum, teachers use the facilities in the school hall very well to promote children's physical development. As in other aspects of the curriculum, the very good teaching often incorporates several areas of learning. Children attain expected standards by the end of the reception year. In response to an imaginative story, for instance, children bounce up and down 'as if on a bouncy castle'. Although some lower attainers find it difficult to

bounce with two feet together, they bounce enthusiastically with a partner. Average attainers can stretch 'really tall' and higher attaining children can hop in a zigzag pattern across the hall. They enjoy skipping and moving energetically and can change direction quickly. They show respect for other's space and behave very sensibly. The teacher encourages children to demonstrate to each other and this helps the less mature to concentrate more fully. The teacher uses very good strategies to encourage independence. Children were able to suggest, for example, various musical instruments suitable to jump to such as the trumpet. They clapped enthusiastically whilst jumping up and down to show how a tambourine is played. In the very cramped classroom base, children nonetheless managed to push and pull wheeled toys, negotiating round various obstacles successfully. Higher attaining children persevere when cutting round spectacles, which they have helped to laminate. They then work out how to join the sides using sticky tape, glue or paper fasteners. Some average attainers made baubles from dough and spent some time turning paperclips into hooks, concentrating as they bent the wire into the correct shape. They behave very well as they are interested in what they are doing.

- 52 Children achieve well in their creative development and reach expected standards by the time they move into Year 1. They learn to mix their own colours, though extended practice is limited because of the restricted space. Lower attaining children often mix many different colours on top of each other, enjoying the process. The very good teaching encourages children to experiment with colour and the activities entice children to learn. The quality of teaching in music is particularly high and enables children to sing well and with enjoyment. They can clap rhythmically and can distinguish whether notes are replayed loudly or quietly. Average attaining children are able to comment on the different kinds of sound made by percussion and higher attainers can choose particular instruments to represent different characters and events in the story. A lively pace and effective, varied methods to involve children and to sustain their interest help them to develop a sense of pulse and rhythm. In performance, children can play different instruments as well as sing both loudly and softly. In all areas of learning, children with special educational needs are very well integrated and receive very good support to enable them to take part fully.

ENGLISH

- 53 By the time they are eleven, pupils' attainment is above the national average in reading, writing, speaking and listening, confirming the results of the national tests in 2000, which also showed standards to be above the national average and above the average for similar schools. The attainment of seven-year-olds is above the national average in speaking and listening, reading and writing. The national tests in 2000 showed reading standards for that year's Year 2 pupils to be very high both in the national context and in comparison with similar schools. Tests in writing showed standards to be above average in comparison to national figures and in comparison to similar schools. In the national tests for eleven-year-olds in 2000, girls achieved much better than boys but in the present Year 6, there is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls. The school monitors these differences carefully. There has been an upward trend in English standards for both infant and junior pupils over the past four years and standards have significantly improved since the last inspection. Important factors in this improvement are the excellent leadership and management of the subject and the very effective implementation of the literacy strategy. Greatly improved procedures for assessing and evaluating pupils' work have enabled teachers to set targets for individual pupils and to provide additional support for groups, based on well-founded information. This, added to the very good teaching of the subject, has made a major contribution to standards. Parents make a positive contribution to standards, particularly in reading,

through the very good arrangements for homework, the reading diary and the part some of them play in the classroom.

- 54 The above average standards attained by the time they leave the school shows very good achievement overall for most pupils. Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well because of the effective support they receive from teachers' planning and from support assistants. Above-average pupils and those who are gifted and talented achieve very well because of the opportunities they are given to choose their own reading books and because of the stimulating opportunities provided to write independently and extensively, particularly in poetry. Average and slightly below-average pupils benefit from effective support both individually and in small groups from well-qualified and capable learning support assistants.
- 55 Standards are good in speaking and listening. Attentive listening both to the teacher and to other pupils is consistently promoted in every class so that pupils, including lower attainers, have the confidence to express their ideas in the knowledge that they will be listened to. The use of structured discussion in personal, social and health education, where pupils take turns to speak in a very encouraging atmosphere benefits pupils' speaking and listening skills significantly. Opportunities are provided to develop speaking and listening skills in drama, during, for example, preparation for the juniors' performance of 'Cats' or during Year 3 pupils' role-play about gender and ethnicity in Peter Pan. Pupils speak out well in reading to the class or to the school in assemblies and Year 5 pupils are articulate in, for example, explaining what they like and dislike about 'Charlotte's Web' in a well-balanced way. The good standards of reading throughout the school are reflected in the way in which Year 1 pupils read aloud together 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar', average attaining pupils reading with very good levels of expression as they follow their teacher's excellent example. Year 3 pupils show a sensitive understanding of the issues in a story about racial intolerance. Higher attaining pupils confidently use a good range of strategies to cope with unfamiliar words and have well-developed skills in retrieving information from books, CD-ROMs and the Internet. All pupils benefit from the systematic teaching of reading skills as they progress through the school. Standards of writing are good and pupils write for a range of purposes and audiences. Year 2 pupils write up their science experiments clearly and write evocative accounts of how a sad person feels; however, in general, infant pupils do not have enough opportunities to write independently and at length, as the school recognises. Older pupils are particularly good at writing poems; Year 6 pupils, for instance, compose sensitive poems about nature and use very original and powerful images in poems based on Ted Hughes' poem, 'The Amulet', which enables them to experiment with an interesting structure. Rich opportunities for writing are provided in other subjects as, for example, in reporting on a residential visit to Whitby, describing features of the town for geography. Younger pupils write well in role as Viking warriors. Information and communication technology is used well to support writing, particularly in editing and re-drafting stories and poems. Skills in spelling, grammar and punctuation develop systematically and, by the end of Year 6, most pupils spell confidently and with good accuracy and are able to use common punctuation marks correctly. Pupils' handwriting improves through regular and well-structured practice and the move to joined-up handwriting occurs with few problems so that most Year 6 pupils write legibly in a clear cursive hand.
- 56 Teaching and learning are very good overall; some excellent lessons were seen for juniors. No teaching and learning was observed that was less than good and in a quarter of lessons, teaching was excellent. Teachers have great strengths in managing the pupils, establishing very warm and positive relationships and applying the school's positive behaviour policy very effectively and consistently. They make learning fun so that pupils enjoy their learning. Lessons have a very brisk pace and teachers prepare

and use learning resources imaginatively. Consequently, pupils behave very well and work extremely hard both intellectually and creatively. The basic skills of literacy are very well taught and pupils as a result make very good progress in acquiring and improving their reading and writing skills. Levels of concentration are very high and pupils work productively and independently in small groups or individually on the computers, polishing their poems or researching their topic. Teachers plan very effectively for the full range of abilities in their classes and have very high expectations of their pupils. In excellent lessons, teachers are very good at assessing how a lesson is going and are quick to adjust their plans when they feel that something is not understood or interest is waning. Particularly in junior classes, pupils are clear about what they should be learning and are involved in evaluating how well they are doing. Homework is used very effectively to consolidate learning and to prepare for later lessons. Regular homework in reading, for example, has a particularly positive impact on pupils' learning. Teachers' marking of pupils' work is constructive and helpful in raising achievement and at the same time suggesting ways of improving. Lower attainers and pupils with special educational needs work hard and respond very well to the work that is planned for them and to the support they receive. Above average pupils and those who are particularly good at English are challenged by stimulating activities so that they extend their knowledge and skills very well. Pupils work very well together, sharing ideas very well and showing respect for other pupils' opinions and values.

- 57 The subject benefits from excellent leadership and management. The co-ordinator, a leading teacher for literacy for the local education authority, has shared her expertise very well with colleagues so that the literacy hour has been very effectively established and is making a great impact on standards of teaching and learning and on pupils' attainment. The school has a very strong capacity to maintain high standards in the subject and to further improve. Classroom monitoring is closely focused with targets negotiated with teachers to further improve their already effective practice. Teachers are supported by a very effective policy that is admirably practical in applying policy to practice and is implemented consistently. English makes a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They learn to appreciate the joy of literature and to empathise with people's varied circumstances. They are encouraged to reflect on life and its meaning and to be understanding and tolerant of others. Their social skills are developed by working together and by appreciating and evaluating their own work and that of others.

MATHEMATICS

- 58 By the time they are eleven, pupils' attainment is above average in mathematics, an improvement on the results of the year 2000 tests, which placed pupils' attainment at close to the national average. The attainment of seven-year-olds is also above average, again an improvement on the 2000 test results, which placed pupils' attainment at close to the average attained nationally and in similar schools. In the national tests for eleven-year-olds, girls attained lower standards than boys. The school is well aware of these differences and has taken positive steps to raise the profile of mathematics both in school and at home. In the present Year 6, the attainment of boys and girls is very similar. This year standards are higher partly because there are fewer pupils with special educational needs in the present Year 6 class but largely because of the consistently very good teaching of numeracy in all classes. The subject is excellently managed and this ensures a consistency of approach, which further contributes to improved standards since the last inspection.
- 59 Pupils' attainment in mathematics is below average when they start school. The school identified that parents were less confident themselves with mathematics and they tended not to encourage or support their children as fully as, for example, with reading. In

order to counteract this, the school has found ingenious ways to interest both pupils and parents through introducing mathematical games or setting homework for parents and children to share. In Year 6, for example, pupils were given the task of checking whether their parents could understand a mathematical calculation after pupils had taught them. One parent was awarded a gold star! Much thought has been given to resourcing mathematics to make lessons lively, interesting and fun.

- 60 By the age of seven, pupils have a good knowledge of shapes and can describe, for example, a pentagon and nonagon accurately in terms of sides and corners. Lower attaining pupils measure objects accurately using metres and centimetres. Pupils solve problems such as 'how much is the 9 worth in $9\frac{1}{2}$?' Most pupils deal confidently with number sequences up to a 100. Teachers encourage pupils to use a wide variety of mathematical terms when they explain their methods both verbally and on paper. As a consequence, average and higher attaining pupils use and understand writing numbers of more than four digits. By the age of eleven, pupils identify number patterns in the co-ordinates for the left and right halves of a number pattern. Higher attaining pupils can use the co-ordinates to set a code for someone to decipher. Teachers clearly encourage pupils to think for themselves. Not only do pupils name complex shapes, average and higher attainers can work out which four different shapes to draw if each has one pair of parallel sides. They can find the range of data in a graph and calculate the mean. Pupils' work on temperature shows a practical application of mathematics. Lower attainers record time and temperature and chart variations, whereas higher attainers give valid reasons for the rise and fall in temperature at different times of day. Pupils can match fractions with decimal fractions accurately; higher attaining pupils use decimals up to 3 decimal places with confidence. They use a calculator well to check their answers.
- 61 The quality of teaching is very good for seven year-olds and some excellent teaching was observed. The national numeracy strategy is used quite inventively so that pupils received many opportunities to contribute and to ask questions. Teachers' questioning takes account of pupils with special educational needs as well as gifted and talented pupils. For example, in Year 1, work on place value was extended for a talented pupil to include four-digit numbers in mental mathematics. Pupils are highly motivated and very enthusiastic. The resources are interesting and designed to captivate pupils' attention. In an excellent lesson, the use of giant domino cards and a 'lucky dip bag' turned doubling numbers into an exciting game as well as reinforcing the two-times table through repetition. Teachers' neat and methodical ways contribute to making pupils' calculations logical and well ordered. Pupils find the combination of games, calculation and speed irresistible. In group work, pupils who have been targeted for extra support receive very good assistance. Lower attaining pupils are trusted in the same ways as others to work independently. As well as raising their self-esteem it makes pupils feel confident that they can work and succeed on their own. Teachers do well in creating a supportive atmosphere of success where praise makes pupils' attempts feel valued. This means pupils achieve well.
- 62 The quality of teaching for juniors is also very good and some excellent teaching was seen. Teachers adopt a 'problem solving' approach which makes mathematics very practical. Teachers explain very clearly what they expect pupils to learn and spend time reinforcing crucial, basic steps, for example, teaching pupils to make sense of a problem by explaining it to themselves, before launching into calculation. Planning is very good and teachers sensibly alter their original intentions to take account of previous learning. Older pupils are helped to work out their own formulas and to derive division and multiplication facts from these. In an excellent lesson, the teacher started a formula for a regular hexagon and from this average and higher attaining pupils were skilfully moved on to identifying irregular shapes from a formula and different ways of writing these. A

talented pupil was asked to expound to others the patterns he had discovered and with higher attainers challenged to investigate the total edge length of different solid shapes and to work out suitable formulae. Many could visualise dodecahedron and worked with minimal practical equipment. Lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs were enabled to achieve a comparable understanding of shape and pattern through a much more practical exercise, involving matching and predicting shapes from opened out boxes. In the closing discussion, other pupils were clearly impressed at the lower attaining pupils' grasp of how to find the edge length of a triangular prism and higher attaining pupils with a new formula to contemplate in preparation for next time, to calculate the circumference of a circle.

- 63 Pupils cover an enormous amount of work. The marking indicates teachers' high expectations and attention to detail. One of the strengths in teaching is the use of assessment to determine which aspects of the curriculum need more help with. This system has been recently refined to enable teachers to assess how well different groups or individuals in the class have learnt each week. This information is then used when planning. The teacher identifies weaknesses in learning and produces an action plan for mathematics. The co-ordinator uses these as the basis for an overall mathematics action plan. This thoroughness is clearly helping to raise standards throughout the school.

SCIENCE

- 64 Pupils' attainment is above average by the age of seven and well above average by the age eleven. The results of the most recent national standardised tests confirm this and also affirm continued improvement of pupils' performance. Standards are high because of the very good teaching pupils receive, with excellent teaching in their final year at this school. The subject is very well led and managed and the consistency of support offered by the co-ordinator is a strong contributory factor.
- 65 Standards in science, although similar to those reported in the last inspection, are now consistently above average throughout the school. Strengths lie in the much-improved resources, which are now sufficiently extensive to allow pupils to undertake a wide range of practical work. The co-ordinator observes lessons and examines lesson plans and samples of work from each year group are checked to see if they match the objectives in the planning. Results of the national standardised tests are analysed and teaching of certain areas adapted accordingly so as to enable pupils to answer questions well. As a result, pupils achieve highly. Science is very well taught through other subjects such as literacy, personal, social and health education, and geography. An area for development is the method of recording investigations. There is too great a disparity at the moment between those used by infants and those by older pupils so there is no consistency, for example, in recording whether a test is fair or not.
- 66 The quality of teaching and learning is very good for seven year-olds. Teachers plan lessons, which interest pupils and make learning fun. Pupils learn to co-operate as a group, pooling their ideas and resources. For example, Year 2 pupils sorted the photographs into two categories, plants and animals. Pupils had to think hard and all worked out that humans must be animals rather than plants. In addition, pupils had to report on how they operated as a group, one revealing that there had been 'no falling out'. From examining pupils' work, it is clear that pupils are taught to solve problems and to think for themselves. Higher attaining pupils, for example, wrote that 'walking will give me exercise' and food such as fish and eggs 'help our bones to grow'. The work is neatly set out and informative. Small details, such as planting cress seeds in transparent pots, mean that pupils can observe daily whether they grow best in wet or dry compost, paper or sand. Mathematics is used well to help pupils to record their results in a chart.

- 67 The quality of teaching and learning of juniors is very good. It is excellent for the older pupils and clearly enables pupils to achieve well above average standard. Younger juniors work in groups to plan a safe test to determine which is the hardest floor covering. The teachers expect pupils to use specialised vocabulary. Lower attaining pupils give valid reasons why they think cork will be the hardest wearing material 'because it doesn't bend as much' whereas average attainers choose thin vinyl 'because it is flexible'. Teachers are concerned to develop pupils' scientific thinking and through well-chosen tasks and their own lively approach engender enthusiasm. In an excellent lesson, pupils were held spellbound as the teacher unfolded a step-by-step demonstration of reversible and irreversible changes using everyday materials. Pupils, as well as being enthralled by the violent chemical reaction when bicarbonate of soda was stirred into vinegar, were quickly able to explain why they thought the bubbles were gas because of the excellent preparation they had received. Pupils say they really like science because it is so exciting. In the after-school information and communication technology club, pupils extend their scientific knowledge when they program the computer to light up three bulbs consecutively, repeated at precisely timed intervals.
- 68 Pupils cover a wide range of work and recording sheets for older pupils encourage logical and analytical thinking though they are almost too prescriptive for higher attaining pupils. Pupils are encouraged to record results in a variety of different ways such as graphs or tables. Teachers' marking is stringent and requires pupils to work out answers for themselves. They clearly expect that all pupils can and should attain highly.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

- 69 Since the last inspection both provision and standards have improved. Pupils by the ages of seven and eleven meet national expectations. Pupils, including those pupils with special educational needs, achieve well. There has been effective curriculum development and guidance for planning so that development in pupils' understanding and skills is more carefully structured. The recent addition of a new computer suite has considerably improved the direct teaching of computer skills and the opportunities for pupils to reinforce learning. Teachers have by their own initiative improved their knowledge and confidence, pending planned intensive professional development in this subject later in the year.
- 70 Seven-year-old pupils can use the computer confidently to word-process text. They know the functions of various keys such as the backspace and shift key. They can use a fair range of keys correctly. They can create sentences straight on to screen and correct spelling and punctuation. They use a paint program to create shape pictures in the style of Mondrian. They can make sensible comparisons between their computer-generated pictures and drawings they have made by hand. They recognise the ease, speed and neatness in pictures created on the computer; one observed very seriously, 'it does not make my arm ache'. Pupils learn well and make very good progress because they are keen to learn and work hard and purposefully. Teaching is never less than very good and has a significant impact on pupils' attitudes and the quality of their learning. Learning objectives are clearly presented, tasks are stimulating and well prepared, and questioning is sharply focused to challenge and promote thought and understanding.
- 71 Older pupils use computers confidently for a range of purposes. Well-planned lessons and effective organisation and methods enable pupils to make good progress. A good example was seen in Year 6 where the teacher was extending the pupils' understanding of spreadsheets. The teacher made very good use of the computer suite, ensuring that all pupils had good opportunities to practise and work at their own pace. Pupils were

very clear from the initial demonstration of what they had to do and how to operate the spreadsheet software. In pairs, they effectively checked and corrected a sample spreadsheet, developing their understanding of the importance of entering data accurately. In the rest of the lesson, they consolidated skills by creating a spreadsheet of their own and over half progressed to developing their understanding of calculating totals of rows and columns by creating formulae representing the cells in the spreadsheet grid. Good learning was also observed with a small group of special needs children working with a learning support assistant. They were reinforcing their understanding of punctuation by having to add the appropriate punctuation to a prepared text. This was a literacy hour task, and use of the computers motivated the children and enhanced their learning. In another lesson, very good levels of concentration and effort were seen where pupils had to delete and replace words in a text on the screen. The lesson was extremely well prepared and presented, using a large screen for demonstration. Behaviour and involvement were very well managed, so that pupils worked co-operatively and very effectively in pairs.

- 72 Teachers throughout the school are very effective in whole class teaching and in enabling pupils to work well in pairs and small groups. As well as developing pupils' knowledge and skill in using the computer, they help them well to appreciate the advantages of carrying out tasks on the computer and use their skill in other subjects of the curriculum. The teaching of pupils with special needs is particularly effective and this leads to very good progress. They are well integrated into the class and have good opportunities to participate in both whole class and group work.
- 73 Although the present co-ordinator has only been in place for a year, great strides have been made in improving provision. The school has been successful in its bid for funding and has been able to establish a suite of networked computers. The leadership and management of the subject are very good, with good curriculum development, planning and monitoring. Currently information and communication technology is used well in other subjects and the co-ordinator is seeking to develop and improve on this, particularly within the literacy hour. The newly formed computer club is operating very well and it is frequently in use throughout the day and even after school.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

- 74 Pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 is in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus for seven and eleven-year-olds. This maintains the standards seen at the last inspection. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and above-average attainers, achieve well. Infant pupils know stories from the Old and New Testaments and can explain their relevance to their own lives. They know about people who help others and think about how to help people who are sad. Junior pupils have a sound knowledge and understanding of features of Christianity and Judaism and can explain similarities and differences between the two religions. They also have a sound knowledge and understanding of aspects of Islam. They apply their knowledge of celebrations such as the Passover to their own special events, explaining why the food they select for their special feast is meaningful to them. They reflect maturely about religious ideas and produce their own 'ten modern commandments', many of them original and thoughtful, such as 'You shall not murder those who commit murder.' A visit to Whitby Abbey as part of a residential visit results in good levels of knowledge and understanding about the structure of the church and the significance of its parts. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress, benefiting from the support they receive. More able pupils benefit from the challenging tasks that are set and are encouraged to think for themselves and not to shy away from original ideas and views.

- 75 Teaching and learning are good. Some very good teaching was seen and in these lessons there were high levels of attention and interest. Teachers use interesting methods to catch pupils' interest and are particularly good at helping pupils to see the relevance of what they are learning to their own lives. Pupils, for example, are encouraged to reflect on what religion means by producing an acrostic about the significance of sacred texts. Because the teachers' skills in class management are so good and because they have such high expectations, pupils work very hard and behave very well. The values that religious education represent are very well modelled in the classrooms and English and history lessons on, for instance, racial prejudice reinforce learning in religious education and personal, social and health education lessons. School assemblies also complement pupils' learning in religious education very well. The subject makes a very strong contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- 76 The subject is well led and managed by a co-ordinator who keeps a close eye on standards of pupils' work. A very good policy includes very practical guidance on putting the policy into practice and has already had a beneficial effect on the quality of teaching and learning. The school is well placed to improve standards and provision in the subject.

ART AND DESIGN

- 77 By the time pupils leave the school, their attainment in art is above that expected for eleven-year-olds, thus maintaining the standards seen at the last inspection. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who are gifted and talented, achieve very well. Good quality work is produced in all classes in painting, drawing and fabric work. Skills are developed systematically as pupils move through the school so that the younger pupils' skills in colour mixing are developed to produce convincing flesh tones and effective blending of colours in Year 2 pupils' lively portrait gallery. Year 5 pupils take these skills further in developing paintings of Whitby that use different kinds of brush to produce a variety of colour effects; above-average pupils use colours in layers very imaginatively. Paintings and drawings by Year 6 pupils show high levels of care and brush or pastel control and good handling of colour blends and variations in paintings of a cross section of a lemon or a whole red apple. Art is used to support other subjects, such as history, very well. For examples, the dramatic collage pictures of bombing raids over London stimulate insights into the situation in British cities during the Second World War. Pupils use the computer to produce effective works of art and some pupils produce work of very high quality that exploits the effects available in the paint program they use very well indeed. Pupils' know the work of a variety of other artists such as Miro, Lowry and Hockney and show good knowledge and understanding of the techniques they use.
- 78 Teaching and learning are good and some very good lessons were seen. Teachers have well developed and confident knowledge of the subject. They use the works of other artists well to stimulate pupils' own work and to provide insights into the pictures' content; for example, Year 3 pupils were encouraged to explore the feelings and relationships portrayed in a Hockney painting before beginning to draw their own sketches of models in a similar situation. Their interest was caught and they worked hard on a very difficult task to try to catch something of the mood of the picture. In very good lessons, very precise questioning develops pupils' insights and promotes their enjoyment of the art they see; consequently, pupils have very positive attitudes to the subject and show high levels of interest. Teachers plan very thoroughly and prepare very efficiently so that lessons move with a brisk pace, maintaining a very productive work rate and excellent levels of creative effort from the pupils. Because they are so involved in their activities and because the teachers have such highly developed class

management skills, pupils behave very well. Pupils know clearly what is expected of them because the teachers are careful to explain the objectives of the lesson. Teachers have very high expectations of pupils and encourage them to work with independence. Pupils respond well to the freedom they are given within carefully defined limits. The subject makes a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, developing their capacity to reflect on the works of art they see and to enjoy the skills the artists portray. The subject is well led by a very recently appointed co-ordinator who is already monitoring pupils' attainment in the subject. The very good policy provides very practical guidance on putting the policy into practice and teachers are already acting on the advice, to the benefit of standards of teaching and learning. The school is well placed to improve standards even more.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

- 79 Because the subject was not being taught at the time of the inspection and only limited examples of pupils' work were available, it has not been possible to make a judgement on standards by the time pupils leave the school. However, the examples of work by eleven-year-old pupils that were seen were satisfactory. Pupils were able to create a design specification for an "Anderson shelter" as part of their work on a history topic. They were able to list the materials they intended to use and describe the steps for the process of making. Some pupils tended to produce narrative accounts rather than design intentions. All made a written evaluation of what they had done and most could make some sensible comments on what went well and what less well. The models still on display showed satisfactory levels of making.
- 80 Pupils by the age of seven make simple hand puppets from felt following their own design, which they have drawn and labelled. They choose different materials to represent parts of the face and clothes and demonstrate skills in stitching and sticking. They are able to produce finished work of good quality, which they can take pride in. Younger pupils have designed and made a fruit salad, using card and drawing and colouring the fruit. They are developing their understanding of designing and making well for their age.
- 81 No teaching was seen, but planning and the quality of work available indicate that teaching is at least sound.
- 82 Leadership and management of the subject have been ineffective over the last few years and the subject has not developed as strongly as it should have done. There is currently no policy for the subject, and resources are unsatisfactory in range, number and quality. However, the new co-ordinator has made an impressive start. She has audited the resources, monitored teaching and pupils' work and developed a clearly formulated action plan. She is enthusiastic and has a strong commitment to developing and improving provision. The staff is keen to follow this lead.

GEOGRAPHY

- 83 By age eleven pupils are reaching standards above national expectations in geography and are making very good progress. This is due to a well-structured curriculum, good planning and very effective teaching. Pupils are interested and keen to learn. They are ready to offer ideas in discussion and work productively on the tasks they are set. They co-operate very well in group activities.
- 84 Younger pupils develop their understanding of their own locality and how it can be represented though drawing their route home, finding their street on a map of Armthorpe

and recording how many pupils come to school by car and how many by foot. They develop their understanding of more distant places through the 'journeys of Barnaby Bear'. They have learnt about Blackpool, Clumber Park and Cyprus, and have used maps and a globe to find out where these places are. Through making simple treasure maps, they have extended their understanding of symbols and of how to indicate location through precise sets of directions. No teaching was observed in infant classes, but planning and quality of displays demonstrated that it was good. Furthermore, discussion with a group of pupils of different attainment levels in the present third year about their work last year clearly demonstrated that they had developed good understanding of what they had studied. They talked informatively about their trip to the transport museum at York, were aware of different kinds of transport before trains, and could present sensible ideas about the impact of the railways upon people's lives. They could identify the countries in Great Britain and name a number of countries around the world. They could make comparisons between life in a village and in a town or city.

- 85 The quality of teaching observed with older pupils in the school was very high. Lessons are very effective in carrying pupils' learning forward because the focus is clear and whole class, group and independent activities are motivating and challenging. The management of behaviour is excellent, all pupils are involved and no time is wasted. In one lesson observed, the pupils developed their map reading skills very well, learning to identify and compare physical and human features of villages, and extended their understanding and skill in interpreting symbols. The resources provided and the organisation of the lesson helped all pupils to succeed. Pupils with special needs contributed well to discussion and were very well supported in their group and individual tasks. In another lesson, pupils produced very detailed work, showing interest and enthusiasm. The teacher made very clear her high expectations of what pupils should achieve, and they responded positively and worked with effort and concentration. They could clearly compare the kinds of services found in Whitby and Doncaster, and were able to list observations relating to buildings, landscape, economic activity and leisure. They know what secondary sources are and have used maps, the Internet, reference books and the display board on Whitby to find relevant information.
- 86 Leadership and management are very good, and significant improvements to provision have been accomplished since the co-ordinator took on the role four years ago. An effective policy and scheme of work has been developed, and the inadequate resources noted at the last inspection rectified. There is good monitoring of pupils' work and of teaching. There is a detailed and clearly focused action plan. In all, the subject is well placed to maintain high standards and improve provision.

HISTORY

- 87 By the time pupils leave the school, their standards of attainment are above those expected for eleven-year-olds. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and above-average pupils, achieve very well. Younger pupils know about similarities and differences between the games they play today and those that were used in the past. They know that the discovery of electricity has strongly affected the kind of games that are available now. Older pupils show a good level of knowledge and understanding of King Henry VIII and why he had so many wives. By the time they reach Year 6, pupils have an above-average grasp of the advantages and disadvantages of different kinds of evidence and can evaluate the reliability of the evidence they have about the arrival of immigrants in 1948. They have a good level of knowledge and understanding of issues surrounding racial prejudice in the years following 1948 and understand what Enoch Powell meant in his 'rivers of blood' speech.

88 Teaching and learning are very good and never less than good. Teachers know their subject well and plan stimulating approaches that catch pupils' interest very well. They have very high expectations and promote independence very effectively through the individual and group research tasks and the homework they set. In Year 6, for example, lessons about the arrival of the *Empire Windrush* with its boatload of Afro-Caribbean immigrants produce such very good levels of learning because excellent book resources support the work and high quality classroom displays and the tasks set are so interesting. The teacher takes great pains to relate the subject to pupils' own experience and ensures through carefully targeted questioning that pupils of all levels of ability are involved. Consequently, pupils make very good gains in understanding their own culture and also issues relating to racism and multi-culturalism. Because teachers have such excellent skills in class management and because they keep the lessons moving at a very brisk pace, pupils have very positive attitudes to the subject and behave very well. The strong links between history and English, art, design and technology and geography enhance understanding in all of those subjects. Pupils use information and communication technology well in, for example, producing high quality booklets about life on the home front during the war. The subject makes a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

MUSIC

- 89 Standards in music are well above those expected of eleven-year-olds. This is an improvement since the last inspection and reflects the importance the school attaches to a musical education. The school values music as a form of communication studied in its own right and so allocates a generous amount of curricular time to the subject and provides for all juniors to learn to play the recorder. On one day each week, all classes have lessons in singing accompanied by a visiting pianist as well as instrumental playing. Younger pupils and those pupils in Years 5 and 6 who do not play in the orchestra have the opportunity to play pitched and untuned percussion. This very good provision is complemented by excellent leadership and management of the subject and very good teaching throughout the school. Very good provision is made for gifted and talented pupils and for pupils with special educational needs.
- 90 The standard of pupils' performance is well above average. Younger pupils sing energetically and tackle unfamiliar songs most capably. They quickly learn the enjoyment and pleasure of singing from their teachers whose well-planned lessons encourage pupils to sing and perform actions unselfconsciously. The quality of older pupils' singing is exceptionally tuneful and of very high quality in terms of precision, accuracy and sheer musicality. Their diction is very good, as they pay careful attention to note lengths and word endings so as to bring out rhyming words or to suggest the hiss of a cat when practising extracts for their Christmas musical production. The quality of teaching is often excellent and teachers are very good at recognising where small improvements can be made which raise the standard even higher.
- 91 Junior pupils enjoy learning the recorder and provision is made for talented pupils to learn the tenor recorder. All pupils therefore learn to read music and this assists them to compose their own. Lessons proceed at a good pace and a very good rate of learning is achieved. Teachers have high expectations and more experienced recorder players are given pieces to play which tax their breath control and accuracy. Opportunities are given for individual volunteers to play on their own and this further develops the pupils' confidence as pupils generously applaud accurate playing. In the orchestral lesson, talented pupils are encouraged to transpose at sight to add colour to the performance.
- 92 From an early age, pupils are taught correct musical terms so that by the time they leave school they use and understand quite a wide musical vocabulary. Much of the pupils' enthusiasm for music and their willingness to practise comes from their teachers' evident enjoyment. Non-instrumentalists in Year 5 and 6 had enormous pleasure playing a seven beat syncopated rhythm. Highly skilled teaching enabled pupils to distinguish and then play in groups two different rhythms simultaneously, using clapping and untuned percussion while a third group improvised a rhythmic melody. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported and highly delighted to play and follow a simple score. In these ways, teachers develop pupils' rhythmic sensibility. The excellent choice of music with a jazz rhythm extends pupils' skills in appraising whilst being exciting to listen to and to play.
- 93 Music plays a vital role in the school in bringing together staff and pupils with a shared spirit of community and their daily lives. This is palpable in their singing and in the absolute silence with which they listen to music in assemblies. The subject makes an excellent contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

- 94 Standards in physical education are above those expected of eleven-year-olds. This is an improvement since the last inspection and is due to the very good quality of teaching pupils receive. The curriculum is very well organised and a generous amount of time is allocated to the subject so that the different elements of dance, gymnastics and games can be taught in depth. Additional physical activities such as athletics, outdoor adventure and swimming are offered to older pupils and help to ensure that they learn an increasingly wide range of skills. By the end of Year 5, almost all pupils can swim at least 25 metres.
- 95 The subject is very well led, and an informative policy, based on practical activities, indicates the means by which pupils make progress. An audit of resources, combined with photographic examples of the highest attained standards in each area of learning, gives very clear guidance to teachers as well as setting a high standard as to what to expect from pupils when assessing skills. These aims and objectives are very well thought out, indicating how to integrate pupils with special educational needs and to extend pupils' multi-cultural awareness through physical education.
- 96 The quality of teaching and learning is very good overall. The lessons seen throughout the school were at least good and some excellent teaching was observed. Younger pupils understand the importance of warming up their muscles before undertaking strenuous physical exercise. Lesson planning is detailed and carefully timed to include a range of activities designed to extend pupils' expertise. Younger pupils are quite inventive as they use different parts of the body to travel across the floor. The teaching is lively and teachers take part fully, providing very good role models. Lively use of language such as 'jump as if landing on a marshmallow' helps pupils instantly to bounce, relaxing their knees, while they giggle with enjoyment. In an excellent lesson, the planning was linked very well to literacy, religious education and music. Pupils recognised the 'snowstorm' as celebratory, noticing that the snowflakes 'float round and round in special water.' The enactment of snowflakes in dance movements was linked exceptionally well to new vocabulary. Careful pre-recording of short extracts of music gave seamless timing to the lesson. As a result of this extremely good teaching, as the lesson progressed, pupils moved with increasing control until by the end, linking actions very precisely, they seemed to float and whirl as snowflakes, rising and falling with the music. Pupils with physical disabilities are very well integrated and are often given a central role, which extends their physical capacity. By the age of eleven, pupils become confident and competent gymnasts. They perform interesting sequences to demonstrate different skills. Teachers build up more demanding activities as the lessons progress, providing constant levels of challenge both in developing creative ideas and in extending skills in movement. Although some lower attaining pupils have a tendency to rush, the linking of different movements is very clear. Average and higher attaining pupils create individual and thoughtful sequences; all pupils have a real sense of style.