

INSPECTION REPORT

TOPCLIFFE C OF E (VC) PRIMARY SCHOOL

Thirsk

LEA area: North Yorkshire

Unique reference number: 121522

Headteacher: Mr S Ashby

Reporting inspector: Dr B Blundell
23868

Dates of inspection: 31st October – 2nd November 2000

Inspection number: 224919

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

© Crown copyright 2000

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Station Road Topcliffe Thirsk North Yorkshire
Postcode:	YO7 3RY
Telephone number:	(01845) 577412
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs J Hook
Date of previous inspection:	18 th November 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Dr B Blundell 23868	Registered inspector	Mathematics Information and communications technology Design and technology Equal opportunities	What sort of a school is it? How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
Ms M Jacobs 13808	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How good does the school work in partnership with parents?
Mr N Bertram 10316	Team inspector	English History Religious education Under fives	How good are the curricular and other opportunities?
Mrs M Marriott 10144	Team inspector	Science Art Geography Music Physical education Special educational needs English as an additional language	

The inspection contractor was:

PPI Group Ltd
7 Hill Street
Bristol
BS1 5RW

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Registrar
Inspection Quality Division
The Office for Standards in Education
Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	4 - 7
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	8 - 9
The school's results and achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	10 - 11
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	11 - 12
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	12 - 13
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	13
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	13 - 14
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	14
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	15 - 18
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	19 - 29

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Topcliffe Church of England Infant and Junior School is a Voluntary Controlled School situated in Thirsk, North Yorkshire. The number of pupils on roll is 79. There are currently no pupils for whom English is an additional language. The proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs is below the national average. However, the percentage of pupils with statements of special needs is above average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average. Pupils' attainment on entry is broadly average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The overall effectiveness of the school is good. Standards in mathematics and science for pupils aged eleven are above average; standards in English are in line with national averages. The overall quality of teaching is good. Leadership and management by the recently appointed headteacher are very good. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards in mathematics, science and music at the end of both key stages and art, at the end of Key Stage 1, are above average; in English, standards are in line with national averages at the end of both key stages.
- Leadership and management by the headteacher are very good.
- The overall quality of teaching is good, with a high proportion being very good.
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good, overall.
- Links with parents are good and improving.

What could be improved

- Standards in information and communication technology and design and technology are below national expectations; in religious education, standards do not meet the requirements of the local agreed syllabus.
- Assessment procedures are unsatisfactory, as is their use; marking of pupils' work is inconsistent through the school.
- Teachers and other adults need to receive suitable training for child protection.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in November 1996. Standards are now above average by the end of Key Stage 2 in mathematics and science and average in English. The overall quality of teaching has improved substantially. A key issue raised in the last inspection, to ensure that all pupils have access to a broad and fully balanced curriculum, has been met; information and communication technology provision has greatly improved, but this has yet to make its full impact on standards. The school has started to adopt an appropriate and effective approach to teaching and learning through the school, but there is not yet sufficient overview of pupils' learning. The role of the curriculum coordinators has improved appropriately. The behaviour of pupils has improved and the majority of those at the top of Key Stage 2 are well motivated and able to work independently; procedures have now been put in place to deal with a minority of pupils who do not always behave appropriately. Procedures for the supervision of pupils have been addressed satisfactorily. Whilst the headteacher has been appropriately trained in child protection matters, this has yet to be carried out for other staff at the school. The school has improved satisfactorily since the last inspection; the systems now being set in place should result in further substantial improvement.

STANDARDS

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

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

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

Owing to the relatively small number of pupils in each age group, results can fluctuate considerably. Nonetheless, pupils' performance in the year 2000 end of Key Stage 2 national tests was very high in English and mathematics and well above average in science. Results in English and mathematics were in the top 5 per cent of pupils nationally.

Test results for pupils aged eleven in the years 1996 to 1999 averaged together, have been rising at a rate that is broadly in line with national trends. Over this same period however, Key Stage 1 results have generally been better than Key Stage 2. Pupils' attainment in the end of Key Stage 1 tests in 2000 was well above average in mathematics and above average, overall, in reading and writing. The school's targets are suitably ambitious, particularly for 2002 and are on course to be met.

In the work seen during the inspection, standards were above average by the end of both key stages in mathematics, science and music and above expectations in art at Key Stage 1. They are in line with expected standards in English, history, geography, art and physical education by the end of both key stages. Standards in information and communication technology and design and technology are currently below national expectations at the end of both key stages. Pupils' attainment in religious education is below that required by the local agreed syllabus at the end of both key stages. Standards for children under five are at the expected level.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils' attitudes to school are good. Pupils are generally enthusiastic and interested.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils' behaviour in and out of classrooms is good, overall. The behaviour of a small minority of pupils in Key Stage 2 is unsatisfactory; new procedures have been put in place to deal with this.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils' personal development is satisfactory; relationships are good.
Attendance	Pupils' attendance is well above average. The level of unauthorised absence is well below average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The overall quality of teaching is good. Examples of good teaching were seen in each class. The proportion of excellent teaching was 10 per cent; very good teaching was 31 per cent; good teaching was 41 per cent and satisfactory teaching was 14 per cent. One unsatisfactory lesson was observed. The teaching in all the other lessons seen in each class in the school was at least satisfactory. The greatest concentrations of very good and better teaching were observed in Key Stage 1 and at the top of Key Stage 2.

The quality of teaching in English and mathematics is good; the skills of literacy and numeracy are well taught. Particular strengths in teaching include the manner in which teachers share the learning objectives with pupils. The school meets the needs of all pupils appropriately.

Pupils' learning is good throughout the school and often very good; strengths include pupils' independence and concentration. Pupils' awareness of their own learning is only satisfactory.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The quality and range of the curriculum is satisfactory. The curriculum is enhanced with the inclusion of French at Key Stage 2.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision for pupils' with special educational needs is satisfactory. However, pupils' individual education plans are not always sufficiently tightly focused.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Not applicable.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for pupils' personal development is good, overall. Provision for pupils' spiritual and social development is good; pupils' moral and cultural development is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares for its pupils satisfactorily, overall. The school's procedures for assessing pupils and then using the results of these assessments to help plan future work are unsatisfactory. Staff have yet to receive the necessary child protection training.

The school works well in partnership with parents and this is an area that is continuing to improve; for example, parents receive regular newsletters that they value. All areas of the curriculum meet statutory requirements.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The leadership and management by the headteacher are very good; since his appointment, he has worked ceaselessly and tirelessly for the benefit of the school.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors' fulfilment of their responsibilities meets statutory requirements. Governors' understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school is good.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school's evaluation of its performance is good.
The strategic use of resources	The strategic use of resources is good.

The staffing of the school is satisfactory, overall. Whilst the school benefits from its own extensive playing fields, the school hall is too small for physical education and there is no dedicated outdoor play area for the under-fives. Learning resources, overall, are adequate. A particular strength in leadership and management is the capability and enthusiasm of the headteacher. The school applies the principles of best value appropriately.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school. • Children make good progress. • The school has high expectations. • Leadership and management are good. • Teaching is good. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some parents would like there to be a greater range of extra-curricular activities. • Some parents would like greater information about their children's progress. • Some parents would like the school to work more closely with them.

The inspection team agrees with parents' positive views. Inspectors judge that the range of extra-curricular activities is satisfactory. They find that the information for parents is now satisfactory and that the school is making appropriate efforts to work with parents.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. As Topcliffe school is relatively small, the number of children in each year group is relatively low. This means that their average performance cannot always be measured reliably against national averages. Overall results can swing either above or below national averages, if even a single pupil does especially well or particularly badly. This needs to be borne in mind when reading about the school's overall results.
2. Shortly after children enter the foundation stage in Reception, they are assessed to see what they know, understand and can do; social and physical skills are also noted. The small intake in 1999 was judged to be broadly average and those entering in 1998 just below average, overall. All in all, the intake to this school is broadly average.
3. By the age of five, near to the end of their time in Reception, children are again assessed against national standards known as the Early Learning Goals. The two children currently in Reception at least meet this standard. Their skills in literacy and numeracy are well developed and they have made good progress.
4. At the age of seven, close to the end of their time in Year 2, pupils take the end of Key Stage 1 national tests in reading, writing and mathematics. The pupils who sat these tests in 2000 and who are now in the current Year 3, obtained levels that were well above average in mathematics and above national averages in reading and writing. Their attainment when compared to schools of a similar type was well above average in mathematics, broadly average in reading and below average in writing. Those who took the tests in 1999 and are now in Year 4 attained standards that were well above national averages in reading, writing and mathematics. Taking the results over the last four years from 1996 to 1999, averaged together, pupils' performance has been approximately two terms ahead of pupils nationally in reading, writing and mathematics. Over this same four-year period, nationally, girls have performed just over one term ahead of boys in writing; at Topcliffe the girls are also ahead of boys by the same amount. In mathematics, boys and girls perform at similar levels, nationally; at Topcliffe, girls are nearly one term ahead of boys. In reading, girls outperform boys by about one and a half terms.
5. Inspectors find that pupils currently in Year 2, who will take their national tests in May 2001 are reaching average standards in reading and writing and above average standards in mathematics and science. Standards in information and communication technology are below national expectations and, in religious education, their attainment is below the requirements of the local agreed syllabus. Pupils are making very good progress in music and art and satisfactory progress in geography, history and physical education. Their progress in design and technology is unsatisfactory, overall.
6. By the age of eleven, near to the end of Year 6, pupils take the end of Key Stage 2 national tests in English, science and mathematics. Pupils' performance in the 2000 tests in terms of national curriculum points scores was very high in English and mathematics compared with schools nationally and well above average in science. (*Note: very high means that these results were in the top five per cent of schools, nationally*). It was well above average in English and mathematics and above average in science when compared with that of pupils in schools of a similar type. Taking the four years from 1996 to 1999 together, pupils have left Key Stage 2 about the same as pupils nationally in English and mathematics and half a term behind in science. This does not necessarily mean that pupils' performance has gone backwards whilst they are in Key Stage 2. To see if this is the case, we would need to look at how the same group of pupils performed in each key stage. Unfortunately, the individual pupil records for 1995 and 1996 are not available at the school.

7. Inspectors find that pupils currently in Year 6 are at above average standards in mathematics and science and average standards in English. This group achieved above national average points scores in their tests in 1997 at the end of Key Stage 1. Changes in the composition of the class, with some higher attaining pupils in English leaving, account for the difference in standards between English and the other core subjects. Differences between pupils' attainment in the 2000 tests and the attainment of the current Year 6 are due to differences in the cohort. The quality and quantity of work in their books show that they have made overall good progress over the last twelve months. As with pupils lower down the school, their level in information and communications technology, whilst improving, is below national expectations in the areas of monitoring and modelling. Attainment in religious education is below the requirements of a syllabus that has been agreed locally and their progress is unsatisfactory. In music, pupils' progress is good at Key Stage 2. In physical education, art, history and geography, progress is satisfactory. Progress in design and technology is unsatisfactory.
8. Pupils with special educational needs are making satisfactory progress throughout the school. They would benefit from individual education plans that have more sharply focused targets that are both specific and measurable.
9. Since the last inspection, standards have been broadly maintained overall, with improvements in mathematics and science. Literacy and numeracy skills are being appropriately developed. Pupils are generally now achieving appropriately, considering their prior attainments, except in design and technology and in the monitoring and modelling aspects of information and communications technology. Higher attaining pupils are now provided with more challenge than they were previously and are paired appropriately with older pupils where possible. The presentation of pupils' work has improved, with ongoing emphasis being given to improving handwriting skills. A recent useful innovation to further improve levels of attainment is the introduction of "Learn by Heart" books in English and mathematics. The school's targets are appropriately ambitious and on course to be met.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, have good attitudes to their work, respond well to teachers and are highly motivated. This is especially so in class one, where pupils work enthusiastically and with great diligence in art to produce collages and clay models to show different textures. Occasionally, when pupils are less stimulated, they do not concentrate so well and are easily distracted and can become disruptive, as was observed at the last inspection. In the celebration assembly, pupils listen well to a performance by the recorder group and applaud the achievements of those who receive merit awards.
11. Pupils, including the children under-five, usually behave well, both in class and around school. In a week when rain prevented outdoor play, they mostly remained calm and played well together. The dining room and classroom used for packed lunches were generally sociable and well ordered. Pupils' behaviour is mostly good in lessons, but, occasionally, when the lesson fails to keep their attention or if they deliberately set about to be disruptive, behaviour is poor. Bullying is not a problem and there are no exclusions. However, when a minority of pupils do misbehave, they disrupt the whole class and affect the learning of their peers.
12. Pupils' personal development is satisfactory. Many have classroom jobs and carry these out efficiently as needed. The residential trip for older pupils contributes well to their growing awareness of the needs of others. As yet, there is no school council so that pupils can be consulted about their views, but the headteacher plans to set one up. Relationships between pupils and adults and amongst pupils themselves are good. During the one brief morning break when pupils could be outside, they played well together, sharing ropes, quoits and balls. In class one art, pupils help each other and say thank you for the help.
13. Attendance is very good and well above the national average. Unauthorised absence is below the national average. Pupils come willingly and happily to school and arrive promptly. Parents keep school informed about reasons for absence.

14. The governors' annual report to parents has not previously reported both authorised and unauthorised absence.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

15. The overall quality of teaching is good throughout the school. In all, except one lesson observed, teaching was at least satisfactory. Overall, it was satisfactory in 13 per cent of lessons, good in 41 per cent, very good in 31 per cent and excellent in 10 per cent. Excellent lessons were seen in Key stage 1 and the top class in Key stage 2.
16. Whilst overall standards of teaching were at least satisfactory in all except one lesson, examples of good lessons were seen in each class in the school. The greatest concentration of very good or excellent teaching was for the youngest children in the mixed Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 class and in the Year 5/6 class.
17. The biggest strengths in teaching include the helpful manner in which teachers often share the learning objectives for lessons with their pupils, the way in which they manage their pupils and the high expectations, particularly for children in Reception, Key Stage 1 and the top class in Key stage 2.
18. In the one lesson that was unsatisfactory, there was an undercurrent of noise and disturbance that was not effectively dealt with. In another satisfactory lesson there was a weakness in the teacher's knowledge and understanding of science. Teachers generally work hard, some tremendously hard and know their pupils well. Pupils are aware of what is expected from them in terms of behaviour and nearly always respond appropriately. In an excellent Key Stage 1 numeracy lesson in which the teacher exuded her enthusiasm, pupils responded very well, chanting useful rhymes about odd and even numbers; these pupils made excellent progress. Children in Reception who are often taught in the same class as Year 1 / 2 pupils, are very well supported by the classroom assistant. She works well with the class teacher in ensuring that these children receive their full entitlement in the foundation stage. Classroom support assistants through the school make a most valuable contribution to pupils' learning.
19. The pace of lessons is generally good through the school. Pupils are sometimes reminded of the time limits on an exercise, for example, in a Year 5/6 design and technology lesson. When pupils are given relatively short time spans to complete a piece of work and reminded of this, it ensures that they focus on the work they have to complete.
20. Throughout the school, literacy and numeracy are well taught. Lessons usually start with productive question and answer sessions to "warm pupils' brains up" and get them thinking. Warm up sessions are also used appropriately in physical education lessons, for example in a Year 1 / 2 physical education lesson taken by the Year 3 / 4 teacher.
21. Teachers' knowledge and understanding are generally good in all subject areas, although there was a weakness in knowledge in one science lesson. The teacher of Year 5 / 6 has great expertise in information and communication technology and this is starting to make impact on pupils' learning in this subject throughout the school. Sensibly, the school has arranged that he teaches each class for one session per week. The teaching of information and communication technology and religious education has not received sufficiently high priority until recently. The teaching seen during the inspection, however, was at least satisfactory.
22. Throughout the school, day-to-day marking of pupils' work and other assessment procedures lack consistency and are unsatisfactory. Whilst pupils' work is often well marked, with appropriate comments to praise pupils' efforts, this is not done to the same degree in each class. Additionally, there are rarely comments to stretch pupils who have obtained full marks for a particular exercise. Whilst lessons, generally, have clear learning objectives, these are not always looked at again at the end of lessons, to see how far they have been met. Teachers do not often take the opportunity to give pupils a quick pencil and paper test to see what they have actually learned by the end of a lesson. However, many lessons end with a worthwhile oral question and answer session, for example in literacy and numeracy.
23. The use of homework is satisfactory through the school.

24. Pupils with special educational needs are taught satisfactorily; lessons are planned to meet individual learning needs. Pupils' individual educational plans, however, lack sufficiently tight focus and are not specific enough.
25. Standards of teaching have improved considerably since the last inspection. At that time, one in ten lessons was judged to be unsatisfactory and the proportion of very good or better teaching was very small indeed.

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

26. The school gives a satisfactorily broad and balanced range overall of worthwhile opportunities for pupils in the school that covers the National Curriculum and religious education and is in line with that found at the last inspection. However, until recently, the school has not been paying sufficient attention to information and communication technology or religious education. The provision for pupils in the Foundation stage is largely satisfactory, although the outdoor play area does not have large play equipment to allow greater variety of physical development. For some years the school has, in addition, provided the teaching of French; this year a student from France also gives additional help to the pupils. This is an enrichment not normally found in primary schools. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory and appropriate targets are being set for the higher attainers in Key Stage 2. The school uses the resources of the Local Education Authority to help pupils with specific difficulties. Throughout the school, teachers effectively support the development of literacy and numeracy, not only through the specific lessons for these purposes, but also in the foundation subjects.
27. Extra-curricular provision is satisfactory. Guitar and other instrumental lessons, football and netball clubs are regular features of school life. In such a small school, where pupils are brought in from a wide area, there are transport difficulties. This limits the time that the small staff can give, although they already volunteer to run activities during lunchtimes, especially in music. The school appropriately teaches drug awareness. Parents contribute appropriately to the training for and playing of soccer on a regular basis.
28. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. Assemblies are uplifting and go beyond being occasions for gathering together. Occasions are given for the pupils to think of others, such as when the pupils brought boxes of items for children in Romania. Stories in assemblies are well told and pupils enter to appropriate music being played. The close attention to the headteacher and the singing of simple songs all make this an important part of the school day. In some lessons such as in science, when pupils expressed wonder at the size of an ice cube when studying changes of state, teachers promote a sense of surprise and awe at new experiences. In geography, the values of people in Africa are studied in relation to their own environment.
29. Provision for pupils' moral development is satisfactory. Standards are well set by the school, with rules of behaviour found in most classrooms. As a result, all pupils know what is right and wrong and virtually all act accordingly. Adults throughout the school, both in and out of lessons, set good examples. House points and certificates reinforce what the school regards as good and bad behaviour. Those few that find it hard to conform to what the rest feel is fair are dealt with firmly, though with understanding. Parents are involved in any processes of improvement.
30. Provision for pupils' social development is good. All have opportunities to visit sites outside the school, which give opportunities for different kinds of relationships and behaviour. They also give a width to experience beyond the gates of the school. Groups who learn musical instruments and perform for the assemblies are given opportunity to appreciate a sense of responsibility. Activities within lessons stimulate working together, sharing and helping. Relationships are good; pupils are friendly and considerate. Pupils know when to applaud their schoolmates who have done well. Other opportunities are not as good, such as in decision making, although many pupils help willingly in classroom routines, such as giving out books and collecting materials.

31. Cultural development is satisfactory. The many visits to museums from Pickering to Newcastle allow all pupils to see items of social and cultural importance. Tuition in musical instruments is enriching, both to the participants and to those who listen to performance. Visiting drama and other groups give the chance to see professions. Where there is a weakness it is in the awareness of the multicultural nature of the whole country. While there is some opportunity to learn about other faiths in religious education and in studies of other countries in geography, the awareness that Britain has many different cultures among its citizens is not well developed. This is especially important in an area like this where these cultures are not numerically well represented.
32. All pupils have satisfactory access to the curriculum, as well as the opportunity to participate in all aspects of the school. The provision for personal, social and health education is satisfactory both through specific lessons and through National Curriculum lessons, for example, sex education and drug awareness in science. The school meets the requirements of the Code of Practice for those pupils on the special educational needs register.
33. The contribution of the community is satisfactory, especially with the growing involvement with the local parish church. Plans to connect with local industry are in the hands of the headteacher, to take place during this academic year. The school makes regular and supportive contact with the local secondary school, with visits from staff and by pupils going to Thirsk. There are also satisfactory links with other primary schools to share experiences and expertise. Links with the pre-school play group, which meets on the school site, are now developing, with only a minority of the children currently coming into the primary school at the end of their time there.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

34. The school provides satisfactory care for all its pupils, including those with special educational needs, but has not yet addressed all the issues from the previous inspection.
35. There is now a nominated person for child protection who is trained and fully aware of procedures to follow. However, this training has yet to spread to other members of staff. There is a health and safety policy and governors are aware that this needs to be reviewed. No formal health and safety checks or risk assessments have been carried out. A number of health and safety issues were notified to the head teacher and chair of governors for immediate action. A good new measure is that pupils must be collected from the playground at the end of the day unless written permission has been given for them to make their own way home.
36. Staff show good understanding of the background and needs of individual pupils and the headteacher is already working closely with some parents, particularly where behaviour is a problem. First aid procedures are sound and parents are informed if their child bumps their head. Children who are under 5 have settled well in class one. However, the head teacher plans to review the way in which children and their parents are introduced to full time school. Transfer procedures for Year 6 pupils to high school are well established to ensure that they move on to the next stage of their education with confidence.
37. Pupils are encouraged to behave well through the merit system and celebration assembly. Pupils receive merit stars regularly for all aspects of school life, including their behaviour, attitudes and the way they treat others. One of the pupils awarded a certificate at the assembly received his for being polite. A Year 6 boy was also recognised for the way he played a board game with younger ones on a wet lunch break. Effective individual behaviour plans are being developed for those few pupils whose behaviour sometimes interferes with the learning of the rest of the class. Parents are involved as are the learning support team when necessary. These measures are addressing the key issue from the last inspection relating to behaviour of some pupils.
38. The school has good systems for monitoring attendance. Most parents inform school of reasons for absence promptly. If they do not, then teachers contact them. An education welfare officer is available, should any pupil present a problem with attendance.

39. Procedures for assessing pupils' academic progress and using that assessment to inform curriculum planning are unsatisfactory. Assessment has been identified as a priority in the school development plan and necessary changes are already starting to be made. Teachers and governors are starting to analyse results of statutory and optional tests to set targets for each pupil and to monitor their progress against those targets. The headteacher recognises the need to involve parents and pupils in setting targets and the achieving of those targets.
40. The monitoring of pupils' personal development is satisfactory. Some monitoring is informal and depends on the good knowledge staff has of each child. The merit system and celebration assemblies are also used to keep a record of the achievements and efforts of every pupil.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

41. Parents' views of the school are good and improving.
42. Since the beginning of term, parents have been receiving weekly newsletters, which keep them well informed of what is happening in school. Those who have e-mail addresses are receiving letters by e-mail and are finding that this a more reliable system than post via their children. The current newsletter is also appropriately posted on a notice board in the front entrance, which is a warm, welcoming place for parents and visitors when they arrive. Appropriate information about children in the foundation stage and for pupils with special educational needs is provided.
43. Annual reports to parents are too variable and do not consistently tell parents what their children know, understand and can do. The best examples clearly describe what pupils have learnt and set some targets within the text for the core subjects. However, most reports are very generalised and neither specific to the subject nor to the pupils. Levels of attainment are not given, nor targets for improvement set.
44. New ideas to involve parents are already being tried. The recent governors' annual meeting for parents was followed by a workshop to demonstrate the new information and communication technology equipment. Although only sixteen parents attended, and some of these were staff or parent governors, the attendance was better than previously. A further workshop is planned, as soon as the school has Internet access.
45. Parents and governors are becoming more involved in day-to-day activities in school and they feel welcome. They help in lessons, using their expertise for example in art. Parents who hear pupils read have been satisfactorily trained to help them change their books. The Friends of Topcliffe School is a small group of committed parents who raise significant amounts of money for the school. They have recently purchased games for wet play times, which certainly proved their worth during the inspection - small outdoor equipment such as skipping ropes and quoits and a larger television. They are now working towards providing the school with permanent outdoor play equipment.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

46. The leadership and management by the newly appointed headteacher are very good on both the academic and pastoral sides; he is very hard working and knows just where he wants the school to go. He also has a large teaching commitment. His leadership ensures clear educational direction for the school and he is fully backed by the governing body. The school's aims and values are easily seen in the daily routines of the school, although the headteacher intends that the school's aims are shortly to be re-drafted, following discussions with staff and parents. There is currently no deputy headteacher. The school plans its spending according to identified needs, manages its finances efficiently and gets good value for money. The subject coordinators manage their subjects appropriately; this is an improvement since the last inspection. Management of the foundation stage is good.

47. The governing body's fulfilment of its statutory responsibilities is good. They want the best for the school and are determined that it should succeed. Governors visit the school and have monitored the delivery of some of the curriculum appropriately, particularly numeracy; monitoring has not yet spread sufficiently to other subject areas. Earlier this year, they met to put in place appropriate measures for the appointment of the new headteacher and for the re-deployment of staff following the loss of the deputy headteacher. The latter has been unable to be replaced owing to a decline in pupil numbers. Governors have been notified of a number of health and safety issues that require their attention. The governing body has a good understanding of the main strengths and weaknesses of the school. Between them, the governors bring appropriate experience to the running of this village school.
48. Whilst the headteacher has formally observed teaching, particularly in the junior classes, the monitoring has yet to spread to the monitoring of teaching by curriculum coordinators. Although there are constraints in a small school, the lack of this, particularly in the core subjects of English and science, does not help in ensuring a coherent delivery of subjects across the school. Nonetheless, coordinators do monitor the planning of their subjects across the school; this is an improvement since the time of the last inspection.
49. The school's targets are appropriate and sufficiently ambitious. Because numbers of pupils are small in most year groups, the achievement of these targets can be dependent on the performance of a single pupil. Inspection evidence is that the targets for 2001 in English, mathematics and science are on course to be met. The headteacher has raised the school's targets for 2002 and has put in place plans to teach pupils who are currently in Year 5 level six mathematics. (*Pupils are expected nationally to reach Level 4.*)
50. Procedures for the induction of new staff are good. The recently appointed part-time Year 5/6 teacher has been appropriately mentored by the headteacher. The school is not currently carrying out staff appraisal, but appropriate plans are in place to carry out performance management.
51. The management of special educational needs is satisfactory. However, pupils' individual education plans do not contain sufficiently sharply focused targets. Governors are not always informed appropriately about policies and practice. Support staff are appropriately experienced and deployed across the school.
52. The match of teachers and support staff to the demands of the curriculum is currently satisfactory. Staff have not received the necessary training in child protection. The accommodation is satisfactory, overall; the fall in pupil numbers has released useful space for withdrawing small groups of pupils for extra help and for lunchtime guitar, recorder and trumpet lessons. The school hall is very small for indoor physical education and there is a lack of a dedicated play area for children under five. Classrooms have attractive displays. The school benefits from a large playing field, although its use in wet weather is restricted. Resources are generally satisfactory in quality and quantity, although there is some shortage of basic measuring equipment in mathematics. Factors outside the school's control are currently preventing the school from accessing the internet.
53. The effectiveness of the school's use of new technology is satisfactory. The school's secretary, who is both efficient and competent, is experienced in the use of information and communication technology.
54. Since the last inspection, the requirement to develop the role of the curriculum coordinators has been carried out successfully. Monitoring of pupils' work has improved appropriately. The school has started to adopt a consistent approach to teaching and learning; for example, all teachers now plan their lessons with appropriate learning objectives.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

55. In order to improve the school further, the headteacher and governing body should:

- i. Improve pupils' attainment in information and communication technology, design and technology and religious education, by ensuring that the full range of the programmes of study are addressed (Paragraphs 94, 109, 123).
- ii. Develop consistent marking and assessment procedures throughout the school and ensure that the assessment procedures are used to help plan future work (Paragraphs 39, 46).
- iii. Ensure that staff receive the necessary training for child protection (Paragraph 35).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	29
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	12

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
10	31	41	13	5	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)	79
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	5

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	19

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	6
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	17

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.6
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2000	11	3

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	10	11
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	14	13	14
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100(85)	93(85)	100(95)
	National	85(82)	85(83)	89(87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	11	11
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	14	14	14
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100(85)	100(95)	100(100)
	National	84(82)	88(86)	89(87)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2000	5	6

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	11	11	11
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	100(65)	100(70)	100(90)
	National	73(70)	71(69)	83(81)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	10	11	11
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	91(65)	100(65)	100(80)
	National	70(68)	71(69)	78(75)

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

*Where numbers of pupils too small to be statistically significant

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	79
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	3.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.9
Average class size	26.0

Education support staff: YR– Y6

Total number of education support staff	3.0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	40

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999-2000
	£
Total income	194860
Total expenditure	200023
Expenditure per pupil	2176
Balance brought forward from previous year	20804
Balance carried forward to next year	15641

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	80
Number of questionnaires returned	41

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	61	34	5	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	54	34	10	2	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	27	56	15	2	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	29	57	12	2	0
The teaching is good.	37	56	5	2	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	20	49	24	5	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	52	39	5	2	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	39	52	0	2	7
The school works closely with parents.	17	54	15	12	2
The school is well led and managed.	27	59	5	0	7
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	24	69	5	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	22	46	22	0	10

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

56. At the time of the inspection there were two children of the age groups under five. Children under five enter the reception class normally at the beginning of the year in which they become five. Some transfer from the adjacent pre-school playgroup. They enter as a group and begin as full-time members of the school. The school works well with parents to arrive at suitable arrangements for each child. There is no separate reception class, the children being part of a mixed-age class of reception, with years one and two. However, this is not a large class, being well under thirty in number. This ensures that there is a seamless transition into the National Curriculum when the time arrives. The very experienced classroom assistant is in constant contact with the children both as a small group and within the class as a whole. Parents and other helpers ensure that small group work forms a high proportion of learning time.
57. All children enter reception level at a standard of attainment that is broadly average, as determined by baseline testing. Speaking skills are normally well developed and children soon learn to listen to the teacher and classroom assistant attentively. They quickly develop their levels of confidence and are keen to join in all activities in the larger group. With the other pupils in the class they quickly learn to share and take turns in work and play. Their number skills develop rapidly and they make good progress in the areas of learning expected of them, achieving the goals for early learning before working on the National Curriculum.

Personal, social and emotional development

58. Both children settled into the class happily and their social and personal development are good. They are confident in their approach to their work in both the small groups and in the class and have good relationships with adults. They abide by the rules of the class and school and quickly fit into the routines expected of them, knowing right from wrong and that the school rewards good work and behaviour equally. They treat school materials with respect and help one another when this is needed, as they did when building their own design of motor car, helping with gluing and cutting. They love to learn, which results in quick consolidation and progress. The teaching supports their personal and social development through ensuring that there are firm routines for them to follow and that the children know what is expected of them.

Communication, language and literacy

59. By the time they enter the National Curriculum, their attainment is in line with the standards expected nationally. They speak to adults and to others in the school confidently and listen to the teacher and to pupils in the class with close attention and understanding. In assembly they listen to the music on entry and to other pupils, when, for example, they play recorder tunes. They play with water and sand and say what they are doing and are able to express themselves clearly. From an early stage, they begin to recognise and form letters, on one occasion using chalk and slate following a visit to a Victorian museum. Together they discuss how they are going to decorate the 'Corner Café', which develops their confidence in trying new activities.

Mathematical development

60. The children are confident in their approach to number; they count to ten and beyond. From their play with number cards they show that they can place the numbers in the correct order and, when asked to select the next card in the sequence from a random pile, they do so unerringly. Good progress is made also when the children join the Year 1 and Year 2 pupils; they join in with enthusiasm in deciding which number is larger than another and so make contact with numbers beyond twenty. From the concept of measuring in sand whether a container has more or less than another, they quickly transfer to understanding the 'equals' 'more/less than' signs that are being taught to the Year 1 and Year 2 pupils.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

61. In the combined groups the children experience the large artefacts from the museum and realise that things have not always been as they are now, for example the differences in washing clothes. They talked about how different it was to use chalk and slate rather than pencil and paper. This sense of place is paralleled by the exploration of Topcliffe where a concept of space, direction and distance is developed. When they constructed their car they were aware of the different kinds of materials they needed to do so. By using a programmable robot they understand through use of information and communication technology what 'backwards' and 'forwards' means. Planning by the teacher enables the classroom assistant to take experiences further to promote thinking skills and encourages them to explore and develop.

Creative development

62. Through the many experiences to use paint, dough, paper, paste and many other materials children reach the expected levels in creative development. They grow in dexterity in using safety scissors, paste paddles, brushes and their own fingers and hands by making many articles that they themselves design. Both have control over what they wish to do, as when they stuck the windows on to their car, in the position that made best sense to both of them. They join in as best they can to the music presented to them and listen appreciatively.

Physical development

63. The school lacks a secure play area with large equipment, which would allow individual development of movement and confidence to a greater extent. The children join in with the main class activities and are catered for within the group, but they do not have a space in which they can express themselves by swinging, sliding or climbing. This is not available at all in the school and is a weakness in provision at the foundation stage. The children do learn to run and walk in and out of spaces, without bumping into one another and learn to stop and start on command.
64. Overall, teaching in all areas in the foundation years is good, with the able support of the classroom assistant. The close and knowledgeable co-operation between teacher and assistant is a strong element in ensuring that the children have as full a range of opportunities as possible within a mixed-age group. Opportunities are taken to make this situation an advantage as in social development where the carefully constructed approach gives the children an advantage over being in a separate group.
65. Progress at the time of the last inspection was found to be satisfactory and this continues to be the case. The small group and its combination might in other circumstances be a hindrance to progress, but the skill, determination and planning of the school does not allow this to happen. Where possible, for example in joining in outside visits, it is made into a benefit to the youngest members of the school community.

ENGLISH

66. In the 2000 National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment in terms of average National Curriculum point scores was very high in English. The proportion of pupils attaining the national expectation of level 4 was very high and the number attaining the higher Level 5 was well above average. Compared with attainment in similar schools, the results were well above average. In the Key Stage 1 assessments in 2000, attainment in terms of National Curriculum average point scores in English was above average in both reading and writing. The proportion of those achieving the nationally expected Level 2 was very high in reading and writing. The percentage of those attaining the higher Level 3 was below average in reading and in writing. Over the course of the years since the last inspection, results at Key Stage 1 have consistently been above national averages in both reading and writing, although at Key Stage 2, the nationally expected levels have not always been attained.

67. The previous inspection report stated that, at Key Stage 1, reading and writing were consistent with the levels expected nationally at both key stages; this level of skill was borne out during this inspection. The results in 2000 came from a group of pupils who had consistently performed above nationally expected targets throughout their time in the school. Overall, the rate of learning for pupils in English is good with more strengths in reading, speaking and listening than there are in writing. The implementation of the National Literacy Strategy has been well used to give structure to learning in all aspects of English. The underlying purpose of improving literacy skills throughout the school can be seen in other lessons. For example, when writing for different audiences and in following instructions in design and technology when making bread, pupils in Year 6 wrote clearly and with words that could be understood by younger pupils.
68. In the work seen during the inspection, standards at the end of Key Stage 1 are average in speaking, listening, reading and writing. By the end of the key stage, pupils listen carefully to the class teacher and to their classmates and follow instructions carefully. There is no calling out, unless through excitement at the topic, for example when pupils wanted to tell what they remembered from their visit to a local Victorian museum. Some could remember how the cooking pot was hung over the fire and that this was the reason that it was so black. The great number of irons excited most of the class, and one boy knew which one needed to have hot coals put inside it. When given frequent opportunities to speak, some pupils demonstrate self-assurance and for very few is there a reluctance to answer when asked a direct question. In reading, the majority know how to make sense of word they find difficult to identify straight away by sounding out the letters. Most can read books at their own level independently, through the phonic method taught by the school. The higher attainers give reasons for liking or not liking characters, for example, in the story of Patrick and the Fox. All give an explanation of the story and whether they like it or not. Most pupils read to family members at home and move sequentially through the school reading scheme. Most pupils write legibly, many with joined script. They write simple sentences and the majority understand basic punctuation such as starting a sentence with a capital letter and closing with a full stop. By the end of Key Stage 1, all pupils including those with special educational needs have made satisfactory progress.
69. Overall, the standards at the end of Key Stage 2, from the work seen during the inspection, are in line with national averages. They are average in reading and in listening and speaking, with some weaknesses in writing. Although most pupils readily answer questions and expand by giving their own experiences, there is little evidence of longer sessions where opinions are expressed or opportunities for expanded discussions or debates. When asked about differences and similarities in a religious education lesson, many pupils showed that they noticed that fishes and loaves were mentioned in both stories and were keen to show the teacher how much detail they remembered. In this way literacy makes a contribution to other lessons across the curriculum. Year 6 pupils used their recent experience in writing instructions for making bread to give logical instructions of how to make a snakes and ladders game. The majority readily understood that the words had to be simple and direct because the instructions were intended for an eight-year-old child. By the time pupils reach Year six they are allowed to choose longer reading books at their own level. They are guided by the assessments made by the teacher who listens to them read. Most enjoy reading and are members of local libraries and make satisfactory progress. Writing is less strong than the other elements of English. Most can write a story or a poem, and are competent in many of the aspects of writing. Their use of language is simple and correct, but few attempt more imaginative phrases, although one pupil did instruct – ‘sieve the reluctant lumps of flour’. There is not sufficient opportunity for longer pieces of writing that might, for example, accompany the preparation of presenting a ‘for and against’ case in an issue for debate. Most pupils readily use computers for drafting pieces of work and can cut and paste to rearrange text before printing it. The setting of challenging targets for the pupils of higher potential is beginning but is not sufficiently developed to raise standards. Provision for and progress by pupils with special educational needs are satisfactory. Differences between pupils’ attainment seen in the inspection and previous test results are due to differences in cohorts.
70. The overall quality of teaching is good. Teaching is never less than satisfactory and, in Key Stage 1 and the latter stages of Key Stage 2, it is often good or very good. Teachers plan their lessons and are well prepared. The pace of some lessons in Key Stage 2 is slow with too low expectations

of what the pupils are capable of. Where teaching is better, enthusiasm and brisk pace challenges the thinking of most pupils. In some lessons in Key Stage 2, teaching lacks precision so that pupils are sometimes not sure about what is expected and their attention wanders. Where there is a clear expectation and specific targets are set, learning proceeds purposefully. Although there are assessment procedures, they have been in place for too short a time for them to have significant effect. When the teachers told pupils what their strengths and weaknesses were it ensured that standards rose further, with teacher and pupil working closely together and was effective with all pupils, including those with SEN.

71. The co-ordinator, who is knowledgeable, effective and a skilled practitioner, is instrumental in forming the scheme of work and developing the assessment procedures to track pupils progress to enable all staff to use them to raise standards of individual pupils. Monitoring of teaching is not sufficiently regular, nor is it shared to ensure the spread of good practice; monitoring of planning is satisfactory. The adequate book stock is at its weakest in the group reading texts and this weakness inhibits pupils' further progress in reading fluently.
72. Since the last inspection there has been some advancement in standards. Whilst the 2000 results show great improvements, they cannot yet be said to show a firm trend upwards. There are procedures and plans in place for raising standards further, but they have not yet had time to be effective. All staff are committed to raising standards still further and have the necessary skills and knowledge to underpin this commitment.

MATHEMATICS

73. On the basis of 2000 national test results based on average national curriculum points scores, attainment was well above the national average at the end of Key Stage 1. The percentage of pupils obtaining level 2, the expected level, was very high; the proportion obtaining the higher level 3 at the end of Key Stage 1 was well above the national average. Pupils' performance in the Key Stage 1 mathematics test was well above average in comparison with schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. The average attainment of pupils in the four years 1996 to 1999 was above the national average in the Key Stage 1 tests. On average, pupils leave Key Stage 1 just over one term ahead of pupils nationally. The performance of girls was lower than that of boys in the end of Key Stage 1 tests; on average, they were nearly one term behind.
74. In the 2000 national tests at the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment in terms of points scores was very high compared to the national average, being in the top five per cent of schools nationally. The proportions of pupils obtaining level 4, the expected level nationally, and the higher level five was also very high. The attainment of this group of pupils was well above average when compared with schools of a similar type.
75. For the current small groups of pupils, attainment in lessons observed, scrutiny of pupils' work and discussions with pupils is above average at the end of Key Stage 1 and also above average by the time they leave the school at the end of Key Stage 2. The reason for the difference at Key Stage 2 between previous test results and inspection findings is that when pupil numbers are small, results can be skewed by the performance of just one or two pupils. Within the range of mathematics work seen during the inspection, many pupils in Key Stage 1 demonstrate good levels of attainment related to investigative mathematics and number. Pupils in Key Stage 2 generally have good knowledge of their multiplication tables as a result of them being regularly practised in class. This helps their attainment in other areas of mathematics. Pupils at the top of the key stage develop their own strategies when solving problems in their heads, can interpret charts appropriately and are familiar with different ways of presenting data. They are able to carry out mental subtractions of three digit numbers using a series of "jumps". For example, when working out $363 - 181$, they realise that 19 is needed to get from 181 to 200, followed by a further 100 to get to 300, followed finally by another 63 to get to 363. Pupils realise that the final solution is to add the results of the three "jumps" together $19 + 100 + 63 = 182$. There was no discernible difference in the performance of girls and boys in the lessons seen. Standards in mathematics are currently higher than they were at the time of the last inspection for pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 and at the end of Key stage 2. Higher attaining pupils are appropriately paired with older pupils

on occasion to enhance their learning. To raise standards of attainment in both key stages there is a need to continue to build up a coherent mathematical vocabulary using the "Learn by heart" notebooks recently introduced by the school and ensure that all pupils have instant recall of their multiplication tables.

76. Overall, progress of pupils in mathematics is good in Key Stage 1 and in Key Stage 2. Pupils' progress is, however, less good in lower Key stage 2 than in other parts of the school. Factors aiding progress include the attitudes and behaviour of the pupils and the overall good standard of teaching. The teaching observed was excellent in two of the five lessons seen, very good in two lessons and good in the other one. The features that make the best lessons excellent and contribute to a high rate of learning are very enthusiastic teaching, very good planning, with plenty of work for pupils and the highest possible expectations. Such lessons clearly explain what the learning objectives are and re-visit these at the end to see how far they have been achieved. Teachers in most numeracy lessons start off with quick-fire question and answer sessions to get pupils thinking. In numeracy lessons, the likeliest time for pupils to lessen their rate of working is in the "independent learning" sessions. In the best lessons, however, teachers are aware of this and set appropriate time targets, as in, for example, a good Year 5 / 6 lesson on mental mathematics. Factors militating against progress are a lack of even higher expectations in lower Key Stage 2, some lack of pupils' instant recall of multiplication tables and an over-reliance, occasionally, on commercial worksheets. Pupils with special educational needs generally make satisfactory progress in mathematics.
77. Pupils' response in lessons seen is good in Key Stage 1 and in Key Stage 2. They generally behave well and concentrate, mirroring the enthusiasm of their teachers. Pupils' attitudes to mathematics are generally positive and they show some enjoyment for the subject. However, a small minority of pupils in Key Stage 2 occasionally attempt to cause inappropriate disruption to the teachers and other pupils. The school has recently developed strategies to overcome this. Relationships all round between pupils and with their teachers, learning support assistants and other adults are generally good.
78. Assessment procedures are generally unsatisfactory, overall, particularly in the long term. In the lessons seen during the inspection, little evidence was seen of quick tests at the end of lessons to see what pupils had learned. Day-to-day marking of pupils' work is generally inconsistent. In some cases it is detailed, with diagnostic comments to help the pupils to improve. Rarely are there comments posing deeper questions for those who have obtained full marks. The standard of presentation of the pupils' work is good and has improved since the last inspection.
79. The school has generally satisfactory resources for mathematics, although there is a shortage of some basic measuring equipment. Use of these resources to support the work in hand is satisfactory and supports learning. The co-ordinator for mathematics is very committed and has carried out some monitoring of teachers' planning. The effectiveness of the strategy to teach numeracy is good, overall.

SCIENCE

80. In the year 2000 end of Key Stage 2 National Curriculum tests, attainment in terms of average national curriculum points scores was well above the national average. The proportion of pupils attaining the national expectation of level four was very high and the number attaining level five was above average. Pupils' performance compared to that in similar schools was above average. Inspection findings indicate that pupils at the end of the key stage are working above that expected nationally. Since the last inspection, a scheme of work has been developed and overall planning for the development of pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding has been developed. Appropriate emphasis is placed on investigative skills. Teachers assess pupils' progress with planned investigations to assess specific skills, although assessment is not always consistent. Information gained from the assessment is used to plan the next stage of learning.
81. In the Year 2000 teacher assessments of pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 1, results were very high. The proportion of pupils attaining the higher level 3 was above the national average.

82. The work seen in the inspection shows that by the end of Key Stage 1 pupils' attainment is above that seen nationally. Pupils understand that ice melts into water and that the rate of melting is affected by the temperature. For example, in an investigation, pupils placed ice cubes in different parts of the classroom and left them for a while. After they had discussed possibilities of what might be happening to the ice cubes pupils investigated for themselves and came to a sensible conclusion that ice cubes should not be placed next to heat or else they will melt.
83. By the end of Key Stage 2, work shows that standards are above the national average. Pupils' strengths lie in investigative work, which promotes their knowledge, skills and understanding. They investigate gases and understand that they are formed when liquids evaporate and that the rate of evaporation can be affected by other factors. For example, when conducting an investigation to identify and describe instances when evaporation occurs, pupils identified wet clothes drying. They understood that the factors affecting the rate of drying changed with where the clothes were placed to dry. In Years 3 and 4, pupils learn how to use a thermometer. They test water at different temperatures and record their findings appropriately. Pupils understand that the liquid in the bulb of the thermometer measures the temperature and test this by holding it in their hand. Pupils record their findings, but are given insufficient opportunities to analyse data and present them in a mathematical form or to use information technology to present information.
84. Pupils' attitudes to the subject are good. They enjoy their work, especially practical activities, and are confident learners. They share their thinking with others and with the teacher during class and plenary sessions. Across year groups, pupils handle materials and equipment carefully. Some pupils work well in pairs and in groups during investigations.
85. Teaching and learning are good, overall. Teachers make use of questioning to probe pupils existing knowledge and understanding and to develop their thinking. The best lessons had a brisk and appropriate pace, thoroughly assessed what pupils knew and set high expectations. In these lessons teaching was lively and enthusiastic and the questions posed were searching. This had a positive impact on pupils learning. In other lessons, teachers were less confident in subject knowledge and the lesson pace was slow. Pupils were given long periods of time to complete their work and often became restless. This disrupted the learning of other pupils in the class. Marking of pupils' work is inconsistent. Helpfully, some marking is done alongside pupils so that comments can be made directly. Assessment and its use are inconsistently applied. In the best lessons seen, assessment is used continuously through questioning of what pupils know and understand.
86. Improvements since the last inspection in pupils' attainment are good. The co-ordinator is dedicated, enthusiastic and works very hard to ensure that standards continue to improve. Resources are of a good quality and quantity and easily accessible.

ART

87. Evidence on which judgements are based was obtained from an analysis of pupils' work and displays throughout the school, discussions with pupils, interviews with teachers and the subject co-ordinator and lesson observations in Key Stage 1. Taking these into account the standards of work are above that of most pupils nationally in Key Stage 1 and are in line with standards seen nationally at Key Stage 2. Standards have improved in Key Stage 1 and have been maintained in Key Stage 2 since the last inspection.
88. Pupils in Key Stage 2 make satisfactory progress and in Key Stage 1 make very good progress. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress, overall.
89. In Key Stage 1, pupils explore texture appropriately through investigating the feel of bark. Teaching reinforced the use of mathematical language and developed skills in the use of descriptive language well. Pupils used touch and dexterity to make an effective relief collage, using texture and moulded clay with a range of appropriate tools to create different textures.

90. In Key Stage 2, pupils painted an appropriate self- portrait using paint as the medium. They painted their names, using ready mixed paint. These were well displayed in the classroom and added to the quality of the learning environment.
91. Pupils enjoy their work and treat equipment and tools with care. They settle to work quickly and usually try hard. Pupils' work is valued and displayed around the school; this adds to their self-esteem.
92. In the teaching seen in Key Stage 1, the tasks are challenging and extend pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding in the development of creating texture, using a natural material. The use of language developed pupils' thinking skills and enhanced the richness of the curriculum. Teaching developed numeracy and literacy skills well, through use of structured vocabulary. Assessment procedures are under-developed.
93. Art is soundly co-ordinated within the school. The subject has not been a focus for development owing to the implementation of the Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. The school plans to develop observation of teaching and learning. Resources are adequate and of a good quality. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

94. Owing to timetable constraints it was possible to see only one lesson in design and technology for pupils in Year 5 / 6. Whilst this was a very good lesson, an analysis of work recently carried out at the school shows that pupils' attainment and progress are unsatisfactory, overall, at the end of both key stages. Pupils are not yet systematically building up the key skills of designing and making as they go through the school. Examples of previous work carried out were unavailable.
95. Pupils respond well and show enthusiasm for the subject. They enjoy their work and the Year 5 and 6 pupils involved in making bread were keen to discuss it.
96. The co-ordinator, who is also the headteacher, is extremely keen and enthusiastic and has attended relevant in-service training. His enthusiasm and drive have yet to make sufficient impact on the subject through the school. Resources are satisfactory and are stored appropriately. Since the last inspection, standards have not been maintained, with much attention being diverted to the core subjects of literacy and numeracy. Assessment procedures are unsatisfactory.

GEOGRAPHY

97. Only two lessons were seen during the inspection and a limited amount of evidence was available. Work scrutiny and talking to pupils, teachers and the subject co-ordinator, together with the lessons observed, form the basis of judgements.
98. By the end both key stages, pupils achieve standards expected for their age and all pupils including those with special educational needs make satisfactory progress.
99. In Key Stage 1, pupils develop their sense of place by mapping their journey to school. They use imaginative text well when taking "Rosie" the hen on a walk and illustrate this by drawing a map. Pupils develop skills by designing and making buildings to place on the map of their journey.
100. In Key Stage 2, pupils are developing their knowledge and understanding of another country. With first hand knowledge of life in Zambia, the teacher developed pupils' learning well. Pupils studied life in Zambia and used a range of books and maps to identify the position of Zambia in relation to Britain. Information technology was effectively used to project images onto a screen to make them accessible to all pupils.
101. No teaching was seen in Key Stage 1 and only two lessons in Key Stage 2. In Key Stage 1, there was a very good display of a journey to school, which included a detailed map, a class graph of

the different methods of coming to school and an account of taking "Rosie" for a walk. This had a positive effect on pupils learning, which was evident in the display. In Key Stage 2, lessons were well planned, with attention given to what pupils will learn. However, in the two lessons seen, teaching was not at a sufficiently brisk pace and there was a need for greater rigour in managing some inappropriate behaviour. Assessment procedures are inadequate.

102. Pupils respond well to lessons. Where teaching is well organised and behaviour managed appropriately, learning takes place. When this does not happen pupils are disruptive and this holds back learning in those lessons where it happens.
103. Geography is soundly led and managed. Assessment and recording procedures are only just beginning to be used to follow progress by pupils, with comparisons being made to the National Curriculum attainment targets. Monitoring of teaching is mainly by scrutinising planning, with direct observation of teaching insufficiently used to spread good practice. Resources are adequate and in good condition. The school has maintained the satisfactory level of attainment seen at the last inspection.

HISTORY

104. The standards of pupils' attainment in history meet national expectations at the end of both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. At Key Stage 1, pupils are interested in their work in history and respond enthusiastically to the activities. They work with concentration at the various tasks set. As a result, their progress is satisfactory. It was not possible to observe any lessons in history at Key Stage 2 during the inspection, but an examination of the earlier work completed by the older pupils indicates that their progress, including pupils with special educational needs, is satisfactory.
105. At Key Stage 1, pupils work on finding out what homes were like a long time ago, building on their work in geography about the ancient village in which many of them live. The visit to a local museum livens up the study and gives pupils the chance to see and handle actual objects of the Victorian times. This is valuable in showing that history is made up of real things and does not just come from books. A humanities field day using the North Yorkshire railway combines with geography as a stimulus to use primary evidence. At Key Stage 2, early work centres on invasions and especially the entry of the Romans into Britain. This work is somewhat less detailed and does not use the primary evidence of Key Stage 1 to ensure a sense of reality of people living in this country so long ago. The older pupils study, among other things, the changes in Britain since 1948, which takes the form of looking at books and talking to adults who can recall vivid memories of these times, and reaches a satisfactory standard. The study of history at this key stage is somewhat narrow and the rest of the scheme of work lacks depth to ensure that standards rise above national expectations.
106. Teaching observed at Key Stage 1 is good and the use of artefacts ensures that pupils remember their direct experiences. By the introduction of some more modern items, such as a steam iron, pupils are given the opportunity to make their own direct observations of how domestic ironing has changed. By giving real pots and pans into pupils' hands, they are able to make their conclusions about how cooking methods have changed over the years. Good use of question and answer techniques ensures that virtually all pupils, including those with special educational needs, are included in the lesson. The teaching is imaginative in order to bring about this situation. History overlaps into English lessons and this combination enhances literacy by developing descriptive writing and by exploring the difference between fact and opinion. By looking at the passing of time and counting the years, for example, from BC to AD, there is use and reinforcement of numeracy.
107. Pupils are enthusiastic about learning history, as seen in the learning in Key Stage 1. The work at Key Stage 2 shows that pupils care about the way they present their work. There are plans in place for monitoring more closely pupils' work and the teaching of the subject, but these are not sufficiently developed for a judgement to be made. The assessment and recording of achievement in history is starting to track the progress of pupils, by recording the levels of attainment against National Curriculum criteria. However, it is not yet sufficiently developed. The book stock is

adequate and artefacts borrowed from museums and from local people are frequently used. Information and communication technology is at an early stage of exploitation, with most pupils at the moment developing basic user skills. The lack of Internet connection inhibits personal research.

108. The school has reviewed the scheme of work and this has the National Curriculum 2000 at its core. This reflects the most recent changes of what is required of pupils of primary school age. This is an improvement since the last inspection. There is scope for greater depth in the study of the topics chosen, which, allied with the development of monitoring work and teaching, gives the basis for raising standards further. The school has maintained the satisfactory levels of the last inspection. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

109. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 and at the end of Key Stage 2 is below national expectations. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils use information and communication technology to assemble text and symbols appropriately. Whilst they are able to generate text and pictures and save and retrieve information with some assistance, they are not given the opportunity to carry out modelling. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment in monitoring and modelling is also unsatisfactory. They are not being given the opportunity to develop these key skills. Overall, standards have not improved sufficiently since the last inspection.
110. Overall progress, whilst improving, is unsatisfactory in Key Stage 1 and in Key Stage 2 for all pupils, including those with special educational needs. Owing to timetable constraints it was possible to see only one lesson in this subject, which was taught well. Assessment is not used effectively to monitor pupils' progress in this subject. Information and communications technology is now given its rightful place on the timetable as a subject that is taught to all pupils each week.
111. Pupils' response is good. They show eagerness for, and interest in, this subject. When the teacher is instructing knowledgeably, the pupils want to know how to carry out particular operations and they listen attentively. They are not afraid to volunteer their own suggestions and work well together.
112. The co-ordinator for this subject is extremely knowledgeable and keen to spread his skills through the school. Appropriately, he teaches each of the classes in the school once per week in the new information and communication technology suite. Whilst he has already provided in-service training for colleagues, he has not yet had time to monitor and evaluate the work of colleagues in this core subject. There are appropriate computers in every classroom which are networked. The school is not yet linked to the internet. Whilst there is an appropriate range of cross-curricular software, insufficient material is available for the pupils to work on the key areas of monitoring and modelling. Improvements have been made since the last inspection in planning of this subject and in teachers receiving necessary training.

MUSIC

113. Standards in music are above national expectations at the end of both key stages. This is an improvement on the last inspection when standards were in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages.
114. Progress in music is very good in Key Stage 1 and good overall in Key Stage 2 for all pupils, including those with special educational needs. Pupils enjoy their music and join in all musical activities with enthusiasm. There is consistent progression of pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding and strong development in the subject throughout the school, due to the subject expertise available. All pupils are given a breadth of experience in performance and appraisal and are developing knowledge and understanding of composition. Pupils have the opportunity to play the good quality and quantity of tuned and untuned percussion instruments. Pupils know how to sing a suitable selection of hymns in assemblies. They have good attitudes to music. They listen carefully and have suitable appraisal skills. Pupils in Key Stage 1 join in singing along in two parts with taped music and to guitar accompaniment in their lessons. They know enough words to make good progress in pitch and diction. In Key Stage 2, pupils develop a good sense of rhythm and pitch and can sing a harvest song in two parts, and sometimes sing this in French. They treat musical instruments with respect and collect them and put them away without fuss. In all lessons, behaviour is very good and pupils demonstrate very good self-control, while waiting for their turn when others in their class play. Older pupils participate in guitar and recorder clubs taken at lunch times and some enjoy learning to play the trumpet and saxophone. The visiting teacher is employed by a charity which helps with the cost of instruments. Here pupils play confidently and well and show enthusiasm and enjoyment in making music together.

115. The quality of teaching is very good. Teachers have high expectations of their pupils and the quality of learning is of a high level. For example in a Year 2 class, pupils could sing a round in two parts, keeping correct time and pitch. They understood and could identify a drone, when listening to a piece of taped music. In a lesson in Year 6 pupils were practising a song for their Harvest Festival. The use of chants to increase accuracy of pitch, focus on enunciation and diction is very good. Teaching emphasised the importance of breathing. Teachers' high level of expectations for pupils' response and effort allied to the good use of praise for good participation, resulted in very good progress in learning. However, in this key stage there were occasions when adverse behaviour affected the quality of learning for others in the class. Learning is enhanced by visiting teachers and musicians; for example, the school has had a request from a visiting woodwind group, who are going to play in school. They hope to attract pupils to the range of instruments played and to offer tuition. Assessment procedures are unsatisfactory.
116. The subject is very well co-ordinated by the headteacher. He has moved the subject forward in the short time that he has been at the school. He has further plans for subject development and is currently adapting a national music scheme to meet the needs of the school.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

117. Although it was not possible to see a wide range of lessons in physical education during the time of inspection, scrutiny of planning, discussion with the subject leader and pupils indicate that the school teaches an appropriate curriculum. Dance, gymnastics and swimming are appropriately taught in Key Stage 1, with dance, games, gymnastics and swimming taught in Key Stage 2. Pupils also have opportunities to take part in netball, short tennis, football and circuit training. The National Curriculum requirement that all pupils swim safely for at least 25 metres by the end of Key Stage 2 is fully met. The school hall is very small for physical education lessons.
118. Inspection evidence shows that pupils achieve standards which are expected for pupils of this age at the end of both key stages. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. In Key Stage 1, pupils develop skills in using their bodies to create controlled sequences, for example in years 1 and 2, when performing high activities jumping across a rubber bridge and low activities going through a tunnel. In Years 3 and 4 pupils developed a range of actions and balances when using different shapes, for example when holding still as a ball shape. Pupils learn to control movement and balance appropriately. Pupils by the age of seven know and understand the need to warm up their bodies before starting physical activities. They know they have warmed up sufficiently if their heart is beating fast. The youngest pupils are aware of others when running around in gymnastics and they use space effectively.
119. By the age of eleven, pupils build on previous skills in gymnastics and are confident swimmers.
120. Pupils are committed to improving their skills when they are challenged and inspired by teaching. They show enjoyment in using their bodies in controlled sequences of movement, and respond well to the physical demands of the subject.
121. Teaching and learning are good, overall. Particular strengths are teachers' enthusiasm and lively approach. Their dedication to improving the health of all pupils through physical education ensures that learning for all pupils is good. Assessment procedures are unsatisfactory.
122. The subject is managed and co-ordinated by a dedicated co-ordinator, who works hard to ensure that standards have been maintained since the last inspection. Storage of resources is inappropriate with space allocated inadequate for the size and amount of equipment.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

123. It was possible to observe only one lesson in religious education during the inspection, in Key Stage 2. Observation of three assemblies and the inspection of the work books presented by the school, make it possible to judge that at the end of both key stages the standards attained by the

pupils are below those expected in the Local Agreed Syllabus of the North Yorkshire Local Education Authority, which is followed by the school. New displays in the entrance hall show prayers written by pupils and a celebration of the Bible. There is little work in the pupils' books, however.

124. The lesson seen at the latter part of Key Stage 2 on the books of the Bible introduced pupils to the Old and New Testaments. Pupils were shown how to find passages by the use of chapters and verse, for the first time by most. As a result, they know how and why the Bible is divided like this. They are also able to find out the differences between two versions of the feeding of the five thousand. Most of the pupils, including those with special educational needs, are not confident of the layout of the Bible. The pupils showed great interest in the lesson and their replies about the miracle showed their grasp of literacy was greater than their knowledge of religion. Work in the books, which included pieces dating back into previous school years, was very brief and did not cover the required topics fully. Faiths other than Christianity are summed up in a way that gives virtually no insight as to the basis of belief. The progress in knowledge and understanding of religious education for all pupils including those with special educational needs is unsatisfactory.
125. The teaching observed was satisfactory, giving opportunity for those who know about the Bible the chance to share their knowledge, and allowed pupils to see that there are differences in the writing about the life and times of Christ. There is, however, little to be gained from a brief chronology of his life if it is not followed by accounts of his teaching and his significance as a figure of world importance, nor of drawing a picture of him out of context. There is insufficient attention paid to assessment with little reference to the expected levels in the local scheme derived from the Agreed Syllabus. Assessment procedures are unsatisfactory.
126. New Bibles are being used and a re-focus of teaching of religious education in a school that has connections with the Church of England is taking place.
127. Religious education has not been seen as an equal part of the curriculum alongside the National Curriculum and this is unsatisfactory. A review of the policy was mentioned in the last inspection report and this has now started appropriately as a matter of urgency.