

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **WALKINGTON PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Walkington, Beverley

LEA area: East Riding of Yorkshire

Unique reference number: 117866

Headteacher: Mrs J Crossley-Klinck

Reporting inspector: Ms Margot D'Arcy  
23158

Dates of inspection: 6<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> November 2000

Inspection number: 224921

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Crake Wells Walkington Beverley East Yorkshire
Postcode:	HU17 8SB
Telephone number:	(01482) 861115
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs A M K Webster
Date of previous inspection:	May 1998

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Margot D'Arcy (23158)	Registered inspector	Science Information and communication technology Art and design Design and technology Music Areas of learning within the Foundation Stage	The school's results and pupils' achievements Teaching and learning How well the school is led and managed
Mickie Jacobs (13808)	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development The school's partnership with parents How well the school cares for pupils
William Lowe (21245)	Team inspector	Equal opportunities Mathematics Geography History Physical education	
Bernice Magson (18143)	Team inspector	Special educational needs English Religious education	The curriculum and other learning opportunities
Valerie Ellis (17879)	Team inspector	Support for: Art and design Design and technology Music	
Ann Burgess (27363)	Team inspector	Support for: Areas of learning within the Foundation Stage	

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

This is an average-sized primary school catering for 138 boys and 134 girls aged between four and eleven. All pupils attend the school on a full-time basis. Reception children (Foundation Stage) begin school in the September of the academic year in which they turn five. There are 41 children in the Foundation Stage, 11 of whom share a class with six Year 1 pupils. Two classes (one reception and one Year 2) contain children of the same age group; all other classes have mixed age groups spanning two consecutive years. Almost all pupils are of white ethnic origin and none have English as an additional language; this is low compared to the national average. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is well below the national average, as is the proportion with special educational needs. Most children have had pre-school experience before beginning in the reception class. Children's overall level of attainment on starting school is above average. Since the school was last inspected, a new junior block has been built and the school is now based on one site.

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

This is a very effective school where the needs of all pupils are well met. Throughout the school, there is very good teaching and, as a result, pupils make very good gains in learning and achieve very high standards by ages seven and 11. Underpinning all of this is the excellent quality of leadership and management provided by the headteacher, co-ordinators and governors. The school provides parents and taxpayers with very good value for money.

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

- Excellent leadership and management underpin all the school's many strengths and steer it firmly on its course of continual improvement.
- Pupils achieve high standards in many subjects. By ages seven and 11, their standards in English, mathematics and science are well above average and their test results often put them amongst the most effective schools in the country.
- Throughout the school, and within a range of subjects, the quality of teaching is of a consistently high standard. This has a very good impact on pupils' learning and is reflected in the high standards achieved.
- Pupils have very good attitudes to school. They clearly enjoy lessons and after-school activities and are keen to participate in both. They get on very well with their teachers and each other.
- There is a very good curriculum, which promotes pupils' all-round education.
- The school takes very good care of pupils. It values, promotes and celebrates pupils' talents and achievements, both academic and personal.
- The school welcomes and promotes parental involvement and recognises the positive role parents play in supporting their children's learning.

**Walkington is a very successful school that has many strengths and no significant weaknesses. In the context of its many strengths, some minor points for improvement have been suggested and these should be considered by the governors as the basis for an action plan. If an action plan is produced it will be sent to all parents or carers of pupils at the school.**

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

The school has made very good improvement since it was last inspected in May 1998. All the key issues for improvement that were identified have been tackled very effectively. The quality of teaching has improved dramatically and, as a result, all pupils now achieve well. High standards in English, mathematics and science have been maintained, with overall improvements in test and assessment results that are in line with the national upward trend. At the same time, standards have improved in other subjects. In particular, there has been good improvement to standards in information and communication technology (ICT), music, design and technology, and geography, where previously many pupils' standards were below average. The school has worked hard to ensure stimulating learning experiences are provided in each subject that allow pupils to build upon what they already know.

Similarly, there are now very good opportunities for all pupils to develop personally and socially, both within lessons and other contexts. The efforts and success of the school in addressing the key issues from the previous inspection, as well as improving in other areas at the same time, show that it has very good capacity to continue to improve.

## 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	A	A	A*	A
Mathematics	A*	A*	A	A
Science	A	A	A	B

Key	
very high	A*
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

Over the three years from 1998, standards have been consistently high. The school has not remained complacent though, and standards have improved overall during this period. The group of pupils that took the tests in 2000 contained an unusually high (for this school) proportion of pupils with special educational needs. However, the school's success in supporting these pupils is evident in the high standards they were able to achieve in all three subjects, with only a slight fall in science results from the previous year. Indeed, standards in English were very high, being in the top five per cent nationally.

Over time, standards are frequently above and well above average when compared with similar schools. Although pupils begin school with above average standards, by age 11, standards are frequently very high and demonstrate pupils' very good achievement. Inspection evidence confirms pupils' well above average standards in English, mathematics and science. To maintain such high standards, the school sets challenging targets for pupils to attain and is in a good position to achieve these. Seven-year-olds' standards are also well above average in reading, writing and science and very high (again in the top five per cent nationally) in mathematics. The performance of these pupils is also well above average compared to pupils in similar schools. During the inspection, it was evident that throughout the school, standards in other subjects are good, or have improved significantly since the last inspection. In both the infants and juniors, standards in art and design, design and technology and religious education are strengths. Junior pupils also achieve high standards in swimming. Standards in ICT have improved since the last inspection and are now in line with those that are expected for seven and 11-year-olds. Children in the Foundation Stage do well in all aspects of their work. By the end of the reception year, most achieve the early learning goals expected of children this age and many achieve beyond this level.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils enjoy school, are keen to learn and willing to participate fully in lessons. They take pride in presenting their work neatly.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. The school is an orderly place where pupils understand and respect the behaviour code.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. The quality of relationships is a significant strength. Pupils readily take on responsibility and develop a mature awareness of the



	needs and views of others.
Attendance	Very good. Pupils are punctual and their attendance is much better than the national average.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching is of a consistently high standard throughout the school and, consequently, the needs of all pupils are very well met. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection. Now, all teaching is at least satisfactory and much is good; 32 per cent is very good or better. The teaching of English, mathematics and science is a significant strength, which is reflected in pupils' very good achievement and high standards in these subjects. Lessons in literacy and numeracy are taught very well and these skills are also effectively promoted within a range of lessons in other subjects. There is very good teaching in art and design, drama, design and technology, music, religious education and physical education. The improvement in teaching has resulted in more consistent learning throughout the school and has raised standards in a number of subjects. The teaching of ICT is now satisfactory, but the school recognises there is room for even more improvement and has this in hand. Key strengths in teaching are teachers' very good subject knowledge, high expectations of what pupils can do, their varied teaching methods and the way they use time and support staff. Teaching meets the needs of all pupils. Creative organisation in the juniors has resulted in all pupils receiving specialist teaching in some subjects. Pupils also benefit from being taught mathematics alongside other pupils of similar attainment. In the infants, pupils in mixed age classes benefit from being taught literacy, numeracy and science with children their own age. Throughout the school, teaching effectively targets pupils' specific learning needs, so that those who experience difficulties are given extra help and those who learn quickly receive additional challenge.

The quality of teaching has a profound impact on pupils' learning. Lessons are productive because pupils show great interest, concentrate and work hard. Skills, knowledge and understanding are all progressively built upon as pupils move through the school. Pupils learn to work independently and to show initiative. They are gaining a good insight into their own learning because teachers tell them how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. Whilst maintaining a good emphasis on the basics of literacy and numeracy, pupils continue to study, in depth, a broad range of subjects. An extensive range of after-school activities enhances the curriculum and supports pupils' personal development very well.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. There are effective systems to ensure pupils receive additional support with basic skills, which means they are better able to tackle work in other subjects.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. Pupils are given lots of opportunities to celebrate their own and others' talents and to reflect upon and appreciate the beauty of the world around them. They gain a good awareness of how they can influence events in their own and others' lives and have an informed insight into their own culture and that of other ethnic groups.

How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good. Pupils are well looked after and kept safe. There are very good systems to check on how well pupils are learning, which help teachers set academic and personal targets for them to ensure they continue to learn effectively.
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The school has a very good partnership with pupils' parents.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Excellent. This is the foundation upon which all the other strengths of the school are built. The sense of purpose and success in all that the school does is directly linked to the lead given by the headteacher and the thriving team approach to management she has created.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very good. Governors are a committed and effective team and provide considerable support for the school. They bring expertise, experience and quality to their role of critical friend, asking the right questions at the right time. They fulfil all their legal obligations.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. The school is fully aware of its strengths and not afraid to admit its weaknesses. The effective forms of self-evaluation that have been set up provide the necessary information to provide a very good sense of direction for the school's work. There is a collective determination to make things better and to go all-out for excellence.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. The school makes effective use of staff, finance, time, accommodation and resources. There is still room for better use of ICT in lessons, but overall this aspect has improved since the last inspection.

The adequacy of staffing, accommodation and learning resources is very good. In relation to spending decisions, and in all aspects of its work, the school applies the principles of best value very well.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children like school.</li> <li>• They feel their children are taught well and the school has high expectations of them.</li> <li>• Parents are pleased with children's standards of behaviour.</li> <li>• They feel their children are making good progress and the school is helping them become mature and responsible.</li> <li>• Parents appreciate the wide range of after-school activities and the time teachers give to providing these.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some parents think the school could tell them more about their children's progress.</li> <li>• Many parents say they would like the homework diary given to Year 6 to be extended to other year groups.</li> </ul>

Inspectors agree with parents' positive comments and find that most parents receive very good information about their children's learning. However, progress reports for children in the Foundation Stage are not as comprehensive as elsewhere, providing only a general overview rather than specific detail within each of the six areas of learning. Inspectors feel parents' request for a homework diary is not unreasonable.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. When children begin school, their standards are generally above that which is expected for their age. As a result of very good teaching and high quality learning experiences, all reception children make good progress in all areas of learning. By the time they reach the end of the reception year, most have achieved the early learning goals expected for children this age. Moreover, a significant proportion achieve beyond the levels expected and work competently within the lower levels of the National Curriculum.
2. National Curriculum test and assessments for seven-year-olds in 2000 were well above the national average in reading and writing, and were very high (in the top five per cent nationally) in mathematics. Teachers' assessments of pupils' standards in science and their skills in speaking and listening were also well above the national average. Compared to pupils in similar schools, pupils' performance was well above average in all these subjects. Taking the five years 1996-2000 together, seven-year-olds' performance in reading and writing has remained very high compared to national averages, whilst in mathematics it has remained well above. Despite these high standards, when the school was last inspected in 1998, there was clear evidence that pupils were underachieving, principally because of serious weaknesses in teaching. These weaknesses had already been identified by the school's management and were in the process of being addressed. This inspection finds that the school's efforts in this area have been very successful. Teaching has improved significantly and, as a result, pupils are now achieving very well. This is clearly depicted in the steep rise in standards in reading, writing and mathematics since 1998.
3. National Curriculum tests for 11-year-olds in 2000 were very high in English, being in the top five per cent nationally. In mathematics and science, the results were well above the national average. Compared to pupils in similar schools, pupils' performance was well above average in English and mathematics and above average in science. The group of pupils that took the tests in 2000 contained an unusually high (for this school) proportion of pupils with special educational needs. However, the school's success in supporting these pupils is evident in the high standards they were able to achieve in all three subjects, with only a slight fall in science results from the previous year. During the five years 1996-2000, 11-year-olds' overall performance in English and mathematics has been very high compared to the national average, whilst in science, it has been consistently well above. The serious weaknesses in teaching identified by the last inspection have been eliminated, as has the underachievement noted of some pupils at the beginning of this key stage. Over time, the high test results at Key Stage 2 do not depict this underachievement as clearly as at Key Stage 1 because good teaching at the end of the key stage was compensating for earlier underachievement. Evidence from this inspection shows that, in response to very good teaching, all Key Stage 2 pupils now achieve very well in English, mathematics and science. Over the past five years, there has been a steady rise in standards, which is broadly in line with the national upward trend and generally remains well above the national average.
4. Over time, and in the most recent test and assessments results (2000), there is no significant difference between the standards achieved by boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well and make good progress towards the reading, writing and numeracy targets in their individual education plans (IEPs). Indeed, many learn so successfully that they reach the levels expected for seven and 11-year-olds when they take the end of key stage tests.
5. Inspection evidence supports the results of tests and assessments. By ages seven and 11, pupils achieve high standards in English, mathematics and science. When they leave school, pupils are very good listeners and are confident to answer questions and express views and opinions in a range of contexts. They make use of a wide range of vocabulary, including subject-specific vocabulary, when conversing with adults or each other. Standards in literacy are high. Pupils are very competent readers and writers. They enjoy a wide range of reading material, including fiction,

information books, poetry and play scripts and are confident to write in these forms themselves. Their skills in spelling, grammar and handwriting are very good. Pupils' understanding of all aspects of mathematics is very good, as are their skills in manipulating numbers mentally. They particularly enjoy mathematical investigations and are skilled at applying what they have learned in the subject to solve problems. Pupils have gained a secure knowledge of all aspects of science, which is underpinned by their very good skills in scientific enquiry. They record the results of investigations and experiments in a variety of different ways.

6. By the end of both key stages, standards are high in art and design and above average in design and technology, the latter showing very good improvement since the last inspection when standards at age 11 were below average. Good improvements have also occurred to seven and 11-year-olds' standards in ICT and 11-year-olds' standards in geography. These are now in line with national expectations where previously they were below. There was insufficient evidence to judge seven-year-olds' standards in geography, but their standards in music have improved since the last inspection and are now in line with what is expected for their age. By age 11, pupils' standards in music are at least in line with what is expected for their ages. Based upon the limited evidence available, seven and 11-year-olds' standards in history are at least in line with national expectations. There was insufficient evidence to make secure judgements about pupils' standards in physical education, although standards in swimming are above average. In the two physical education lessons seen, seven-year-olds were working at a level above that which is normally expected for their age, whilst 11-year-olds were demonstrating average standards. Standards in swimming are a strength; by age 11, all pupils achieve the national expectations and many achieve beyond this. By ages seven and 11, standards in religious education are above those expected by the locally Agreed Syllabus; this also represents an improvement since the last inspection.
7. In setting the statutory English and mathematics targets for 11-year-olds, the school makes very good use of its analyses of data about pupils' performance in the statutory and non-statutory National Curriculum tests, as well as the information they have about pupils' performance in other standardised tests and assessments used. The targets for 2000 were appropriately challenging as are those that have been set for 2001.

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

8. Pupils' attitudes to school are very good; this includes children in the Foundation Stage and those with special educational needs. Pupils are keen to come to school and show enthusiasm for everything they do. In lessons they concentrate well, listen carefully and work very hard. They also participate, with evident enjoyment, in a wide range of after-school activities such as drama, art, chess, sport activities and country dancing. Year 4 really enjoy their swimming lesson and maintain 45 minutes of continuous effort. Year 3 and 4 pupils avidly discuss where the centre of the village is in geography. Pupils take great pride in the presentation of their work, which is always neat.
9. Pupils behave well in the classroom and around school. They are polite and considerate. Pupils of all ages hold doors open for adults and for each other as a matter of course. They are well mannered and wait their turn patiently in the queue for their midday meal. They respond very well to instructions in lessons and to all adults working with them, including volunteers. Occasionally, there is some fidgeting and undercover chatter in lessons, mostly when pupils are not with their regular teacher. There have been no exclusions during the past year. Bullying is not a problem. Pupils have gained a good understanding of what bullying is and of how to deal with it should it occur. Pupils say they are happy with the way the school deals with any incidents of misbehaviour.
10. Pupils' personal development is very good. In 'Circle Time' (where children sit in a circle and discuss a wide range of issues), even very young pupils have already learned to respect the right of others to express their ideas and feelings. Most are confident to talk and know that their friends will listen to them in silence. Year 6 pupils say that they find 'Circle Time' a valuable opportunity to express their own feelings and to think about the feelings of others. Pupils of all ages are trusted

and encouraged to take on responsibility. Even the youngest children act as class and register monitors. Older pupils help with lunchtime supervision and act as librarians. The 'Pupil Council' is made up of an elected representative from each class and pupils feel it gives them a say in how the school is run. Pupils can be trusted to work independently. For example, they work conscientiously in the central computer suite, researching information to support their work in class and they help one another if they are stuck. The homework diaries that older pupils have are helping them to develop independence and skills of self-organisation as part of their preparation for secondary school. Pupils are actively involved in organising charity events for the whole school, initiating ideas and taking responsibility for every aspect of the day, including producing fliers to advertise the event.

11. Relationships are very good. Pupils interact and mix well with each other, their teachers and the range of adults who work and visit the school. They are always willing to help each other at work and play. Pupils respond well to midday supervisors; they listen to and obey swimming instructors and are polite to the coach driver. Pupils treat volunteer helpers, who are often parents that they know, with respect.
12. Attendance at the school is very good and well above the national average. Unauthorised absence is below national figures. Pupils come willingly and promptly to school.

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

13. The quality of teaching is very good and has improved significantly since the last inspection. There is no unsatisfactory teaching and 86 per cent is good or better, with almost a third being very good or excellent. This high quality teaching is consistent throughout the school and has a direct, positive impact on the high standards pupils achieve and the very good progress they make during their time at the school.
14. There is good teaching in almost all subjects and the teaching of English, mathematics and science are very good. The basic skills of literacy and numeracy are taught very well in English and mathematics lessons and are also consistently and effectively promoted in other subjects. For example, in science and design and technology, teachers expect pupils to research information, make notes, label diagrams and write accounts and evaluations. They also require pupils to take measurements and to collect, record and interpret data. Across the school, teachers make better use of ICT to support learning in other subjects than in 1998, but there are still occasions when potentially good opportunities to use computers are missed.
15. Teaching of children in the Foundation Stage is good in 73 per cent of lessons and very good in 18 per cent; no teaching is unsatisfactory. Children in the school's early admissions class and those in the mixed age class with Year 1 pupils, receive the same high quality learning experiences. Teachers have a good understanding of the specific learning needs of these very young children and plan interesting and challenging activities within contexts that are entirely appropriate for children's ages and stages of development. Much of the work is practical in nature, with good use being made of play as a vehicle for learning. There is a good balance between teacher-directed and child-chosen activities, the latter supporting children's independence very well. The children's personal, social and emotional development is continually promoted, as are basic literacy and numeracy skills. The quality of teaching enables children to make a good start to their education and prepares them very well for beginning the National Curriculum and the school's religious education syllabus.
16. At Key Stage 1, the quality of teaching is good or better in 86 per cent of lessons. In 20 per cent it is very good and 13 per cent is excellent. At Key Stage 2, teaching is good or better in 84 per cent of lessons, with 30 per cent being very good and six per cent excellent.
17. Teachers at both key stages have very good subject knowledge. This is a result of their hard work, dedication and commitment and is also an outcome of the school's very good arrangements for the professional development of staff. Initiatives to acquire teachers with specialist subject knowledge, for example, in ICT, physical education and music, are proving very successful in

- promoting higher standards and better learning. In lessons at both key stages, teachers' very good subject knowledge is evident in the clear and detailed explanations and instructions they provide for pupils, the perceptive and penetrating questions they ask of them and the technical vocabulary they use and promote. The quality of teachers' planning is very good and reflects their high expectations of pupils. Explicit learning outcomes are clearly stated and there is good detail about how these will be achieved and built upon and of what teachers will look for in assessing pupils to ensure they have understood what has been taught.
18. Teachers make very effective use of a wide range of teaching methods to promote learning. They are successful at combining creative and imaginative methods with what is accepted as the best of traditional teaching. For example, there is very good direct teaching to the whole class at the beginning of lessons, to introduce and explain new ideas or revise previous learning, and at the end, to reiterate key learning points and assess what pupils have learned. In between, teachers provide plenty of opportunities for pupils to work collaboratively and to show independence and initiative, for instance, in using the library or ICT suite to research information. During these periods, teachers spend productive time providing more intensive teaching for smaller groups, as in literacy and numeracy lessons, whilst maintaining a good overview of the rest of the class. In practical lessons, teachers move between groups, constantly teaching; for example, by questioning, providing further explanations, demonstrating skills and encouraging pupils to talk about their work.
  19. A feature that comes through strongly is teachers' enthusiasm for their work and the subjects they teach. Their lively presentations capture pupils' interest and motivate them. Lots of examples were seen, such as the reading of 'George's Marvellous Medicine' to pupils in Years 3 and 4, to stimulate work on annotating a play script and the singing demonstrations by the teacher to convey the musical concepts of dynamics, pitch, tempo, timbre and texture. The provision of investigative tasks is another strong feature of teaching in a range of subjects and is part of the school's move to discover pupils' individual learning styles to promote even more effective teaching and learning. These tasks promote both subject-specific learning and the development of cross-curricular skills such as literacy, numeracy and ICT, and pupils say they enjoy the challenge they present. Teaching of this nature provides pupils with very good opportunities to think logically, pool ideas and compare different strategies and answers.
  20. Although in the early stages, the new arrangement of mixed-age classes throughout Key Stage 2 looks to be working very well, with no adverse effects in terms of planning and teaching work to meet pupils' different needs. Similarly, the new organisation of grouping Key Stage 2 pupils for mathematics lessons, according to their prior attainment, is proving to be very effective. For example, by narrowing the range of attainment, teachers can match work more precisely to pupils' needs. This form of organisation, and the carousel system that allows all pupils to receive specialist teaching in religious education, music and drama, is well managed, with no loss of time as pupils move to different classrooms. Flexibility is also built into the teaching organisation at Key Stage 1, allowing all reception and Year 1 pupils to be taught literacy, numeracy and science with their own age group.
  21. Teachers make very good use of all the available time for teaching. Lessons are taught at a brisk pace, with pupils given time limits for the completion of work. This creates a sense of urgency and motivates pupils to apply themselves to tasks. Consequently, pupils' attention is sustained and they work hard, making good or better progress in most lessons. Teachers also make good use of other adults, such as the school support staff and parent helpers. These individuals are always well briefed about their roles, for example, about the questions they should ask pupils and the extent of intervention they should provide. All make a positive contribution to pupils' learning.
  22. Pupils with special educational needs are taught well, both in class lessons and when withdrawn to receive short, individual or small group activities that are specifically planned for them. Teachers and support staff are sensitive to the difficulties these pupils experience with learning and show considerable patience and understanding when working with them. They make sure that pupils are challenged, using pupils' IEPs well when planning or adapting work for them. In class lessons, teachers and support staff often show ingenuity in adapting work to ensure that pupils gain full access to the whole range of learning experiences on offer. As a result, these pupils make

good progress and many achieve the levels expected for their ages in National Curriculum tests.

23. An important feature of the teaching, and one that is particularly effective in promoting pupils' good behaviour and attitudes to work, is the quality of relationships between pupils and all teaching staff. Teachers clearly like and respect their pupils. A very good rapport exists between the two, with teachers often using humour to promote hard work and effort from pupils.
24. Throughout both key stages, teachers make very good use of ongoing assessment. For example, well-targeted questioning acts as a strong evaluative tool in most lessons. Similarly, comments made to pupils about their work, both verbally and through marking, strike the right balance between celebrating pupils' efforts and informing them how they can improve. Indeed, since the last inspection, considerable improvement has occurred to the quality of marking, which is now very good. Pupils' work contains lots of constructive comments by teachers, which provide them with an insight into how well they are learning. Good homework tasks are set at both key stages that support the work being followed in class. These frequently relate to real-life situations and focus on developing pupils' research skills.

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

25. The curriculum provided is very good and meets all legal requirements. The school provides a broad range of learning experiences that include all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. The time allocated to each subject is appropriately balanced to ensure pupils receive worthwhile experiences in every subject and these are planned in such a way as to be relevant to pupils' ages, needs and interests. The previous inspection identified the need to improve the quality of schemes of work, provision for personal and social education and to comply with the legal requirements for teaching ICT. These issues have all been addressed very effectively. In all subjects, schemes of work now provide a very good structure to ensure pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding are systematically developed as they get older. The high priority that is given to providing quality personal and social education has been successful and this aspect is now very good. The curriculum is planned to ensure all pupils have good access to the wide range of learning opportunities on offer, with excellent arrangements to ensure pupils with physical impairments are fully integrated into lessons.
26. The curriculum for all children in the Foundation Stage is relevant to their needs. The children in this key stage who share a class with Year 1 pupils receive the same, good quality learning experiences as those children in the single-year-group class. Careful planning and organisation ensures that all reception children are taught literacy and numeracy with their own age group and that they all have good opportunities to learn through play and be involved in practical tasks that make learning more meaningful for them. At Key Stage 1, those children in mixed-age classes benefit from being taught literacy, numeracy and science with children their own age. At Key Stage 2, joint curriculum planning meetings between teachers and support staff focus strongly on ensuring that pupils in each of the three mixed-age classes receive the same curriculum entitlement.
27. The agreed format for curriculum planning is of a very high standard. Very good use is made of the detailed schemes of work in each subject, which form the basis of comprehensive lesson plans. These clearly identify the intended learning outcomes and how they will be achieved. The plans also contain clearly stated criteria against which pupils' learning will be assessed. The results are recorded and provide teachers with good information that allows them to modify future lessons, either for all pupils or for groups, to ensure all pupils learn as effectively as they can.
28. The school is implementing the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy very well and this is helping to maintain pupils' high standards in these subjects. Moreover, literacy and numeracy skills are also being effectively developed within a wide range of subjects, for instance when pupils research information, write accounts of their work or present the results of investigations in tables, charts and graphs. However, the strong focus on developing basic skills in reading, writing and



mathematics has not detracted from the school's aim of providing a rich and varied curriculum that allows all pupils, whatever their talents, to succeed and make progress. For example, there is a strong emphasis on the creative arts, with very good opportunities for pupils to gain specific knowledge and skills in art and design, music, design and technology and drama. These subjects are also used very well to widen and deepen pupils' understanding of other subjects. Drama, for example, supports the skills of speaking, listening and empathy, as well as promoting pupils' moral and social awareness. Curriculum provision for ICT now meets legal requirements and planning in this and other subjects takes account of how ICT skills can be developed and exploited to support the whole range of pupils' learning.

29. The provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is very good. Time is provided each week for pupils to discuss topics and issues relevant to themselves and the wider world. Through discussion and reflection, the pupils are taught to consider the contribution they can make as citizens and are required to contemplate how their attitudes, beliefs and actions affect the lives of others. Sex education, and education about the dangers of drug misuse, is provided.
30. The curriculum for pupils with special educational needs is good. These pupils have individual education plans that identify their specific needs and how they can be helped to make progress. Both teachers and support staff take good account of these when planning pupils' work. Pupils receive a good range of learning experiences in all National Curriculum subjects and religious education. Many also receive additional, very good quality individual support for literacy, which amounts to fifteen minutes each day. However, despite the very good contribution this provision makes to pupils' progress in reading and writing, the organisation is such that pupils who are withdrawn from their classroom for this support miss parts of lessons in other subjects.
31. There is an excellent range of very good quality extra-curricular activities and events that enrich the curriculum and provide pupils with lots of scope to extend their education after school. These include music, country dancing, sport activities, chess and clubs for ICT and art. Teachers give generously of their time to run these. This element of the curriculum has improved significantly since the last inspection.
32. The curriculum is further enriched by a wide range of visitors and visits that help make pupils' learning more meaningful. For example, representatives from various religious organisations visit regularly to talk to pupils and workshops are held with visiting writers and artists. The school places a high value on pupils visiting a range of interesting places to promote learning in many subjects. Good quality links exist with the wider community.
33. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good and has improved significantly since the last inspection. Spiritual provision is planned sensitively for inclusion in lessons and collective worship. Short periods are provided for the pupils to reflect when they are assembled together as a class or as a whole school. In lessons, teachers prepare for moments of reflection and also exploit incidental opportunities that occur. For instance, in a Year 2 art and design lesson, pupils delighted in seeing the various effects of using different surfaces and colours to make prints. Similarly, in a Key Stage 2 literacy lesson, there was an air of quietness and empathy as pupils reflected upon the unhappiness and torture of war, when reading about the happenings of the Nuremberg raid in the book 'Conrad's War'.
34. Provision for moral development is very good. The school successfully promotes worthy moral values and creates an ethos of respect for people and property. Pupils develop a sense of right and wrong from a very early age. Provision in this area is founded upon the school's comprehensive inclusion policy, which is very evident in the school's ethos. Pupils work and play together regardless of their individual special needs. They see that everyone is treated with equal care, affection and attention and this has a very positive effect on the way they perceive the world and treat others. 'Praise assemblies' are a weekly feature of school life that celebrate pupils' efforts and achievements. Here, pupils from all year groups tell the rest of the school about their good work, be it academic or personal.
35. Provision for social development is very good. Pupils treat each other with kindness and respect.

Each class elects two 'bully reps' so that, in addition to sharing any concerns pupils may encounter with adults, they have friends their own age they can confide in. Pupils are given frequent opportunities to work collaboratively in groups or pairs and are taught to help each other and value each other's efforts. From an early age, pupils are given appropriate responsibilities to support teachers, school staff and each other. Social experiences are further broadened by regular planned visits out of school, including residential visits. The quality of relationships within the school is very good and this undoubtedly has a very positive effect on pupils' attitudes and the very good quality of social interaction.

36. Cultural provision is very good. Schemes of work address this aspect well so that in a wide range of lessons and subjects, opportunities are planned for and capitalised upon to help pupils understand and value their own cultural heritage and cultural diversity. Pupils visit theatres, museums and places of historical and geographical interest. Music and art and design are built into curricular opportunities each day; these subjects make a very good contribution, encompassing learning that spans a wide range of times, traditions and cultures. For example, Year 3 and 4 pupils studied images of Christ by Chinese, Indian, Aboriginal and African artists, then decided what they considered to be the common characteristics. Visitors from other nationalities are welcomed into school and provide pupils with opportunities to reflect on their heritage, religion, family and cultural traditions.

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

37. The standard of care for pupils is very high. Pupils' academic performance and personal development are monitored very closely and the school provides very good support and guidance for them.
38. There is very good attention to health and safety. Regular checks and risk assessments are carried out, including those for outdoor play equipment. The nominated person for child protection is trained and all staff are aware of their responsibilities in this area and the procedures to follow. From a very young age, pupils are taught to think about keeping themselves safe. First-aid is administered with sensitivity and care and very good records are kept. If there is an accident, parents are always informed by letter. The needs of pupils with specific medical conditions are known and understood and they are looked after and supported sensitively.
39. Staff know pupils very well. This begins when children visit from the playgroup to become familiar with school before starting in reception. Children begin school on a full-time basis, but flexibility is built into this arrangement to take account of individual children's needs. Care and sensitivity are shown to Year 6 pupils who are well supported in their preparation for transfer to secondary school. As well as meeting teachers and visiting the schools, these pupils use a homework diary so that they become used to organising their own work. The school ethos is such that pupils will go confidently to class teachers and the headteacher for help and advice.
40. The statutory requirements for the recording and reporting of absence are met. Class teachers are responsible for their own registers and for following up any absence without reason. Registers are clearly marked and collated, with all figures up to date; they are checked weekly by the clerk. Pupils arriving late for school enter via the office. Parents are made aware of their duty to inform the school of reasons for absence and usually do so on the first day. Because attendance and punctuality are consistently very good, the school does not need to employ any specific strategies to promote or improve these aspects.
41. The school is very good at monitoring behaviour and ensuring that pupils understand how they are expected to behave. Very good records are kept of any incidents of poor behaviour and parents are kept informed as necessary. Pupils who hurt another child are sometimes required to apologise in writing and are, therefore, helped to think about the effect their behaviour has on others. Pupils fully understand the school rules and the sanctions applied for breaking them. They respond very well to the merit points awarded and are truly proud of the certificates they earn. Some Year 6 pupils feel the best thing that has happened to them at school is receiving their first merit certificate. Pupils like the idea of electing their own class 'bully rep' and are very confident to go to

the rep if they have a worry or concern, although they are adamant that there is no bullying, just occasional 'teasing'.

42. Pupils' work and progress is tracked and assessed closely. The school and individual teachers make very good use of the information gained through assessment to help identify and address possible weaknesses in curriculum provision, teaching and/or learning. The results of statutory and non-statutory tests are analysed carefully to track individual and group progress and trends over time. Pupils' learning is rigorously assessed and recorded in all subjects and the results used wisely to adapt lessons for optimum learning potential. For example, in one Year 5 and 6 religious education lesson, pupils had difficulty finding passages in the Bible, so the teacher showed the next class how to go about this before asking them to find and read different versions of the Christmas story in the Gospels. Similarly, in some lessons, pupils are asked to evaluate their own learning, which gives them, and teachers, valuable insights. For example, in the praise assembly, Year 2 pupils explained how they evaluated their work in design and technology and, through this, thought of ways to improve what they had made. The very effective marking of pupils' work also gives them a good insight into how well they are doing and how they can improve. Marking goes beyond ticks, crosses and short phrases, being very constructive in terms of the comments made that prompt pupils to think about their work and how they can do better. Assessment days are held each half term when teachers discuss progress with pupils and set them individual targets. These are also shared with pupils' parents. 'Circle Time' and the school's provision for personal, social and health education, make a good contribution to teachers' already secure knowledge of individual pupils. They use this well to support pupils' personal development.

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

43. Parents are very supportive of the school. They think highly of the headteacher, teachers and all the staff. They give willingly of their time to help in school and to raise money to support the school, for example, in purchasing learning resources.
44. Most parents feel that the school works closely with them and keeps them well informed about school life and their children's progress. However, at the parents' meeting, and on the returned questionnaires from parents, a significant minority expressed concerns about the quality of communication and, in particular, about the information they receive regarding how well their children are learning. The inspection team found no significant evidence to support these concerns and finds that, overall, parents are kept very well informed. There are three formal opportunities during the year for parents to discuss their children's progress. Annual written reports to parents of children at Key Stages 1 and 2 are of a very high standard. They are individual, spell out clearly what children know, understand and can do and set appropriate targets for improvement. However, reports for children in the Foundation Stage are not as detailed. These provide only a general overview and are not specific enough in telling parents what their children have achieved and how well they are progressing in each of the specified six areas of learning upon which the curriculum for these children is based. Parents receive regular letters informing them about all aspects of school life. They are also provided with curriculum summaries, which give detail about what pupils will be learning each term. The school's prospectus and governors' annual report to parents are informative, interesting and nicely illustrated with photographs. Many parents say that they find all teachers and the headteacher approachable and easy to talk to. They feel teachers will always make time for them and that they would never be unaware of any problems about learning or behaviour.
45. The school actively encourages parents to be involved with their children's learning and the work of the school. Many parents and other volunteers give freely of their time to help in a variety of ways. They provide support for small groups of pupils in classrooms, hear pupils read, accompany them to swimming lessons and are willing to do whatever is needed. They know their contribution and efforts are highly valued and respected by teachers and pupils.
46. Parents say that they are very pleased with the progress their children make academically and personally. Many comment on how they grow in confidence and how much they like their teachers. The attendance at parents' reporting evenings and for concerts and performances is very

high. There is a 'Friends of Walkington School' association, which is an active group of parents involved in raising significant amounts of money for the school. For example, they have contributed funds to improve outdoor play equipment.

47. Most parents are happy about the amount of homework provided by the school. Of those that are unhappy, there is a fairly even split between those who feel too much homework is given and those who think the amount provided is insufficient. Inspectors find that homework provision is good and supports the work pupils complete in class. Parents with children in Year 6 are particularly happy with the homework diary, which the school provides as a means of helping pupils prepare for organising increased homework at high school. Many other parents at the meeting said that they too would appreciate a homework diary to keep them informed about dates for homework completion and so that they can organise their own, and their children's, time around this schedule. Inspectors feel that this is a reasonable request.

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

48. The headteacher provides excellent leadership and management and clear educational direction. She has been quick to act upon the key areas for improvement identified by the last inspection, all of which have been addressed very successfully. During the same, relatively short two-year period, many other significant improvements have also been made.
49. Behind the headteacher's approach to management is a deep-rooted conviction that all members of staff have an essential role in running the school. People matter at Walkington. All staff feel valued and are willing to commit much hard work to succeed. Governors bring expertise, experience and quality to their role of critical friend and they ask the right questions at the right time. At the centre of all this are the pupils. All that the school does is channelled into making things better for them and they are rightly seen as the most important people in the school and their interests are put first. The school is committed to pupils achieving high standards of attainment and is successful in this. However, the human dimension to management puts great value on the all-round development of pupils and inspection evidence shows that this pays off, with many strengths evident in the personal, social, moral and spiritual development of pupils.
50. Supporting the headteacher is a very competent deputy and senior management team. These individuals carry out the duties and responsibilities delegated to them very well and play a central role in the school's overall effectiveness. The recent initiative to appoint a second team leader at Key Stage 2 has proved to be an effective move, providing additional strength to the management structure and complementing the leadership provided by the co-ordinator at Key Stage 1, whose role also encompasses co-ordinating the Foundation Stage. Subject co-ordinators are all highly committed and successful managers. They are responsible for planning the entire curriculum in their subjects and do so meticulously, to ensure that, as pupils get older, the work planned for them builds upon what they have already learned. Co-ordinators are knowledgeable about their subjects. Their monitoring duties give them a good insight into pupils' standards and how effectively teaching promotes learning. They use this information well to improve provision and, thereby, raise standards. Co-ordinators provide good support for colleagues, both formally and informally. In line with the school's priorities, this includes demonstrating and observing teaching, analysing pupils' work, providing training and giving advice through general day-to-day discussion. They are effective in managing a budget for their subjects and ensure that there are sufficient, good quality resources to support teaching and learning.
51. The monitoring, evaluation and development of teaching is excellent. This has been pivotal in supporting the very good improvement to teaching since the last inspection. The headteacher regularly monitors the quality of teaching. She does this rigorously, but sensitively, with staff viewing the process as a crucial part of their professional development. The evidence from the headteacher's lesson observations demonstrates her sharp and perceptive insight of the most significant aspects of effective teaching. She knows what works well and what does not and is,

therefore, able to offer individual teachers very good advice about how to improve their performance. This process links very well with the school's strategy for teacher appraisal and performance management. This school has excellent potential for training new teachers.

52. The very good systems to check on the quality of teaching and learning, together with the detailed analyses and interpretation of performance data, support the school in identifying and prioritising areas for improvement. These are clearly set out in the school's improvement plan, with very good detail about how they will be achieved and how success will be measured. The priorities that have been identified are the correct ones for the school at this time.
53. Governors are a committed and effective team and provide considerable support for the school. They too strive for excellence. Governors understand their roles and responsibilities, attend regular training and fulfil all their legal obligations. They are well informed about the school's work, clearly articulating its strengths and demonstrating an informed insight about where provision and/or standards could be improved. Governors are effectively involved in shaping the school's direction and receive comprehensive and accurate information from the headteacher to support them in this.
54. Day-to-day administration and financial control are efficient and support the smooth running of the school. Administrative staff provide a warm and welcoming first contact for parents and visitors. The recent financial audit report shows that financial systems are of a high standard. There is a team of highly committed, enthusiastic and well motivated teachers and support staff that work very well together. The school's management has made considerable efforts to acquire teachers with specialist subject knowledge and there is an overriding requirement that all teachers are fully competent in ICT. This, together with the creative teaching organisation at Key Stage 2, is proving to be a very effective way of supporting many pupils' learning.
55. The accommodation is very good and has improved significantly since the last inspection. The new Key Stage 2 building, in particular, is a significant improvement, allowing the school to be based on one site. A talented and conscientious site manager maintains the school to a very high standard of safety and cleanliness. The new junior block is very well designed around a central library and ICT suite, which is helping to promote pupils' research skills and the use of ICT across the curriculum. High standards are expected and achieved in relation to the quality of display. This is used very effectively to enhance the learning environment and, in particular, to stimulate and celebrate all pupils' learning. Outdoor accommodation is extensive, with separate playgrounds for infants and juniors that offer excellent play facilities appropriate to pupils' different ages. There has also been effective redevelopment to provide a large outdoor play area for children in the Foundation Stage. Every subject has plenty of high quality resources that are used very well. In relation to spending decisions, and in all aspects of its work, the school applies the principles of best value very well. The school provides very good value for the money it spends.
56. Overall, the strong and effective leadership and management noted by the last inspection have improved even further. The result is seen in pupils' high standards and the school's very good provision across the board. This includes a team of staff and governors that have very clear insights into the school's strengths and weaknesses, and a collective determination to make things better and to go all out for excellence. There are effective strategies and systems to support this and, as such, the school has very good capacity to improve even further.

## **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

57. There are no key issues for the school to address. However, in the context of its many strengths, the following minor points for improvement should be considered by the governors and headteacher as the basis for an action plan:
  - review the organisation for withdrawing pupils with special educational needs to ensure they do not miss parts of the same lessons each week (paragraph 30); and
  - improve progress reports for children in the Foundation Stage so that they address each of the six areas of learning (paragraph 44).



## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	59
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	32

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
7	25	54	14	0	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR– Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	272
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	4

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR– Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	15

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	8
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	8

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.8
National comparative data	5.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
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	21	19	40

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	20	19	20
	Girls	18	19	18
	Total	38	38	38
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	95 (98)	95 (98)	95 (100)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	20	20	20
	Girls	19	18	19
	Total	39	38	39
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	98 (98)	95 (100)	98 (100)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	19	17	36

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	18	18	19
	Girls	17	16	17
	Total	35	34	36
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	97 (91)	94 (100)	100 (100)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	14	17	18
	Girls	17	15	17
	Total	31	32	35
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	86 (94)	89 (94)	97 (94)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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



### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	2
Black – other	0
Indian	2
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	221
Any other minority ethnic group	5

*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)	11.1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24.5
Average class size	27.2

#### **Education support staff: YR– Y6**

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	130

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	1999/00
	£
Total income	436,471
Total expenditure	435,023
Expenditure per pupil	1,713
Balance brought forward from previous year	23,217
Balance carried forward to next year	24,665

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

**Questionnaire return rate 28%**

Number of questionnaires sent out	272
Number of questionnaires returned	76

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

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	54	34	8	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	37	36	9	9	7
Behaviour in the school is good.	30	62	4	0	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	24	53	16	3	4
The teaching is good.	37	47	7	1	5
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	18	41	32	5	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	38	50	8	1	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	46	41	4	0	7
The school works closely with parents.	24	46	17	8	1
The school is well led and managed.	39	38	8	4	8
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	33	51	3	3	8
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	41	45	4	1	5

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

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

58. There are 41 children in the Foundation Stage, 11 of whom share a class with six Year 1 pupils. Children begin full-time schooling in the September of the academic year in which they turn five. However, there is flexibility built into this arrangement to allow those who need to attend on a part-time basis to do so. During the inspection, all children were attending full-time. Children have above average standards when they begin school.
59. Good teaching, supported by detailed planning and careful organisation, ensure that children in both classes receive the same, good quality learning experiences, which allow them to make good progress. Practical and interesting homework tasks are given that address all areas of learning and involve children's parents in supporting their progress at home. For example, children were asked to use reclaimed materials to make a wind chime. In this, they were required to tell their parents their ideas, make a list of the things they wanted to use and help the grown-ups as much as possible in putting it together.

### **Personal, social and emotional development**

60. Standards are high in this area. Although children have only been in school for a short time, many already achieve the early learning goals expected by the end of the reception year. They have settled in very well and come happily to school, showing interest and excitement in the range of activities on offer. Children concentrate well. They listen carefully to teachers and show enthusiasm for the tasks they have been given or have chosen for themselves. Many are confident to answer questions or to talk about their work or the things that have happened at home. Their eagerness to do this reflects the very good relationships they have with teachers, other adults and each other. During lessons and activities, children take turns, share equipment and often make encouraging comments about each other's work. They are learning how to take on responsibility and are eager to be the weekly register and juice monitors. The children have made good progress in learning the rules and routines of school life. For example, they know and abide by the simple classroom rules and walk sensibly in a line to whole-school assemblies where they behave very well. Children's behaviour is also very good in other contexts and they show care and concern for each other, for example, if one of their friends feels ill or falls over at playtime. When preparing for physical education lessons, the children dress and undress with minimal support. They handle cutlery effectively at lunchtime, go to the toilet unaided and know that they must wash their hands afterwards.
61. Teaching is good. Teachers, support staff and helpers provide good role models for children. They show respect for the children by thanking them, asking them politely to do things and praising them for their efforts. They help children understand the consequences of their actions by providing simple explanations and examples that they can easily relate to. In one lesson, a teacher made creative use of two large card hands to elicit ideas from the children about how hands can be used to help people; the children's suggestions were written on each finger. In another lesson, where the story of Rama and Sita was read, the teacher handled the children's amusement at illustrations of the man in the story having long hair very sensitively and positively. The cultural difference was explained well by the teacher who also made very good use of the colourful Indian clothing samples she had brought in to illustrate the story further and reinforce the positive images of cultural difference. In addition to the planned activities to promote learning in this area, teachers are successful in promoting children's personal and social learning in many incidental activities that occur throughout the course of each day. They exploit routines, such as 'juice time', effectively, encouraging children to discuss a variety of things, such as different ways to keep healthy. In this activity, the children made many suggestions, including bathing, shampooing their hair and brushing their teeth regularly.

## **Communication, language and literacy**

62. The quality of teaching and learning in this area is good. Children are well on target to achieve the early learning goals expected by the end of the reception year and a significant proportion already achieves these. Children listen and contribute well during lessons. They enjoy hearing stories and listening to teachers and friends explain things. In these situations, and in others, such as whole-school assemblies, children often sit enthralled, keen to take in what they are being told. Children respond well to opportunities to explain things to teachers and their friends, for example, in sharing their news or telling the whole school about their good work in the praise assembly. Many are confident to sing well-known nursery rhymes to the class, either on their own or with a partner. Early reading skills are well developed. Children know how books work and most correctly sequence a set of four pictures that tell the story. The children have positive attitudes to reading and provide lots of detail when talking about the characters, making good use of the illustrations to help them in this. They know where to find the title and the 'blurb' and understand what these terms mean. The children have a good knowledge of letter sounds and recognise many common words and character names in their reading books. All make very good attempts at reading the 'speech bubbles' in the shared text they read as a class. Higher attainers accurately read most of the text in their reading books. Children write their names and make good attempts at writing words, using their knowledge of letter sounds to help them in this. They are learning to form letters correctly and with good control over their size and orientation.
63. Teachers' good subject knowledge allows them to teach the basic skills of reading and writing very well. They also provide lots of opportunity for children to practise these skills and speaking and listening skills throughout the day in a range of contexts. For example, the travel-agency role-play area promotes children's imaginative use of talk and reinforces literacy skills as they write notes and make pretend holiday bookings. In whole class reading sessions, teachers encourage children to talk about the characters, describing them in terms of their features and asking children to use this information to think about what sort of person they might be, for instance fierce or kind. This promotes children's descriptive use of vocabulary and provides a good foundation for later written work.

## **Mathematical development**

64. Teaching is good. The children learn effectively and are well on target to achieve the early learning goals by the end of the reception year. Indeed, many children already achieve a significant number of these goals. Children have a good knowledge of number and many accurately count past 20. They recognise the numerals to 10 and can form these correctly. In practical work, the children are beginning to grasp mathematical ideas about comparative size and correctly use language such as 'bigger' and 'smaller' to describe toy bears and other everyday objects such as clothing. Higher achieving children are beginning to give reasons for their answers. For example, they could say that an object was too big or the wrong shape to fit into a box. The children recognise common shapes such as circles, triangles and squares. They identify a repeating patterns and create their own with beads, cubes and on paper, using three and four colours to do so.
65. The children are confident, well motivated learners who are not afraid to make mistakes. When this happens, teachers use children's misconceptions to make positive teaching points and are quick to praise children's efforts, which encourages a positive attitude to mathematics. Teachers make good links with other areas of learning to promote mathematical development. For example, number stories and songs are used well to promote children's learning, whilst work in art and design reinforces children's understanding of shape and pattern.

## **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

66. As a result of good teaching and the provision of stimulating, practical learning experiences, children make good progress in this area, which covers scientific, historical, geographical and

technological learning. Children are well on target to achieve the early learning goals expected by the end of their time in the reception year. Good provision is made for children to develop early scientific skills of observing and describing, for example, of natural materials such as leaves and shells. Children notice the colours, shapes and patterns of these objects and talk about how they feel when they touch them. In sand and water play they learn skills of pouring accurately, whilst in outdoor play they gain practical knowledge of forces, for example, when using the slide. In history, the children identify modern and period clothes from a series of photographs. Their understanding of the past is developing well and is evident in their discussion of significant past events in their own lives such as birthdays and holidays. Early geographical skills are promoted as children discuss how changes in the weather cause people to wear different types of clothing. They correctly identify clothes suitable for warm and cold weather and give reasons for their choices. They know about essential services such as shops, the police and post services and give simple explanations about how these support their lives. Children are confident to use computers and have good control over the mouse. They make use of their knowledge and skills to draw recognisable pictures of people and objects such as cars and houses. They are making good progress in learning where the letters are situated on the keyboard and use these to write short sentences. Children make creative use of commercial and reclaimed materials to make models. In this they learn different ways to stick materials together or to make them move.

### **Physical development**

67. The children make good progress and many achieve the early learning goals before the end of the reception year. They hold pencils correctly, trace patterns accurately and show good control when forming letters and numbers. They have good dexterity when using other small equipment such as jigsaws, scissors and beads, and are becoming increasingly competent in managing different fastenings on their clothes, such as buttons, zips and laces. In physical education lessons and in outdoor play, children's large movements develop well. When in the hall, children make good use of the large space available and respond creatively to the music and story theme being followed. For example, they try hard to convey animal movements such as waddling like penguins and slithering like snails. They take part in lessons enthusiastically and are learning to co-ordinate different movements such as walking, marching and galloping.
68. Teaching is good. Teachers provide stimulating contexts for children to develop control over small and large movements. They encourage children to be imaginative in using their body and outdoor play equipment and ensure that they are aware of necessary safety points, such as the importance of warming up and cooling down before and after physical activity.

### **Creative development**

69. Teaching is good overall. Children's skills are effectively developed and they are well on target to achieve the early learning goals by the end of the reception year. In art and design, children produce paintings, drawings and models making use of a range of materials, tools and techniques. For example, they explore the different effects they can create by dipping the surfaces of found objects into paint and printing these on paper to create firework pictures. Children's paintings, drawings and models with malleable material such as play-doh, show their growing awareness of the artistic elements of line, shape and form, and they are beginning to use colour creatively. Independence is evident in some of the choices children make, for example, about colour, materials and tools. Occasionally, however, the children are required to produce pictures that 'mirror' the teacher's model. Children have learned the words and tunes to a wide range of songs and sing these enthusiastically. They enjoy listening to music and thinking about how it makes them feel and what it might be communicating as, for example, when listening to music that depicted the movement of animals. In role-play contexts, the children make good use of their imagination to play-out scenarios at the travel agency or in the home corner. For example, children were observed engaging in one-sided telephone conversations with imaginary customers and with each other.

## **ENGLISH**

70. The standard of work seen by pupils at the end of both key stages is well above average. By ages seven and 11, most pupils achieve the expected standards in all aspects of English and a high proportion achieves beyond this. This inspection judgement reflects the results of the most recent (2000) National Curriculum tests, which were in the top five per cent nationally and those achieved in the previous three years (1997-1999). Seven and 11-year-olds' standards in literacy are high.
71. Although pupils' skills in speaking and listening are already well developed when they begin Key Stage 1, they make very good progress in Years 1 and 2 and continue to do so throughout Key Stage 2. During Key Stage 1, pupils become more confident and proficient at explaining their views. In a wide range of contexts they listen with interest and respect to their teachers and each other. Pupils' understanding and use of subject-specific vocabulary develops very well, which also supports learning in other subjects. By age seven, pupils listen intently to stories and explanations. In discussions encompassing a wide range of subjects, they make relevant and informed contributions and question teachers avidly for further information. By age 11, pupils are articulate speakers and capable listeners. They have a wide vocabulary and provide lots of detail and interesting anecdotes when talking about their life experiences and hobbies. Similarly, they provide comprehensive explanations about their work, using technical terms knowledgeably. Pupils have a very good general knowledge and in class discussions many introduce ideas and express opinions confidently. Drama lessons make a valuable contribution to the high standards in this aspect of English. For example, in one lesson, Year 4 pupils led a complex discussion about scientific DNA testing whilst acting out a scene in which they discovered an imaginary dinosaur egg.
72. At both key stages, pupils make very good progress in reading and writing. Those pupils with special educational needs also progress well, with their learning being very effectively enhanced by the additional one-to-one support they receive.
73. Most seven year-olds read accurately and with developing fluency and expression. Lower attainers have good attitudes to books and are confident to tackle unfamiliar words with a variety of appropriate strategies, including blending letter sounds. These pupils can say something about their story's content and characters, which shows that they are reading for meaning. Higher attainers explain their preferences in books. Seven year-olds' knowledge and skills in using non-fiction texts are good; most know how to use contents and index pages to locate information and a significant proportion know the function of glossaries. By age 11, most pupils are fluent and expressive readers who demonstrate very good understanding. Most know that there are different types of texts and readily express preferences, often referring to specific authors in this. Pupils have a very good knowledge of children's literature and enter into detailed discussions about favourite stories, plays, poetry and non-fiction material. Most read a play script effectively with good attention to interpretation of the characters in their dramatisation. A few higher attaining Year 6 pupils discuss how authors use similes, metaphors and other means to achieve specific effects and make their writing more interesting; these pupils also show good awareness of the idea of bias and persuasiveness in different types of text. Not all pupils have a secure understanding of how books are organised in libraries and, occasionally, have difficulty finding the information they want. Pupils are more skilled at accessing research material from the Internet or on a CD-ROM encyclopaedia, where they demonstrate good skill in skimming and scanning long texts to find relevant information.
74. Progress in writing is very good at both key stages. From simple sentences and stories at the beginning of Year 1, many seven-year-olds produce well-organised short stories that show good development of ideas, characters and plot. By this age, pupils are competent to write in a range of different forms, including poetry, instructions, captions, notes, invitations and labelled diagrams. Good examples of pupils' writing were also seen in many subjects, including science, design and technology and history. For example, in these subjects, pupils produced good quality written explanations of investigations, evaluations of design and make tasks and created a questionnaire for their grandparents to obtain information about childhood in the past. Punctuation and spelling skills are good and pupils' handwriting is neat and well formed. Pupils have made some good use of word-processing programs to compose extended stories and accounts.

75. By age 11, pupils have developed a good insight into how to structure different types of writing. They write diaries, newspaper articles, autobiographies, poetry and play scripts. Their writing is mature, with creative writing demonstrating pupils' lively imagination and very good use of vocabulary. Pupils' composition of poetry is of a very high standard. They have a good understanding of the various forms of poetry and are confident to use this form of writing to express their thoughts and feelings. For example, in a religious education lesson, some Year 6 pupils chose to use poetic form to describe the life of Krishna. Pupils' writing shows good knowledge and application of grammar and very good use is made of descriptive vocabulary within quite complex sentence structures. Most pupils' spelling shows a high degree of accuracy, and standards of handwriting are very good.
76. The overall quality of teaching is very good. No teaching is less than satisfactory and much is good or better, with a third being very good or excellent. There is no significant difference in teaching quality between either key stage. This high quality teaching reflects teachers' very good subject knowledge and their high expectations of the pupils. At both key stages, teachers plan interesting lessons that include a good range of teaching methods. Teachers are making very good use of opportunities to assess pupils' knowledge and skills and use this information well to tailor work to pupils' needs. This ensures that the work pupils complete builds upon what they already know, which results in very effective learning. Moreover, teachers ensure that pupils are part of the assessment process, providing regular opportunities for them to evaluate their reading and writing and so contribute to the setting of targets for improvement.
77. Throughout the school, shared reading sessions with the whole class at the start of literacy lessons provide very effective learning experiences. As a result, pupils develop fluency and accuracy and learn how to respond to a range of punctuation. Teachers provide very good opportunities for pupils to reflect upon and discuss a wide range of interesting texts, posing challenging questions that make pupils think about what the author is communicating, either literally or implied. Basic skills are well taught. For example, after an interesting whole-class input about adjectives, Year 1 pupils were very successful in writing their own adjectives to describe fruits and animals. Throughout the school, pupils are given very good opportunities to write in different forms and to learn the appropriateness of each for different purposes and audiences. Writing and reading skills are also effectively developed within a wide range of subjects because teachers fully exploit the opportunities that arise. Pupils at Key Stage 2 are fortunate to receive specialist teaching of drama, which results in very good learning, particularly of speaking and listening skills. For example, in one lesson, Year 3 and 4 pupils were challenged to search and identify archaeological finds on 'an unexplored island' and then explain their findings to a convened 'council'. During the 'question and answer' session that followed, pupils made decisions to judge the validity of the find based upon the persuasiveness of the explanations that had been given.
78. The subject has a high profile in the school and is well led and managed, with very good resources to support pupils' learning. There has been good improvement since the last inspection. Since 1998, standards of reading and writing have risen steeply at Key Stage 1 and an upward trend is evident at Key Stage 2.

## **MATHEMATICS**

79. The standard of work seen by pupils at the end of both key stages is well above average. By ages seven and 11, most pupils achieve the expected standards and a high proportion achieves beyond this. This inspection judgement reflects the results of the most recent (2000) National Curriculum tests, which were in the top five per cent nationally for seven-year-olds and those achieved by 11-year-olds in the previous three years (1997-1999).
80. By age seven, pupils' standards of numeracy are well above average. Most can order numbers to 100 and beyond and demonstrate a sound grasp of tens and units. Higher attainers have good knowledge of hundreds, tens and units and use this to perform mental calculations in steps, such as  $100+80+7$ . They understand and identify sequences of odd and even numbers. Pupils have good skills of addition and subtraction and know the relationship between the two. Their knowledge

of number is good and they use their skills effectively to work out problems. For example, they make the number 18 by adding different combinations of digits and are quick at doubling and halving numbers. Pupils recognise and name common two and three-dimensional shapes and describe these in terms of their properties, referring to the number of edges, faces and corners. In measuring activities, pupils understand the need for standard units of measure and make good estimations of the length of objects in centimetres. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of how mathematics is used in everyday life develops very well in the wide range of relevant investigations they engage in, such as that in which they explored number patterns on a number grid. Pupils gain useful skills in collecting data and learn how to use tally charts and then display their information in graphs and charts.

81. By age eleven, most pupils' understanding of place value (hundreds, tens and units etc) has developed very well, which allows them to read, write, order and work with numbers containing up to six figures. They quickly multiply and divide by 10 and 100. Pupils recognise proportions of numbers and shapes and use fractions, decimals and percentages to describe these. In mental arithmetic work, they quickly add 3.6 and 6.4 and round decimals to the nearest tenths and hundredths. Higher attainers use addition, subtraction, multiplication and division very effectively in working out problems with decimals and most are efficient in changing improper fractions to mixed numbers. Pupils' understanding of shape is good. They recognise many regular and irregular shapes and use properties such as angles and the reflective symmetry of shapes to describe them. They name a variety of angles correctly, using terms, *acute*, *obtuse* and *right angle* correctly. Pupils have a good understanding of co-ordinates and work with these in four quadrants. In data handling, pupils collect separate data and use frequency tables to record it. They construct and interpret a number of different types of graph. Pupils' investigative and problem-solving skills are well developed. For example, pupils explore the 'Fibonacci' number system and use spreadsheets to determine the most profitable way of receiving pocket money.
82. The quality of teaching is very good at both key stages. This is reflected in pupils' very good learning and high standards at ages seven and 11. Both teaching and learning have improved since the last inspection and there is now no evidence of underachievement due to weaknesses in teaching. Lessons provide lots of opportunities for pupils to manipulate numbers mentally and to explain their thinking and the strategies they use to solve problems. Pupils learn to use a wide range of mathematical vocabulary because teachers consistently and successfully promote this in their explanations and questioning and they expect pupils to do the same. Teachers effectively convey their enthusiasm for mathematics, which does much to promote pupils' very good attitudes. A brisk pace is maintained in lessons and teachers work hard to ensure the content captures pupils' interest. The new system, at Key Stage 2, for organising pupils into teaching sets according to their prior attainment is working well. As a result, lower attainers receive more time and support in grasping ideas they find difficult, whilst higher attainers move on quickly if new ideas and skills are mastered easily.
83. Teachers conduct regular assessments of pupils and use the information gained to help them match work accurately to pupils' needs, thus allowing them to learn more effectively. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and are effectively supported in their learning through the identification of specific mathematical targets in their individual education plans. Moreover, the needs of very able pupils are recognised by the school and provision has been made for a small group of Year 6 pupils to receive more advanced tuition from a visiting teacher from the local high school. The setting of individual targets for pupils is another influential factor in promoting pupils' very good achievement, giving them a useful insight into their learning.
84. The school is implementing the National Numeracy Strategy very effectively with lessons following the suggested format and including a strong emphasis on mental calculation. Teachers are also very successful in promoting numeracy skills in subjects other than mathematics. For example, in geography, pupils produce graphs and frequency tables to show land use, whilst in design and technology their patterns for making slippers showed their consideration of size and shape factors, such as length and width, and involved accurate measuring. Pupils also make these links. For example, in a Year 2 art lesson, pupils explained, without any prompting from the teacher, that the printed patterns they had produced for 'jumpers' had to be symmetrical.



85. There is a very good curriculum for mathematics that takes good account of the National Numeracy Strategy and emphasises mathematical investigations, in particular how mathematics is used in everyday life. Leadership is strong and is supporting the school's continuous and successful drive to improve.

## SCIENCE

86. The standard of work seen by pupils at the end of both key stages is well above average. By ages seven and 11, most pupils achieve the expected standards and a high proportion achieves beyond this. This inspection judgement reflects the results of the most recent (2000) tests and assessments and those achieved by 11-year-olds in the previous three years (1997-1999).
87. By ages seven and 11, pupils have made very good progress and demonstrate a high standard of scientific knowledge in all aspects of the curriculum and above average skills in scientific investigation. Seven-year-olds' very good subject knowledge has been developed through the very good opportunities they have to be involved in practical, investigative work that gives them lots of opportunities to make observations and describe and record what they notice and discover. Resulting from their investigative work on materials, seven year-olds clearly explain that some materials change when they are heated or cooled and that some of these changes are reversible, whilst others are not. In their explanations they use correct scientific vocabulary. For example, they say that ice is a *solid* that changes to a *liquid* when heated and back to a solid state when put in the freezer. They name other substances that change under similar circumstances, such as chocolate and jelly, but are quick to point out that some things such as bread, cake mixture and play doh mixture cannot be changed back once they are heated.
88. As a result of very good teaching, infant pupils are making substantial progress in learning the skills of scientific enquiry. For instance, in an investigation by Year 1 and 2 pupils about which materials were the most efficient at keeping 'ice-pops' from melting, their teacher gave them lots of opportunity to consider and discuss the things that they might change and what they would keep the same. This supported pupils' developing understanding of the need for fair testing which they articulated using these words, and exemplified with suggestions that, for example, the size of the material used should be the same, as should the location of the ice-pops during the waiting time. From the start, pupils are taught to make predictions about what they think will happen in investigations. They are required to consider elements that can be measured in order to support their observations. For example, pupils suggest that they will measure the time it takes for ice-pops to melt. They use equipment such as stop-clocks with increasing skill and are learning to record their observations and results in a variety of scientific ways, including making notes, filling in tables and charts, and producing labelled drawings.
89. Pupils' very good progress in all aspects of science continues during Key Stage 2. For example, by age 11, pupils have gained extensive knowledge of materials. They use correct vocabulary to classify different types of rocks as *igneous*, *sedimentary* and *metamorphic*. When explaining about the structure of specific rocks, they use the terms *fragmental*, *crystalline*, *porous* and *impervious* knowledgeably. Practical, investigative work is central to all lessons and this is evident in pupils' very good skills in this aspect of science. In a Year 5 and 6 lesson, for example, pupils made predictions and then worked effectively in small groups on a variety of tasks such as testing the hardness of different rock samples and determining which were porous or non-porous. Discussions with pupils revealed that they have learned methods of separating materials, for example, by sieving and filtering. By age 11, pupils reach a high standard in recording science work. In their own words, pupils write predictions, list apparatus used and explain methods, results and conclusions. In this work, they include a wide range of scientific vocabulary.
90. The quality of teaching is very good at both key stages. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and high expectations of what pupils can achieve. This comes through clearly in their explanations and the questions they ask pupils, which continually reinforce correct use of scientific vocabulary. In all lessons, scientific investigations play a central role in teaching and learning. This is why pupils' understanding of scientific knowledge is so secure and their

investigative skills are so well developed. Lessons are organised and resourced down to the last detail so learning progresses smoothly and teachers are able to spend productive time working with pupils during practical tasks. Here they assess pupils through observation and by asking probing questions, supporting and challenging pupils as required. The pace of lessons is brisk, with teachers and pupils accomplishing much in the time allocated. Support staff, and parent helpers, make a very good contribution. Teachers are careful to thoroughly brief these individuals about their roles, often providing written guidance about, for example, the type of questions to ask and the vocabulary to promote.

91. The science curriculum, quality of leadership and ample, good quality resources, all make a very good contribution to the quality of teaching and learning and to the high standards pupils achieve.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

92. By ages seven and 11, all pupils have made very good progress and achieve high standards.
93. By age seven, pupils have experienced a wide range of art and design activities. Following the theme of pattern, pupils' observational drawings of shells, honeycomb and cross-sections of fruit and vegetables show excellent attention to detail. This includes care taken over achieving the correct size, proportion and perspective, as well as demonstrating very good use of pencils to show line and shading. During the inspection, pupils' understanding of pattern and skills in printing were developing very well in lessons. For example, younger pupils were using different surfaces to produce patterned squares to contribute to a large 'Patchwork Quilt'. Using the three primary colours, older pupils experimented with different surfaces before choosing those they would use to produce a pattern on a jumper-shaped piece of paper. Their finished work showed a good understanding of pattern and they had made considered choices about which colours worked well together and provided an effective contrast with the colour of paper they had chosen. Pupils' attention to detail and skills in colour mixing were evident in their work on enlarging a small section from patterned fabrics and wallpapers, in which they also learned about the work of artist/designer William Morris. Here too, pupils' work showed excellent attention to detail with the reproduction of colours from the original being almost perfect. The latter reflected the time and care that was obviously taken in blending colours to achieve just the right shade.
94. By age 11, pupils produce very impressive work in two and three dimensions. During the inspection, pupils were making masks from clay and mod-rock. Although on the same theme, each work was distinctive in style and showed pupils' creativity and skills in using tools and media to reflect the individuality of their piece, into which a great deal of care and pride had undoubtedly been invested. For example, the clay masks included a wide variety of patterned markings, whilst a wide range of mixed media and techniques, including detailed painting and collage work, had been used to decorate the mod-rock masks.
95. The production of such detailed, high quality work is a consequence of highly effective teaching of a very good curriculum. Pupils are given time to engage in practical work and there is an expectation that pieces should develop rather than be rushed-off in one lesson. The process begins with experimenting with techniques in sketchbooks before embarking on an original work. Pupils are also required to conduct research before and during their work to increase their knowledge, which ultimately improves the finished product. For instance, Year 5 and 6 pupils' research gave them an informed insight into how masks have been used in times past and present, and their role and meaning in different cultures, such as in Africa, India and Greece, which is clearly reflected in their own works. They also explained how masks could be moulded, cast or assembled and expanded upon the different techniques, most of them recounting enthusiastically their enjoyment at being 'covered up like a mummy or a film star' when having their individual masks cast from their faces. The very good progress in practical work is also evident in pupils' knowledge and understanding of the work of different artists and designers. For example, Year 3 and 4 pupils have learned how the architect Antoni Gaudi used mosaic tiling in his abstract works in parks in Spain. In response, they have created their own work based on his style. This includes large two-dimensional dragons and a three-dimensional seat, which effectively conveys the unique Mediterranean feel of the artist's work. In this, pupils have made good use of

mixed media, such as paint, crayon and oil pastels, to produce small patterned pieces; they then used collage technique to create the broken-tile effect used by Gaudi.

96. The quality of teaching is very good. Teachers prepare thoroughly for lessons, making sure their own subject knowledge and skills are secure, which results in detailed explanations and demonstrations. Lessons are well resourced and organised, with plenty of opportunity for pupils to practise skills and techniques. Teachers expect a lot from pupils and are rewarded by the high quality work they produce and their enthusiasm for the subject. They value all work that results from good effort and application and display pupils' work attractively in classrooms and corridors. Teachers are successful in making good links with other subjects and exploiting opportunities to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. In Years 3 and 4, for example, pupils learn that in various countries, Jesus is portrayed differently according to the environment and experiences of the painters and illustrators; teachers often use music to inspire pupils and evoke moods and feelings they wish to come through in artwork.
97. The subject is led and managed very well. The high standards noted by the last inspection have been maintained.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

98. By ages seven and 11, all pupils have made very good progress and achieve standards that are above those expected for their age. This represents a significant improvement since the last inspection when standards were below average at age 11.
99. By age seven, pupils have acquired good skills in designing, making and evaluating. During the inspection, pupils were learning about lever and sliding mechanisms and how some of these are used in making everyday objects, such as scissors. After noting the way real scissors work, the pupils joined two pieces of card, representing the two halves of the scissors, with split-pins, and were successful in creating their own lever mechanism. They have also produced labelled plans and drawings of playground structures such as slides and see-saws and made pages for a book that feature sliding mechanisms. Work with textiles has included designing and making a purse, where pupils listed the materials they would use and wrote out step-by-step instructions and simple, but clear, evaluations after making the product, which incorporated the development of needlework skills in producing patterned stitches. In addition to written evaluations, pupils discuss, with teachers and their classmates, how they could improve their work. During the inspection, some pupils showed their card scissors to the whole school in a celebration assembly and shared their experience of making them and what they might do to improve them.
100. By age 11, pupils conduct a 'slipper analysis' before designing their own patterns for slippers. They investigate the materials used for the sole, lining and upper and consider the shape and possible alternative decorative aspects, in relation to target consumers, for example, whether the slippers are for children, teenagers, men, women or old people. Pupils' slipper patterns show that they have learned to consider seam allowances, the type of material used to enhance safety as well as comfort factors, and growing space, for example in children's slippers. Year 3 and 4 pupils investigate photograph frames, looking at the component parts and making links with mathematics as they recognise that triangular structures provide reinforcement and stability. The detailed portfolio of photographic and other evidence, detailing work that is often too large to retain in school, also show pupils' very good progress
101. There is a very good curriculum for the subject. This ensures that pupils receive a broad range of learning experiences that address the three key factors of design planning, making and evaluating, and allow pupils to build upon earlier skills as they get older. The distinctive features of this subject and art and design are made clear, both in planning and teaching, whilst obvious links are exploited, for example, as in the work completed by recent Year 6 pupils on African jewellery and tie-dyeing. Here, the Zulu meanings for colour and pattern were researched and reproduced in beads and other jewellery. Very good links are also made with other subjects. For instance, in a linked activity, science, geographical and art knowledge and skills were all effectively supported when pupils investigated the appropriateness of different materials for tie-dyeing and providing

clothing in Kenya.

102. The quality of teaching is very good. Teachers' secure subject knowledge allows them to plan interesting activities that incorporate good opportunities for pupils to use a wide range of resources. This promotes effective learning. Teachers provide very good support for pupils' learning in all elements of the design, make and evaluate process. For example, they challenge pupils with questions that make them think about what they will do, the materials they will use, and how their work might be improved. The co-ordinator provides effective leadership, including a very good role model for teaching the subject.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

103. By age 11, pupils' standards are in line with national expectations. This represents good improvement since the last inspection, which found standards to be below those expected. It is not possible to make secure judgements about seven-year-olds' standards and progress in geography. This is because, in line with the school's acceptable strategy for alternating curriculum time for geography and history, the subject was not being taught to pupils at Key Stage 1 during the inspection. Moreover, because the timing of the inspection was near the beginning of the academic year, there was limited evidence available for analysis in pupils' workbooks.
104. By age 11, pupils discuss areas they are studying in terms of how the human and physical processes impact upon the environment. They explain causes of global warming and make suggestions on how its effects can be minimised. They identify different information sources such as the Internet, books, CD-ROMs and photographs. In discussion, pupils satisfactorily compared different localities in terms of their differences and used subject-specific vocabulary such as *primary*, *secondary* and *tertiary* to describe the land. Pupils' increasing awareness of the physical features of landscapes is evident in the maps they produce, which include features such as contour keys and weather information. Pupils' written work shows a secure understanding of the effects of human influences on the environment.
105. It is not possible to make secure judgements about teaching at Key Stage 1. From the two lessons seen, and the analysis of pupils' work at Key Stage 2, the quality of teaching is good at this key stage. The lessons seen were well planned and work was appropriately matched to pupils' needs and prior attainment. Subject-specific vocabulary is taught and teachers expect pupils to use this in their explanations. The work in pupils' books is carefully marked, with suggestions about how pupils can improve. Pupils are encouraged to work independently and develop study skills such as note taking, interpreting data and using photographs and other evidence.

## **HISTORY**

106. It was not possible to see any history lessons during the inspection so judgements about pupils' standards and progress are made on the basis of an analysis of their work and discussions with them and with teachers. By ages seven and 11, pupils' standards are at least in line with those expected for their ages. This is a similar situation to that found at the time of the last inspection.
107. By age seven, pupils have gained a secure understanding of the passage of time. They compare their own childhood experiences with that of their grandparents and, through this, gain a good insight into how things, such as school, toys and leisure activities, have changed over time. Pupils provide simple but clear explanations about why gas masks were needed in World War II. They are developing skills of finding information from different sources such as books, photographs and, for example, by devising a simple questionnaire for their grandparents. They also know that they can find out about the past from the Internet and by visiting museums. Pupils can vividly remember the 'Victorian Day' held at the school, explaining how they took part in games from the past such as hop-scotch and used whipping tops and hoops.
108. By age 11, pupils know a range of ways to find out about the past. They know the difference

between primary and secondary sources and accurately identify logbooks, census returns and building surveys as the former. They know that some sources of evidence, such as books or verbal accounts, have to be viewed cautiously as they may provide biased perspectives. Their work on local history in Victorian times has allowed them to make informed comparisons between their own lives and the lives of people living over a century ago, in particular about occupations, education and domestic life.

109. All pupils make progress that is at least satisfactory. As they move through the school their knowledge of significant events, people and dates increases alongside their skills in researching the past. At Key Stage 2, Year 3 and 4 pupils demonstrated a good insight into life in Tudor England, which was effectively supported by their visit to Gainsborough Old Hall. While there, they dressed in Tudor costume and engaged in role-play and other activities such as preparing a meal. They examined documents such as house inventories and gained an understanding of how the lives of rich and poor people differed.
110. Although no lessons were seen, the work completed by pupils and the good insight they demonstrated in discussions shows that teaching is at least satisfactory. The scheme of work is very good and ensures that pupils increase their knowledge, skills and understanding as they get older. There are good opportunities for pupils to examine historical artefacts and to engage in role-play, the latter helping pupils develop skills of empathy with people from the past. Visits and visitors make a good contribution to teaching and learning.
111. The subject is well led and managed. There has been good improvement since the last inspection. Historical skills are now developed effectively and there is no evidence of teaching and learning being unsatisfactory. Resources are of good quality and provide effective support for teaching and learning.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

112. By ages seven and 11, pupils' standards are in line with national expectations. This is an improvement since the last inspection when standards were below average.
113. By age seven, pupils use ICT to communicate in words, pictures, graphs and charts. They use the standard keyboard successfully to write short stories, poems, advertisements and accounts, making appropriate use of the correct keys to delete letters, produce capitals and lower-case letters and create spacing. These activities enhance pupils' capability with ICT and also support their developing knowledge and skills in literacy and in subjects such as history or science, where they write about the work they have completed. When pupils use art packages, they show good control of the mouse, using this purposefully to select colours and tools to create patterns or draw pictures. During the inspection, pupils produced some very good pictures for the front of Christmas cards, including candles, Christmas trees, and presents. Pupils are competent in using the 'fill' option on art packages and, during the inspection, were learning to use the 'undo' option. Each of these often produced comments such as 'wow' as pupils saw their creations changing instantly with one keystroke. Pupils are learning to log-on and off the school's network and many use drop-down menus to save and print their work. Pupils have learned how to use simple databases to sort and classify information, for example about their favourite foods, and then produce simple bar charts that show the information in graph form. There is insufficient evidence to judge pupils' understanding and skills in control technology, but there is good evidence that they engage in work of this type.
114. By age 11, pupils are competent to use computers to communicate ideas in a variety of forms. They have composed lengthy texts at the computer, making creative use of facilities to change the size and appearance of the font. When using word processing programs they know how to use 'cut and paste' techniques to amend and organise their work and explain how to import pictures and tables from other programs and how to 'centre', 'justify' and 'border' text to enhance its presentation. Good examples were seen in pupils' word-processed poems, advertisements, questionnaires, surveys and newspaper articles. Pupils have made good use of data handling programs to enter, store and present information. Many give clear explanations about how they

use these programs to produce spreadsheets, charts and graphs. Pupils are developing satisfactory skills in using control technology. They use programs such as LOGO to follow instructions to draw a square, linking their knowledge that right-angles have 90 degrees to support them in this. Pupils have good understanding of how ICT is used in the everyday world. They readily access the Internet and CD-ROM encyclopaedias to research information in a range of subjects. For example, during the inspection, some pupils were using the Internet to find out about rocks and landscapes to support their work in science and geography. Pupils explained that in searches of this kind they must choose key words carefully to ensure they get the information they want. For example, two pupils had learned that simply typing in the word 'Rock' provided information about rock music and rock groups which, although capturing pupils' interest, was not useful for the research they had been asked to conduct.

115. The teaching of ICT has improved since the last inspection and is now satisfactory. Teachers have received significant training in the subject since 1998 and the school stipulates that all newly appointed teachers should be competent in ICT. These measures have resulted in a teaching staff with improved subject knowledge, skills and confidence to teach the subject. The impact is evident in the improvements to pupils' learning and standards. In a short time, the school has done much to address the ICT key issue made by the last inspection. There is now a very good curriculum that meets statutory requirements and provides the structure for pupils to receive a broad range of learning experiences, which are set in relevant contexts and also support learning in other subjects. Teachers are working hard to ensure their lessons provide opportunities for pupils to make use of the considerably improved resources and facilities. They are often successful in this, but accept that they still miss some opportunities. However, improving pupils' standards and the quality of teaching in ICT is a high priority for the school, with a continual emphasis on making use of ICT across the curriculum. The detailed action plan identifies this, and other initiatives, and provides a very good basis for continued improvement. Curriculum organisation makes provision for all pupils to use the ICT suite for discrete lessons in the subject, with the skills taught being practised during the week on classroom computers and in the suite, when it is available. Overall, this is working well, although there are still a few 'teething problems'. For example, infant pupils understandably found it difficult to sustain interest and concentration in watching their friends work at the computers whilst waiting for their turn. In this lesson, much of the teaching input was good, but the organisation meant that a lot of the teacher's time was spent maintaining the attention of those pupils not using the computers.
116. The school makes very good use of ICT to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils frequently marvel at the ease of accessing information and the dramatic effects they can create with the click of the mouse. They know the rules for safe Internet use and respect these. Their input in producing aspects of the school newsletter, e-mailing pupils in an American school and participating in the after-school ICT club do much to enhance their social skills and cultural awareness.

## **MUSIC**

117. By age seven, pupils' standards are in line with national expectations. This represents an improvement since the last inspection, when standards at the end of this key stage were below average; progress at Key Stage 1 is now good. Since the last inspection, specialist teaching has been provided at Key Stage 2 and, as a result, progress is very good. By age 11, pupils' standards are at least in line with what is expected for their ages.
118. By age seven, pupils sing a range of songs from memory and quite well in tune. They clap simple rhythms and are able to keep a steady beat. Pupils are making very good progress at learning to follow symbolic notation. For example, in an activity using playing cards, pupils respond correctly to the different body percussion sounds that had been assigned to each suite, such as clapping, clicking fingers and tapping knees or head. Whilst performing these action sounds for the specified number denoted by the card, pupils concentrated hard to keep in time with each other and maintain the rhythm. Progressing from this, pupils worked in pairs to compose their own sound sequences within the challenge set by the teacher, that all compositions must add up to eight. During this activity, the pupils worked hard in the limited, but appropriate, time allowed, and were

keen to make their compositions as individual as possible.

119. During Years 3 and 4, pupils develop their awareness of sound quality. For example, they learn that holding and striking instruments in different ways and with different beaters or implements alters the sounds produced. They then use this knowledge when composing, as a class, the musical accompaniment to a song depicting a variety of sounds such as dogs barking and people blowing kisses. Their understanding of symbolic notation is extended as they suggest interpretations of what symbols such as zig-zags, squiggles and dots might represent in terms of sounds and instruments. By age 11, pupils have gained a good understanding of the musical concepts of pitch, dynamics, tempo and rhythm and identify all of these by name from sung demonstrations by the teacher. Indeed, many are successful at representing these concepts in their own singing, showing good confidence in singing solo in front of their classmates. Their voices have developed well and they maintain good rhythm and tune when singing and show good control over breathing and diction. Pupils listen thoughtfully to different types of music, appraising two pieces well in terms of the different moods they evoke. They worked well collaboratively, in small groups, to compose a musical montage, which included some of the musical concepts learned about in the lesson. Pupils' work, based upon depicting different sports, showed very good creativity, with each group working hard to successfully complete their sequence in the short, but sufficient, time allowed.
120. The quality of teaching is good at Key Stage 1 and very good, with some excellent teaching, at Key Stage 2. This is supporting pupils' rising standards and compensating very well for the below average standards noted in 1998, the effects of which are being continuously eliminated. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and ensure lessons contain a good balance between listening and appraising, and singing and composing. There are always plenty of good quality resources for pupils to use. The activities set include a good degree of challenge and show teachers' high expectations. Pupils respond very well to these high quality lessons and their enjoyment of music is evident. They apply themselves well to the range of tasks required, being keen to produce good work for their teachers and for their own satisfaction. Lessons give pupils the opportunity to grow in confidence, with many pupils readily singing aloud by themselves. These efforts are genuinely valued by other pupils, with a real atmosphere of 'shared experience' in lessons, which can really be classed as 'spiritual'.
121. Improvements have also occurred to the curriculum, which is now very good. The carousel system of teaching at Key Stage 2 is working very well and helping to raise standards because all pupils are benefiting from being taught by specialists. Leadership and management is very good, with the co-ordinator providing an excellent role model for teaching music.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

122. It was only possible to observe three lessons during the inspection and one of these focused on swimming. Consequently, it is not possible to make secure, overall judgements on the standards pupils achieve by ages seven and 11. However, in the lesson seen at Key Stage 1, the standard of work demonstrated by Year 2 pupils was above that which is normally expected for their ages, whilst in the Key Stage 2 lesson, Year 6 pupils were performing at the level expected for their age. Standards in swimming are above average, with all pupils achieving the expected standards by age 11, and many achieving beyond the level expected.
123. By age seven, pupils travel around the hall in a variety of ways and at varying speeds, making different shapes with their bodies as they do so. They use the hall space well and can link a series of movements to make a sequence. Their movements show increasing control over co-ordination and developing creativity. For example, they depict very effectively the slow, lumbering movements of a hippopotamus wallowing in mud. Progress over time was evident in the Year 6 lesson where pupils showed greater control and precision in executing their movements and were quick to follow commands that required them to alter their speed and direction. These pupils had gained good co-operative skills and worked effectively in groups to arrange their own African dance routines, which demonstrated their application of a number of different techniques and ideas. Most Year 4 pupils swim lengths unaided using different strokes such as the front crawl and backstroke.

They have gained good confidence in the water and are enthusiastic to improve their skills.

124. At both key stages, pupils are keen to learn and behave well in lessons. They understand the importance of warming up and cooling down exercises and the effects of exercise on their bodies. They respond well to the teaching, which is good at both key stages. Teachers ensure that pupils have plenty of time to practise and perfect new skills and encourage them to appraise their own and others' performance. In this work, teachers use questioning and time very well to enable pupils to reflect critically on their work and explain how it could be improved. Teachers praise good performances and adopt an encouraging manner with all pupils, which supports effective learning. Teachers are also skilled at demonstrating techniques and use their voices effectively to motivate pupils and maintain good class control. Swimming is taught very well, with very good attention paid to safety aspects as well as raising pupils' confidence in the water and helping them to improve their strokes.
125. Extra-curricular provision makes a very good contribution to this subject. Pupils are able to participate in a wide range of activities, including football, netball, volleyball, cricket and country dancing. Competitive matches are arranged with other schools and the school is represented at most local competitive events. During the inspection, the football club was 'rained off', but pupils attending the country dancing session were gaining very good skills in executing both simple and complex dance steps with precision, whilst maintaining good timing to the accompanying music. In this they worked very well as part of a group, and their enthusiasm, and the teacher's, was boundless, which contributed very well to the high standards displayed.
126. Although only a few lessons were seen, the very good scheme of work shows that pupils receive a comprehensive curriculum that covers all aspects of physical education and supports their progress as they move through the school. The new co-ordinator has a clear vision for improvement, which includes using video recordings of model gymnastics lessons as a resource to support teaching and learning. There are good records of individual pupils' attainment that are used by teachers to inform lesson planning. The school has monitored teaching and the results have been used effectively to improve teaching provision and pupils' performance.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

127. By ages seven and 11, pupils have made good progress and achieve standards that are above the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus implemented by the school. This represents an improvement since the last inspection.
128. By age seven, pupils know that people hold different religious beliefs and worship in different ways and in different places. Visits to the local Christian church and a synagogue have supported children's learning very well, as have the opportunities they have had to question visiting religious leaders from different faiths about the values and beliefs associated with their particular form of worship and prayer. As a result, pupils can make simple comparisons between different religions. For example, they compare the Jewish Shabbat and the Christian Harvest. Pupils have learned about different creation stories and clearly describe the events surrounding the birth of Jesus at Christmas and His death at Easter. Their learning is well supported by opportunities to engage in role-play, for example, of Christian weddings and christenings. Younger pupils in this key stage describe people and possessions that are special to them and learn that it is important to take care of special items and respect and value the special possessions of their friends.
129. By age 11, pupils have a good knowledge of several world faiths. In particular they talk knowledgeably about the special books, customs and festivals of the Christian, Hindu and Islamic religions. Pupils have good knowledge of the Bible and the sacred books used by other religions. For example they know that the Qur'an is the sacred scripture of Islam. They explain how the Bible is written and collated into the New and Old Testaments and can find biblical references by chapter and verse. They discuss concepts of justice, freedom and responsibility.
130. As a result of good teaching, including specialist teaching for pupils at Key Stage 2, pupils make good progress. For example, in Years 3 and 4, pupils focus on Bible stories as a reference to



compare beliefs and customs of people in Old and New Testament times. They also learn to compare some significant Biblical events to their own life experiences. For example, they study the story of Moses and the Ten Commandments and compare this to the importance of having rules at school and at home. Teachers have good subject knowledge and deliver lessons with sensitivity and respect. The carousel system implemented to allow pupils at Key Stage 2 to receive teaching from a specialist in this subject is working well and ensuring that pupils receive the same good quality learning experiences. Throughout the school, lessons are well planned, identifying the most significant teaching and learning points, assessment opportunities and the resources required.

131. Teachers often make good links with learning in other subjects such as literacy, ICT, art and history. For example, Key Stage 2 pupils used the Internet to research information about the main tenets of different world religions. Similarly, they have looked at how artists from different countries and cultures depict Christ, and have learned about the tensions between art and Christianity over the centuries. Pupils in this key stage learn how historians have used various methods to record the events in the life of Christ and that some differences in interpretation exist in the Bible in the same way as exists in other written evidence sources. Teachers make good use of artefacts and other resources such as videos, transcripts and visits out of school to support pupils' learning. Lessons also make a valuable contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.