

# INSPECTION REPORT

**GREAT SMEATON COMMUNITY PRIMARY  
SCHOOL**

Great Smeaton

LEA area: North Yorkshire

Unique reference number: 121297

Headteacher: Mr C Wood

Reporting inspector: Mr J Lea  
OIN: 21193

Dates of inspection: 13 – 15 November 2000

Inspection number: 225166

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Great Smeaton Northallerton North Yorkshire
Postcode:	DL6 2EQ
Telephone/fax number:	01609 881349
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr R Turner
Date of previous inspection:	11 <sup>th</sup> November 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
J Lea 21193	Registered inspector	English Religious education Physical education Design and technology Music Foundation Stage Special educational needs Equal opportunities	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
D Heath 9777	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
K Saltfleet 22291	Team inspector	Mathematics Science Information and communication technology Art and design History Geography	How well are pupils taught? How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

The inspection contractor was: SLA Inspections, 40 Weelsby Road, Grimsby, DN32OPR.

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London WC2B 6SE

## REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>6</b>
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	
<b>How high are standards?</b>	<b>10</b>
The school's results and achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
<b>How well are pupils taught?</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>How well does the school care for its pupils?</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>How well does the school work in partnership with parents?</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>How well is the school led and managed?</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>What should the school do to improve further?</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES</b>	<b>22</b>

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

The school is situated in Great Smeaton midway between Darlington and Northallerton. Its catchment area includes the villages of Entercommon, Hornby, Girsby and High and Low Worsall and outlying farms. A significant number of the 74 pupils on roll live outside this area. When compared with the national picture, the proportion of children relatively advantaged in socio-economic terms is broadly average. Unemployment levels in the area are below the average for the country. The school is set within a strong local community and parents take a keen interest in the progress of their children; virtually every family is represented at parents' evenings. A substantial number of parents work in agriculture or the professions. The number on roll in January 2000 shows that the school is much smaller than other primary schools, when compared with the average size nationally of 226 pupils. The school admits children to the reception class at the start of the academic year after their fourth birthday. Most pupils have had some experience of pre-school education. Attainment on entry is broadly in line with the level of attainment generally expected of children rising five, representing the full ability range. There are currently eight children in the school who are under five. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is below the national average. Two pupils have Statements of Special Educational Need and this is above the average for schools of this type. There are currently no children speaking English as an additional language.

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

This is an effective school with many strengths. In both key stages and in all subjects most pupils attain standards expected of their age. A significant number reach a higher level. Teaching throughout the school is good and often very good. The school is well managed and enjoys the support of a well-informed governing body. The school gives good value for money.

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

- Achievement is high in English, mathematics and science.
- Pupils attain high standards in music.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around school is very good.
- Teaching and learning are consistently good.
- Provision for pupils' moral and social development is very good.
- The school cares well for its pupils providing good educational guidance and personal support.
- The school provides an environment in which pupils are encouraged to learn.

#### **What could be improved**

- Some aspects of creative writing.
- Opportunities for teachers to monitor the teaching and learning in those subjects for which they have particular responsibility.
- Outdoor provision for pupils in the Foundation Stage.

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

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

The school has made good progress since the last inspection in its response to the key issues of the previous report. It has ensured that its good features have been maintained.

The staff have responded positively to the challenges presented and have moved a long way towards meeting them. Managerial and curriculum responsibilities have been reviewed and distributed more equitably. This has given teachers specific responsibility for at least three subjects of the curriculum. The school makes greater use of marking to raise pupils' expectations and to complement its sound assessment arrangements particularly in the core subjects. The school development plan incorporates the use of success criteria and is now a useful working document. Significant changes have been made in the range of equipment and work taught in information and communication technology throughout the school. Grants from the National Grid for Learning have allowed the school to buy new computers and software. More opportunities for pupils to gain an understanding of other cultures and traditions have been created through a review of curriculum planning. The numeracy hour has had a positive effect on pupils' understanding of number.

## STANDARDS

The children in the Foundation Stage make sound progress so that by the time they are five, most are achieving the Early Learning Goals. At both key stages, most pupils attain the expected level for their age in English, mathematics and science; a significant number reach a higher level. The majority of pupils, including those with special educational needs, make sound progress. At both key stages pupils achieve expected standards in information and communication technology. In religious education pupils achieve the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils enjoy school and work hard in their lessons.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good overall. Pupils have respect for each other and for adults.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships throughout the school are good. Pupils are encouraged to become independent learners.
Attendance	Very good.

Pupils' attitudes to school are very positive. They are courteous and polite. A feature of all classrooms is the very good relationships between pupils themselves and their teachers.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching throughout the school is overwhelmingly good and examples of this good teaching were seen in all lessons. A feature of teaching throughout the school is the good management of pupils and the range of opportunities provided to meet their interests

and abilities. In 52 per cent of lessons seen, the teaching is good and in 48 per cent it is very good.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school curriculum is broad and balanced and provides well for pupils' learning opportunities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Pupils are given good support and they make good progress towards meeting the targets set in their individual education plans.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Overall, good. Their moral and social development are particularly good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school provides good care for all its pupils in an effective learning environment.

Parents strongly support the school in all its work

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides strong leadership for the school. He is supported well by a hardworking team of teachers. All staff and adults make a good contribution to pupils' learning.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors fulfil their responsibilities well.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school development plan is a good document which is effective in giving a firm basis on which to measure the school's effectiveness. Pupils' performances in tests are analysed and the results are used as a basis for setting new targets.
The strategic use of resources	There are sufficient well-qualified staff with good classroom support. The school uses its resources well. Accommodation is satisfactory overall.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

<b>What pleases parents most</b>	<b>What parents would like to see improved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Their children like coming to school.</li><li>• Standards achieved.</li><li>• The progress they make.</li><li>• The good behaviour.</li><li>• Good standards of teaching throughout the school.</li><li>• The school's expectations.</li><li>• Promotion of good attitudes and values.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Arrangements for homework.</li><li>• The range of activities outside lessons.</li><li>• Some aspects of public relations.</li></ul>

The inspection supports the positive views expressed by the parents. The school is reviewing the provision it makes for homework. The range of activities available to pupils outside lessons is satisfactory for a small school.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. The number of pupils who took the statutory tests at the end of both key stages in 2000 was too few to make valid comparisons with national and local figures. However, they do substantially reflect the findings of the inspection, which shows that in English, mathematics and science most pupils at both key stages attain the expected level for their age. A significant number of pupils, at both key stages, reach a higher level. The majority of pupils, including those with special educational needs, make sound progress. However, there is a need to exercise caution when comparing attainment against national benchmarks when small numbers of pupils are involved. Differences in ability between year groups can have a distorting effect. The expectation that performance at the end of Key Stage 1 is an indicator of performance at Key Stage 2 is only valid as long as the cohort stays the same for the four intervening years.
2. Inspection evidence indicates that the majority of children in the reception class are likely to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the time they are five. They are given good opportunities to develop their independence and positive attitudes to learning. There is a clear emphasis on developing children's language and literacy skills. They are becoming comfortable with numbers and shapes, and are finding out about the world around them in and beyond their own environment.

#### **English**

3. At both key stages, pupils' oracy skills are good. At Key Stage 1, the youngest pupils listen carefully to what their classmates have to say and willingly talk about their interests. As they move through the key stage they further develop their ideas, speak clearly and use a growing vocabulary. By the end of the key stage pupils are speaking in imaginative ways and expressing ideas and feelings in a variety of different situations. In Key Stage 2, pupils talk about the poems they have read and reasons why they like them. Most pupils are articulate and listen carefully to each other and their teachers. By the time they leave the school they can talk and listen confidently in a wide range of subjects.
4. Standards of reading throughout the school mirror pupils' overall attainment in English. As they move through Key Stage 1, most pupils develop a good phonic knowledge and a relatively extensive sight vocabulary. They are confident in recognising the high frequency word lists appropriate to their age. By the end of the key stage they can read these easily in and out of context and are well launched into reading. Those pupils reading at a higher level are well on the way to becoming fluent and confident readers. By the time they leave the school most pupils are independent readers who read with interest, fluency and pace. They are aware of different authors, have their favourites and understand the importance of plot and characters. Pupils who reach a higher level are accurate and well motivated readers who fully understand what they read.
5. In Key Stage 1, well-organised brainstorming sessions encourage pupils to develop ideas on settings and characters. They understand that a story has a beginning, middle and end and are starting to write independently in sentences. By the age of seven, most pupils can write stories in the correct sequence with properly organised

sentences and for a range of purposes. They use their skills well in narrative work. The meaning is clear and their use of punctuation is mainly accurate. The presentation of work is good. Pupils' handwriting is neat clear and well formed.

6. In Key Stage 2, pupils continue to progress, for example, exploring the text in newspapers for complex and exciting vocabulary. Most pupils are developing a sound understanding of how English works. They recognise the need to write for different purposes with a particular audience in mind. The presentation of work is good overall. Higher attainers write in some volume, in a mature personal style showing clear well punctuated writing that is correctly paragraphed. The majority of pupils develop and understand the conventions of story writing well through a regular practice. However, although pupils' writing has sufficient detail to engage the reader, it sometimes lacks that imaginative vocabulary and vitality to really make it interesting.

## **Mathematics**

7. Key Stage 1, pupils build on their work in the Foundation Stage. There is much practical work taking place and this has a positive impact on pupils' learning. At Key Stage 1, the youngest pupils use ordinal numbers to ten with understanding and count in tens to 100. In their investigative work they record their findings and draw conclusions. They recognise and name two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes. By the end of the key stage the majority of pupils are developing effective mental strategies with quick recall of addition and subtraction facts to ten and 20. At Key Stage 2, pupils' mental strategies continue to develop well and they carry out relatively complex calculations accurately. Most are beginning to use mathematics in real life situations. Their understanding of shape, space and measurement is good. By the time pupils leave the school their multiplication skills are well developed.

## **Science**

8. Pupils in Key Stage 1 are developing useful exploration and investigative skills. Most understand the need for a fair test and are able to make accurate predictions. Their understanding of physical processes is sound. They identify and classify accurately the properties of common materials. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have a good understanding of living things and what is required to sustain life. In Key Stage 2, pupils' investigative skills continue to develop. They make good use of fair tests and predictions, and use scientific terms confidently. They can identify a wide range of materials and have a good understanding of how they change under certain conditions. In their work on forces, they understand friction and gravity, and the rotation of the Earth and the Moon. Most pupils can talk with understanding about the main organs of the body. All have a basic understanding of electricity and can construct a simple circuit.
9. In information and communication technology pupils at both key stages make sound progress and attain standards appropriate to their age. By the time they leave school, pupils have a wide range of skills, which they effectively apply to other subjects, such as literacy and geography. However, there is a need for pupils in Key Stage 2 to have more opportunities in the use of spreadsheets, the application of control technology, and monitoring, for example, using sensors for data logging. Attainment in religious education is in line with the requirements of the agreed syllabus. Throughout the school, pupils achieve good standards in music. In all other subjects, at both key stages, pupils achieve standards normally expected of pupils of these ages.

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

10. Pupils' positive attitudes to work, their behaviour and personal development have been sustained since the last inspection and remain a strength of the school.
11. Pupils have very good attitudes to work. They are well motivated, enjoy learning and are keen to respond to the challenges offered. Children in the Foundation Stage show that they have settled well, they respond well to the teacher in story time, they sustain concentration and the majority speak confidently and clearly. They are good at taking turns and sharing equipment. This pattern of good response continues throughout the school and has a positive impact on the standards achieved. Pupils settle quickly to new tasks and work with purpose and good levels of concentration. Pupils with special educational needs relate well to adults and to other pupils.
12. Behaviour throughout the school day is very good. This confirms parents' views. Pupils clearly know what is expected of them and they behave accordingly. Around the school they behave sensibly and move around in a controlled and orderly way. Incidents of bullying are rare and none were reported during inspection. There have been no exclusions this year.
13. Pupils' personal development is also very good. They are confident and clearly respect each other's rights, feelings and values. The older children are keen to take responsibility and to help younger children as was seen in the dining room at lunch-time. The children are well mannered and respectful. The quality of relationships among pupils and between pupils and staff is good and makes an important contribution to pupils' learning.
14. Attendance is above the national average for primary schools; pupils are punctual and lessons start on time.

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

15. The quality of teaching seen throughout the school is overwhelmingly good. To be more specific, in 52 per cent of lessons it is good and in a further 48 per cent very good. There is little difference in the quality of teaching between the three stages in the school. This shows an impressive consistency since the last inspection when similar high standards were seen and relates directly to the maintenance of high standards of achievement, particularly in the core subjects.
16. The context for this successful teaching is the high expectations of teachers and the good attitudes and behaviour of the pupils. Relationships are also very good with pupils working within what can best be described as a 'family atmosphere'. This level of trust and respect underpins the values of the school. It ensures that its aims are met and creates an effective learning environment. In the best lessons, teachers let their enthusiasm show and make learning fun. They lead by example, challenge their pupils to succeed and this has a direct effect on maintaining pupils' interest and involvement. In the words of one teacher, "we provide the happiness factor", and "don't allow failure".
17. Teachers subject knowledge is good, particularly in the basic skills in literacy and numeracy, for example, in the teaching of phonics and mental arithmetic. They use information and communication technology well to support work in other subjects. Pupils are managed very well with a quiet but effective authority. Procedures for promoting good behaviour and discipline make a significant contribution to pupils' attainment and progress. Teachers know their pupils well and succeed in matching

work to the wide ability range in their classes. The needs of pupils with special educational needs are clearly identified and implemented through their individual education plans. Teachers make good use of pupil support assistants. They work under the direction of the teacher with individuals or groups of pupils, particularly those with special educational needs.

18. All teachers use a variety of approaches to classroom management. These include whole class, mixed ability, paired and individual work. Teaching has its most impact when it is clearly focused on the skills to be taught through a range of well thought out strategies and activities. For example, science is taught through an investigative approach, allowing pupils to learn through first hand experiences, which are designed to make them think. It also gives them good opportunities to work independently. This emphasis on developing pupils' good work habits is reinforced throughout the school. This results in pupils transferring to secondary school with confidence in their own ability and to use their own initiative.
19. Teachers encourage their pupils to talk about their work, which in turn extends their vocabulary and confidence. A feature of all the lessons seen is the way teachers use questioning in the introductory and plenary sessions. Its impact is to involve all pupils in the lesson, make them think and deepen their understanding. They use this well to assess and evaluate pupils' learning. Throughout the school pupils' learning is good. In the majority of lessons seen pupils have a positive attitude and show good levels of concentration and independence. The productivity and pace of pupils' working are good.
20. Pupils' work is marked daily and is effective in helping pupils improve on their work. Overall, the quality and use of ongoing assessment are satisfactory. It is most effective when it is used to identify what pupils have learned in the lesson and to plan their future work. Inconsistent setting of homework is an issue mentioned by the parents at their meeting and through their answers in the returned questionnaires. In response, the school is reviewing its provision throughout the school to ensure that pupils are set work to effectively build on their work in school.

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

21. The quality and range of learning opportunities throughout the school are good, and meet the requirements of the National Curriculum. The school has made a good start to the new curriculum changes. In the Foundation Stage, the curriculum is based on the Early Learning Goals with full coverage of the areas of learning. At Key Stages 1 and 2, it is broad and balanced and is socially inclusive. Equality of access to the curriculum is very good. All pupils have a range of opportunities planned to meet their interests and aptitudes. Religious education is taught in line with the locally agreed syllabus.
22. The school has made a conscious decision to ensure that the foundation subjects retain their importance and are covered in some depth. Visits out of, and visitors to school play an important part in this approach. For example, pupils in Key Stage 1 visit the local egg farm to complement their work in science and geography. Older pupils have their history brought alive by writing with quills, and pike drill under the supervision of a visitor in Tudor costume.
23. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The Code of Practice has been fully implemented and the policy is clear and informative. The school works hard

to meet pupils' needs and the majority achieve standards in line with their abilities. Individual education plans are in place with realistic targets. Class teachers use these in their everyday planning to ensure that work is focused and relevant to pupils' individual needs. Parents agree that all pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

24. The school has effective strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy. Planning in both key stages follows the relevant framework guidelines and meets the needs of pupils in mixed age classes. Good use is made of information and communication technology through, for example, planned opportunities for pupils to practise their spelling and multiplication skills. Schemes of work are in place for all subjects. These are supported by informative medium-term plans. Some subject policies are in need of review. Time allocations are appropriate for the range of subjects taught. Work is differentiated through teachers' medium and short-term planning. Short-term planning identifies clear learning objectives with opportunities for teachers to make daily notes and assess what pupils have learned.
25. Provision for extra-curricular activities is satisfactory, particularly for a small school although some parents would like to see more. These activities include a successful after school club for pupils, accompanied by their parents, to have extra mathematics tuition. There are opportunities for pupils to receive paid instrumental music tuition, including brass, woodwind and guitar. Older pupils take part in residential trips, for example, to Seahouses and Boggle Hole. These give useful links with other subjects, for example, with physical education, geography, orienteering at East Barmby Residential Centre. There are good links with the other nine schools in the local cluster. Pupils compete with their peers in sports such as football, netball, cricket and cross-country running. Links with secondary schools are effective to make sure that pupils transfer as smoothly as possible. The resources of the village and surrounding countryside are used to provide relevant first hand experiences, especially in history, geography and religious education.
26. The school has a programme of social and personal education. Health education, including the awareness of drugs is covered in the school's science curriculum. In sex education questions are dealt with sensitively and appropriately as they arise.
27. There are good links with the local community, which make a useful contribution to pupils' learning. For example, younger pupils take part in a Baptism service at St Eloys Church and the local rector regularly visits school, making an important contribution to assemblies and religious education. Visits to the Crucial Crew give the oldest pupils opportunities to learn life skills, including personal safety. The school has a number of links with the local business community. The Parent Teacher Association makes a substantial contribution to the school in terms of financial support through fund raising and social events. A good example is the planned school extension, with 50 per cent of the finance raised by them alone.
28. The school's provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. Assemblies play an important part in the life of the school with an emphasis on Christian values and beliefs. They give pupils a sense of belonging to a whole school community, celebrating and appreciating each other's contributions and achievements. They are planned effectively to encompass a wide range of themes throughout the year. Pupils are given opportunities to reflect upon their own and other people's beliefs and develop their own spiritual awareness. Collective worship and subjects such as religious education, geography and history are useful contributors.

29. The school's promotion of pupils' moral development is very good. All staff and adults in the school reinforce the school's high expectations of behaviour fostered within a whole family philosophy. Pupils are given many very good opportunities to develop values such as honesty, fairness, independence and respect. They are taught to respect differences in others. Pupils learn how to learn from their mistakes and to be responsible for their own behaviour. They can clearly distinguish between right and wrong. Parents value this approach and rightly believe that the school is helping their children to become mature and responsible.
30. Provision for pupils' social development is very good. This results in very positive relationships between pupils themselves and between the adults with whom they work. Older pupils care particularly well for younger pupils in the playground and around the school. Teachers provide good opportunities for collaborative and individual work during lessons. For example, the school's investigative approach to science encourages pupils to take responsibility and use their initiative.
31. Pupils' cultural development is good. They are taught to appreciate their own cultural traditions and those of others through visits out of school and subjects such as art and music. Provision for pupils' understanding of multicultural Britain has improved since the last inspection. Again the school has used visits and visitors to give pupils good first hand experiences. For example, visiting the Gudwara in Darlington; an Indian musician and an African dancer visiting the school and working with the pupils. In religious education, they study Judaism, Sikhism and Hinduism.

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

32. The welfare of pupils is well promoted in the school. The health and safety committee make regular inspections of the school and matters requiring attention are dealt with. School equipment is checked by professionals and there are no safety concerns at the present time. Standards of cleaning are good. The building is tidy and is in a sound state of repair. Pupils are well supervised throughout the day and lunchtime routines are well managed. As a result the school functions smoothly. Procedures for dealing with accidents, illness and for the administration of medicine are appropriate. The school nurse makes regular visits to the school, giving pupils medical examinations and assisting with the education of the older pupils. Child protection arrangements follow local authority guidelines. The headteacher is the named person with child protection responsibility, all staff are vigilant and any concerns are referred to the appropriate agency.
33. The school has very good procedures for promoting high standards of behaviour based on clearly defined rules. Sanctions are fair and the sensible rules ensure that pupils are polite, quiet and courteous in their conduct. Good procedures are in place to deal with any incidents of bullying. Any reported incidents are taken seriously and are usually resolved quickly and satisfactorily.
34. Assessments are very effective. Teachers know their pupils well because of the size of the school. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility and this is seen at lunchtime when pupils serve themselves with food in a caring sensible manner. The teachers, staff and pupils look for good deeds performed by pupils, these are recorded and reported during the rewards assembly at the end of the week.
35. The attendance records are well kept and up-to-date. The school and parents work well together to achieve no unauthorised absence.

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

36. The school has established a good working relationship with the majority of parents. They are well informed of all aspects of school life by regular newsletters. The well-presented school prospectus and the annual governors' report comply with statutory regulations. Consultation evenings are held in each term so that parents can discuss their child's progress with teachers. Parents of children with special educational needs are regularly informed of their progress. The annual pupil reports are hand written and the teachers give positive advice to parents relative to areas where the children need to concentrate.
37. The school encourages parents to be involved in the school by inviting them to help in class, with trips out of school and with school building maintenance. The parents who have time available accept this invitation and their help makes a good contribution to the standard of education provided by the school. Parents know that this is a good school, they are supportive but they look for the best for their children. A significant minority of the parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire signalled that the range of extra-curricular activities was insufficient. They also said that the school needs to work harder at the public relationship arrangements and at levels of homework. A small number of parents said they were not comfortable in approaching the school.
38. New parents are well informed by the school and there are good arrangements to support new pupils so that they make a good start to their school life. Pupils are well supported prior to their transfer to secondary school. The parent teacher association is well organised and is very effective in providing the school with financial support.

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

39. The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher provides strong leadership and gives clear educational direction for the school. He is well supported by a hard working team of teachers and pupil support assistants.
40. The school has explicit aims and values, which are clearly reflected in its work. These are evident in the good relationships in school and the wish for everyone to work together as a team. A strength of the school is the shared commitment of the teachers and governors to its success with the potential to further raise standards. It is clear through the returned questionnaire that the vast majority of the parents clearly support the aims and values of the school. They agree that the school is successful in promoting a happy and caring ethos with a commitment to providing an effective learning environment for their children.
41. In such a small school sharing of responsibilities is very important. All teachers have delegated to them the co-ordination of at least three subject areas and they make a useful contribution to the school's management. This currently extends to an advisory role and an overview of planning. However there is a growing need to give teachers opportunities to visit classrooms and monitor the quality of teaching and learning in their subjects. This will not only give them a strategic overview of their subjects but a valuable opportunity for professional development.
42. The governing body fulfils its statutory responsibilities well, including the requirement to provide for pupils with special educational needs. It has a committee structure and programme of meetings that ensure important decisions about the future of the school are made carefully. The governing body is kept well informed about the

- strengths, developmental needs and day-to-day workings of the school by the headteacher. They are now in a position to build on this good work to help further shape the direction of the school through a deeper understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. In order to do this they need to become more “hands on” through planned visits to the school and to classrooms.
43. There is not a formal policy in place for the induction of teachers new to the school. There is recognition of the need to put one in place at the earliest opportunity. Staff development is firmly linked to the school improvement and development plan and is designed to enhance the school’s quality of teaching and to contribute to teachers’ professional development. At present the school is not in a position to offer itself as a venue for Initial Teacher Training.
  44. The school is developing effective procedures for evaluating its performance by monitoring pupils’ attainment and progress as they move through the school. Baseline assessments, standardised tests and statutory and non-statutory assessment tasks and tests give useful information and provide links on which to base programmes of action. The governing body has set targets to measure improvement in the performance by pupils. Whilst this is possible, it is susceptible to the fluctuations in small cohorts of pupils.
  45. Educational priorities are well supported by careful financial planning. The school development plan is central to the school’s work and is a useful working document. Key objectives and priorities are identified, linked to costings, to ensure that the best strategic use is made of its resources. The finance committee meets regularly to review spending. The main recommendations of the latest auditor’s report are in place. Day-to-day financial administration is efficient. The good use of new technologies enables easy access to current budget information.
  46. The school uses additional funds through specific grants well and for their designated purposes. A good example is the use of money allocated through the National Grid for Learning, supported by valuable parental contributions, to markedly improve the school’s provision for information and communication technology. The principles of best value are important in this small school and are effectively applied.
  47. The school has an adequate number of suitably qualified teachers who provide a good balance of expertise and experience. They relate well and offer support to each other. Pupil support assistants make a valuable contribution to pupils’ learning. The caretaker and midday staff work hard and contribute well to the smooth running of the school.
  48. In many respects the accommodation of the school is good. Externally the school benefits from hard surfaced play areas and a grassed field. However there are some restrictions. The headteacher’s room is also the secretary’s office and the staff room. The hall is used not only for physical education but for a variety of purposes, for example assemblies, school meals, peripatetic musicians, small working groups and the fiction and non-fiction library. Storage space is very limited.
  49. The school has good resources in most subjects. Many are new and have been bought to support the newly organised curriculum, for example, a wide range of big books and guided reading material to support the literacy hour. Provision for information and communication technology is good with ten computers and access to the Internet. The library, has a good range of fiction and non-fiction material. Good use is made of educational visits as additional resources. However, outdoor provision for children’s physical activities in the Foundation Stage is unsatisfactory.



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

The governing body of the school, in conjunction with the headteacher and staff should take the following action to further raise standards in the school by:

1. improving further the quality of pupils' creative writing in English, by encouraging pupils to use the vocabulary skills and grammatical techniques acquired in the literacy hour, more imaginatively;(see paragraphs 6, 65)
2. providing opportunities for teachers to monitor the teaching and learning in those subjects for which they have particular responsibility; (see paragraph 41)
3. improving the outdoor provision for children's physical activities in the Foundation Stage. (see paragraphs 49, 55)

Other issues the governors may wish to consider:

For the governing body to build on their good work through a series of planned visits to school in order to gain a deeper understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.  
(see paragraph 42)

To provide the school with a formal policy for the induction of teachers new to the school.  
(see paragraph 43)

Review liaison procedures between parents and the school.  
(see paragraph 37)

Review subject policy documents, in line with recent legislation.  
(see paragraph 24)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	21
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	12

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	48	52	0	0	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)		74
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		4

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		14

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	1
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	0

### Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	3.4
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.

### **Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	71
Any other minority ethnic group	0

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

### **Exclusions in the last school year**

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

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

### **Teachers and classes**

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	3.1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.9
Average class size	23.6

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

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	20

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Financial information**

Financial year	1999/2000
	£
Total income	138,504
Total expenditure	143,354
Expenditure per pupil	2,140
Balance brought forward from previous year	13,940
Balance carried forward to next year	9,090

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	74
Number of questionnaires returned	37

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	46	51	3	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	43	51	3	0	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	59	35	3	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	19	46	22	3	11
The teaching is good.	35	57	5	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	35	41	19	3	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	30	43	16	8	3
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	57	38	5	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	30	38	22	8	3
The school is well led and managed.	27	57	16	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	32	54	5	3	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	11	43	27	14	5

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

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

50. Children enter the reception class at the start of the academic year after their fourth birthday. There are eight children under five and provision for them is good. All children have a wide range of learning experiences, which are linked with the Early Learning Goals. Good teaching prepares the children well for statutory education by linking the Early Learning Goals skilfully with the demands of the National Curriculum. As a direct result of well structured planning and good levels of support, by the age of five most children reach expected levels in all areas of learning; with a significant proportion achieving higher standards in language and literacy. Children are identified well in regard to special educational needs and make good progress against the targets set for them.

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

51. By the age of five, children attain standards expected of their age in personal and social development. The quality of learning is good. Children are confident and eager to establish new relationships with visitors. They sit quietly in an orderly way in a variety of different settings. In physical activities they dress and undress independently, place their garments in a neat pile and wait quietly for the lesson to begin. They participate in activities with enthusiasm and where necessary take turns well aware of what is fair practice when working with groups. The quality of teaching is good. There are clear expectations of good behaviour and as a result there are good relationships between teaching staff and children. There is clear planning related specifically to personal and social development. A good understanding of the needs of this age range is evident and careful organisation ensures children understand the teacher's intentions.

#### **Communication, language and literacy**

52. The children make sound progress in this area of learning. There is a clear emphasis on developing children's language and literacy skills. They talk confidently about their drawings and listen carefully to the teacher in the early part of the literacy lesson. They are taught to speak clearly when, for example, they respond to the teacher's questions. The early reading skills are taught well and children enjoy following the text of a big book, with the teacher, for example, 'Handa's Surprise'. Information and communication technology is used well to help children recognise letters and to reinforce their sounds. Most children are building up a sound phonic base on which to develop their reading skills. They love books and listening to stories and poems, for example, 'The Little Red Hen' and 'Mrs Pepperpot'. The children have good opportunities to write. At this early stage in a new school year, all can copy write their names and a significant number of the letters of the alphabet.

#### **Mathematical development**

53. The children are becoming comfortable with numbers and shapes. Children can match numbers and objects and name simple shapes and sort and classify objects by colour, shape and size. For example, they can tell the difference between faces and corners, and solid and flat shapes. Many activities are practical giving children good opportunities to develop their mathematical concepts. A good example is the

use of the play area for role play where children organise a post office, flower and baker's shops for sorting, counting and measuring. Number stories and rhymes are used effectively to extend children's mathematical language. The majority of children are able to count and order numbers up to ten and beyond. Many confidently sort and match numbers to six.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the World**

54. The children are finding out about the world around them and beyond their own environment. For example, in geography they collect information about the weather and see how this affects the clothes they wear. They contrast this by sorting the clothes people wear in countries with hot climates such as India and Africa. Children quickly establish skills in their use of technology, for example by matching letter sounds and shapes on a computer. They learn about important events in the Bible, such as the Creation and the life of Jesus, through listening to stories both in the classroom and during assembly. A good example was seen when pupils listened to and discussed the story of the loaves and fishes linking it to caring and sharing in their own families. They learn about the simple properties of materials and enjoy baking bread, biscuits and Chinese moon cakes. The teacher has high expectations and makes purposeful links with other areas of the curriculum to extend children's knowledge and understanding of the world.

### **Physical development**

55. Children learn to move confidently, control their bodies and handle equipment. For example, there are opportunities for constructing, cutting and printing in their art and design and technology activities. They handle construction toys with confidence and are very confident in folding their clothing. They show good pencil control and levels of writing are good. In their physical education children use space well with control and co-ordination and confidently take part in catching and throwing activities. Good preparation and direction ensure that children know what is expected of them and subsequently they perform well. There is only a limited range of outdoor provision to allow pupils to develop their physical skills and strength and to fully meet the objectives of the Early Learning Goals in this area.

### **Creative development**

56. Children have good opportunities to experiment with colour, texture and shapes in their art and design work. Most children recognise and name the primary colours, and some can name the secondary colours. The good standard of paintings on display show that children can choose colours and paint and draw confidently. The children are encouraged to listen carefully to music and enthusiastically use a range of untuned instruments and join in confidently with action rhymes and songs. There are good opportunities for them to participate in imaginative play; they have lively conversations and take on a variety of roles.
57. The quality of teaching is consistently good. It is based on an awareness of the need for young children to develop thinking skills, to formulate ideas and opinions through first hand experience. There is a secure and caring atmosphere where the contributions of all the children are valued. The good use of praise and acknowledgement of the children's good behaviour play an important part in the growth of children's self-esteem. The teacher's calm manner brings out the best in the children and when they make mistakes they are encouraged to persevere. She is well supported by an experienced pupil support assistant. They make an effective

team with a good understanding and awareness of the needs of young children. They use this well to provide a meaningful and relevant curriculum that develops children's understanding and awareness of the world around them. Classroom routines are planned clearly and groups are managed effectively. An emphasis is placed on encouraging pupils to work independently and make choices. There is a seamless transition from the Early Learning Goals to work at Key Stage 1 of the National Curriculum.

## **ENGLISH**

### **Speaking and listening**

58. At both key stages, pupils' oracy skills are good. At Key Stage 1, the youngest pupils listen carefully to what their classmates have to say, for example, when talking about the seven fruits of Handa. They describe bananas, pineapples and guavas with a developing and appropriate vocabulary using words such as smooth, spikey, hard and soft. They recall past stories accurately and place characters in a correct sequence. Most pupils confidently read stories and poems aloud in front of the class or to a larger audience, for example, in assembly. As they move through the key stage they further develop their ideas, speak clearly and use a growing vocabulary. By the end of the key stage pupils are speaking in imaginative ways and expressing ideas and feelings in a variety of different situations.
59. In Key Stage 2, pupils contribute well to class discussions and assemblies. For example, in the literacy hour, the youngest pupils talk about poems they have read and why they enjoyed them. Most pupils are articulate and listen carefully to each other and their teachers. Good examples were seen when older pupils discussed 'The Last Journey' and explained Captain Scott's meaning of 'without the reward of priority' and the phrase 'stirred the hearts of Englishmen'. They ask questions, think about their ideas and confidently express their own opinions, for example, in a traffic accident scenario when pupils take turns in 'hot seating' the characters. By the time they leave the school they can talk and listen confidently in a wide range of subjects.

### **Reading**

60. From talking to pupils and listening to them read, it is clear that reading skills are developed well through a well structured programme in school and regular practice at home. Their enjoyment and interest are very evident. As they move through Key Stage 1, most pupils develop a good phonic knowledge and a relatively extensive sight vocabulary. Most pupils are confident in recognising the high frequency word lists appropriate to their age. By the end of the key stage they can read these easily in and out of context and are well launched into reading. Those pupils reading at a higher level are well on the way to becoming fluent and confident readers.
61. By the time they leave the school most pupils are independent readers who read with interest, fluency and pace. They are beginning to understand that what they are reading is not always straightforward and they have to read between the lines. In their reading they are aware of different authors and have their favourites, for example, J K Rowling, Dickens and Enid Blyton and understand the importance of plot and characters in these.
62. Pupils who reach a higher level are accurate, fluent and well-motivated readers who fully understand what they read. They appreciate the meanings of words and phrases, which are beyond the literal. They read some demanding texts, short novels, for

example, Macbeth, poetry and non-fiction. The school places an important emphasis on pupils developing good research skills. Older pupils at Key Stage 2 understand how to use the contents and index to find information, that a glossary can be helpful and use skimming and scanning techniques in their research. By the time they leave school many pupils are reading challenging and lengthy texts, independently and are able to analyse and discuss them with others.

## Writing

63. Overall, pupils achieve well in writing. However the school development plan, quite rightly, sees the raising of standards in writing at both key stages as a high priority.
64. In Key Stage 1, well-organised brainstorming sessions encourage pupils to develop ideas on settings and characters. They understand that a story has a beginning, middle and end and are starting to write independently in sentences. By the age of seven, most pupils can write stories in the correct sequence with properly organised sentences and for a range of purposes. They use their skills well in narrative work. The meaning is clear and their use of punctuation is mainly accurate. The presentation of work is good. Pupils' handwriting is neat, clear and well formed.
65. At Key Stage 2, pupils continue to progress, for example, exploring the text in newspapers for complex and exciting vocabulary. Most pupils are developing a sound understanding of how English works. They recognise the need to write for different purposes with a particular audience in mind, for example, a newspaper report or the diaries of Captain Scott. By the end of the key stage, pupils structure their writing and plan their stories simply, with a setting, characters and plot. They respond with consistent accuracy when writing for information purposes. The presentation of work is good overall. Most pupils work hard at producing well formed, joined script. Higher attainers write in some volume in a mature personal style showing clear, correctly paragraphed and well punctuated writing. The majority of pupils develop and understand the conventions of story writing well through a regular exercising of these skills. Although pupils' writing has sufficient detail to engage the reader it sometimes lacks that imaginative vocabulary and vitality to really make it interesting.
66. The quality of teaching at both key stages is consistently good. A feature of this good teaching is the interaction with pupils; teachers know them well as individuals. Lessons are properly introduced ensuring that pupils know what they have to do. Work is well planned and taught based mainly on the framework of the literacy hour. Teachers work hard to ensure that their lessons are interesting and wherever possible links are made with other subjects, history and religious education, for example. Information and communication technology makes an important contribution in developing pupils' literacy skills, for example, in word processing and gives the younger pupils good phonic support when practising their letter sounds. Pupils' response to English is good throughout the school. They work hard and show interest in the work set. In whole-class and guided group work they make useful contributions and work well in the independent sessions.

## MATHEMATICS

67. In Key Stage 1, pupils build on their work in the Foundation Stage. There is much practical work taking place and this has a positive impact on pupils' learning. A good example was seen when they used the spots on the backs of ladybirds to count backwards and forwards and to practise number bonds to ten. In their numeracy work, pupils can add and subtract to 20 and are developing a good understanding of

place value. Older pupils can add simple two digit numbers. When using money they use the correct coins needed to pay for a sandwich, an apple, a piece of cake and a drink. Pupils understand concepts of simple fractions such as a quarter and a half. In their work in shapes they recognise and can name two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes such as squares, circles and triangles, and cube and cuboid. Younger pupils use non-standard and standard units in their measurements; older pupils are beginning to recognise the need for more standardised measurements. By the end of the key stage most pupils have good mental recall of numbers, for example, multiples of two, five and ten.

68. At Key Stage 2, pupils' use and apply mathematics well in their investigative work. This approach continues to play an important part in their development of their skills and makes them think, deepening their learning and understanding. For example, enlarging a variety of shapes or investigating the number of ways ladies can hang their coats on four pegs. As they move through the key stage pupils become confident in the four rules of number and use these skills well when using decimals, such as when solving problems involving money or measurement. The oldest pupils successfully solve problems involving long multiplication and division. Pupils explore number patterns and understand how to use multiples, factors and squares and the equivalence of fractions and decimal fractions. By the time they leave the school they know their multiplication tables and recall facts easily. They have a good knowledge of two and three-dimensional shapes and their properties. Pupils continue to develop their work on symmetry; older pupils understand the concept of rotational symmetry. They draw and measure angles accurately and use formulae to calculate the area and volume of a variety of shapes. These include rectangles and triangles, cubes and cuboids. Pupils can record and retrieve information from pie charts and block graphs, and draw and interpret line graphs accurately. They are confident with simple probability and use its language effectively.
69. Throughout the school pupils enjoy their mathematics lessons as they are actively engaged in their learning. They particularly enjoy the challenges set in their mental mathematics sessions. For example, older pupils finding the angle between the numbers five and eight on a clock face. Pupils listen carefully to their teachers, share ideas as they explain their reasons or thinking and work hard. In most lessons pupils are able to work well independently. They sustain concentration and interest and are very supportive of one another. The standard of presentation at both key stages is consistently good. Information and communication technology is used to support pupils work in the numeracy hour. A variety of programs are, for example, practising multiplication tables and drawing graphs from information collected in a database.
70. Overall, the quality of teaching is good in both key stages. Lessons are well planned, based on clear learning objectives, using the guidelines of the National Numeracy Strategy. Teachers have good subject knowledge, and this has a positive impact on pupils' attainment. Work is planned to cover the full ability and age range of the class. Pupils with special educational needs work with support assistants and this helps them to progress well in their learning. Management of pupils is generally good with clear instructions about the work to be covered. Pupils' work is marked daily. The co-ordinator is currently evaluating newly published commercial schemes to support even more effectively the teaching in the numeracy hour. The headteacher holds a weekly after school mathematics club for older pupils in Key Stage 2 and their parents. It has proved to be very useful to some pupils, helping them make good progress in the aspects of mathematics they were finding difficult. A spin off is that parents see how mathematics is taught and are given the skills to work effectively with their children at home.

## SCIENCE

71. At Key Stage 1, most pupils know that green plants need water and light so that they can grow. They can name correctly the major parts of a plant, such as the stem, leaves and root and know the ways in which seeds are dispersed. Most pupils in Year 2 understand some of the differences between living and non-living things. In their investigations they choose foods which are the right one for them to keep their teeth healthy. The oldest pupils understand the basic reasons why teeth decay and that brushing their teeth will remove unwanted food particles. They identify the materials that some things are made of, and sort them into groups according to their texture, for example, smooth, soft or hard. Pupils of all abilities work well together so that even the lower attaining pupils learn at a good rate.
72. Most pupils in Years 3 and 4 are clear about what they have to do to plan and carry out a fair test in their experiments. They apply this principle when investigating forces and make simple predictions. For example, to find whether a leather or rubber soled shoe will slide down a slope first as they increase the angle. From their results they learn that friction is a force that slows things down. Some higher attaining pupils, who particularly enjoy the challenge of a problem, discuss in detail the way the test is to be carried out.
73. In Years 5 and 6, an important aspect of pupils' attainment is their ability to organise themselves when carrying out investigations. Most know that this work must be clearly planned in writing, carefully carried out, results accurately recorded, and conclusions drawn. They build on their investigative skills and make confident predictions based on valid reasons. For example, a streamlined boat will move more quickly through water because there is less friction created. They know that animals need to breathe oxygen, which they get from plants, and that animals breathe out carbon dioxide and it is absorbed by plants. Most pupils have a more extensive knowledge of plants, and describe how water plays an essential part in plant life. By the end of the key stage, pupils describe correctly the function of some of the body organs, such as the heart, lungs, muscles and kidneys. Pupils of this age understand well the working of a simple electrical circuit. They know that light travels in straight lines, and that it can be split into the colours of the rainbow.
74. In the lessons seen in both key stages most pupils had good attitudes to their work. The great majority enjoy science and are keen to work hard. Of particular note is the very good way that pupils firstly listen to their teachers, and then discuss in small groups the most efficient way to carry out their investigations. These qualities do much to enhance pupils' learning. Pupils are very aware of safety principles and organise their equipment well in their classroom.
75. Overall the quality of teaching at both key stages is consistently good and sometimes very good. There is a common approach to teaching science throughout the school. All pupils are given imaginative and worthwhile "hands on" experiences through good quality investigative work. Good all round relationships have a positive impact on the quality of lessons and the progress pupils make. A notable feature of the lessons seen was the way in which the teachers introduced their lessons by 'recapping' with pupils the work they had done on a previous occasion. This carefully planned approach did much to consolidate learning, to enable pupils to contribute new facts and ideas, and to focus their attention on the lesson. Indeed, in the best lessons the teacher made much of pupils' own ideas. Pupils were given good opportunities to

work both independently and in small groups, including time to think and talk together about how they were going to carry out their tasks.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

76. Pupils at both key stages attain standards appropriate to their age and make satisfactory progress. In Key Stage 1, pupils use a variety of materials well, for example, pasta shapes and pulses in their food pictures. They mix colours well to give a good visual effect and confidently use brushes. A good example was seen when making washes as a background to their silhouette paintings of trees. Pupils use pencils to make line drawings of kitchen utensils such as a garlic crusher. In their three-dimensional work, pupils are taught a variety of techniques using easily managed materials. They use salt dough to make food for the class cafe and small clay bowls with pinched edges.
77. At Key Stage 2, pupils further develop their skills in painting and drawing. These build effectively on their close observational skills, for example, in their pencil drawings of boots and shoes. Older pupils use charcoal and pastels in their still life drawings of bottles. They pay close attention to shading and the reflection of the light. Their finished drawings show the transparency of the subject with a real feeling of depth. They paint in the style of Lowry and experiment with the techniques of McKensie Thorpe, a local artist.
78. The quality of teaching in both key stages is very good. Lessons are planned well with the intention of making art fun, creative and exciting. It is often planned to complement other subject for example, making Hindu Rangoli patterns as the border of a collage of a peacock. Indeed pupils' achievements are celebrated in good quality displays around the school. Pupils clearly enjoy the work prepared by their teachers and work hard. Plans are very clear and provide a focus for individual lessons. They ensure that all pupils make progress as they move through the school. A good example was seen in Key Stage 1 when pupils were sewing firework patterns. The youngest pupils used a "pinch and push" technique; older pupils had to use a more accurate stitch. At both key stages pupils confidently use information and communication technology as another medium. Sketchbooks are used to develop pupils' ideas and as a record of their work. Art makes a good contribution to pupils' cultural development.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

79. There were no opportunities to see design and technology being taught during the week of inspection. However from the evidence obtained through discussions with teachers and pupils, a scrutiny of planning and samples of work, it is possible to draw positive conclusions about standards in the subject. Pupils at both key stages attain standards appropriate to their age. Progress for all pupils, including those with special educational needs, is sound throughout the school.
80. The youngest pupils in Key Stage 1, have acquired skills in a range of activities including making models from a range of recycled materials and construction kits and baking. They understand the importance of making structures strong, stable and safe, for example, when they build bridges. Older pupils make models for a purpose and link them with other areas of the curriculum, for example, puppets with moveable joints, in drama and wooden insects in science. All pupils are able to use a variety of materials well, for example, felt, clay, salt-dough, card and disposable cartons to make symmetrical tiles, plaques and stick, finger and glove puppets. They can estimate, measure, mark out and cut simple shapes in a range of materials

accurately. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils use a range of techniques to successfully join materials and make judgements about the end product of their work.

81. In Key Stage 2, the youngest pupils construct simple switches to operate lights on their models, for example a Rudolph with a shiny nose. They construct wind-assisted yachts related to work in science and information and communication technology. Older pupils make and design Tudor houses in connection with their history topic. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils can confidently investigate, evaluate and discuss individual ideas leading to a design and have a good understanding of the processes involved.
82. Pupils have good attitudes towards design and technology. They talk about their designs and models with enjoyment and enthusiasm. They listen well to suggestions and work collaboratively on complex tasks. The quality of finished products shows that pupils take a pride in their work. Teachers' planning and organisation ensure full coverage of the subject. Resources are sufficient to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum with a good selection of large and small commercial construction kits. There is also a good selection of tools for measuring, marking, cutting and joining.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

83. There were no opportunities to see geography being taught during the inspection, but discussions with teachers and pupils shows that a satisfactory programme is in place and pupils at both key stages attain standards appropriate to their ages. It was not possible to make firm judgements about the quality of teaching and learning.
84. At Key Stage 1, pupils' first hand experiences are used well as an important resource to develop their early geographical skills. They follow simple routes around the school and the village looking at the types of houses and shops. Pupils understand that geographical conditions influence our lives, for example, in the different clothes people wear. They enjoy studying the weather and keep a daily log in the classroom. Pupils compare the differences in urban and rural settlements and investigate ways in which they can improve their own environment. By the end of the key stage, most pupils can name and locate the countries of the United Kingdom, on a map of the British Isles.
85. At Key Stage 2, pupils build on these foundations. They continue to make progress in their map skills and draw plans of the classroom and the school. They develop good skills when using Ordnance Survey maps and confidently use six figure grid references. Older pupils use these skills practically when orienteering at East Barmby residential centre. Younger pupils look at water in the environment. For example, finding the speed of the River Wiske by timing a floating orange. In their fieldwork, older pupils visit Swaledale and look at the work of rivers and their valleys. When contrasting settlements they investigate how land is used, for example, sheep farming. In their study of the wider world, pupils contrast the everyday life of people in St Lucia, with their own.
86. Geography makes a good contribution to pupils' cultural development, and has good links with other subjects, particularly literacy and information and communication technology. For example, pupils use art packages to make simple maps and use programmable robots in teaching directions. The co-ordinator recognises that the long-term plans will need to be amended in light of the recent curriculum changes.

## **HISTORY**

87. Opportunities to see history taught during the inspection were limited to a single lesson at Key Stage 2. From a scrutiny of teachers' plans and pupils' work, it is possible to draw conclusions that attainment and progress of pupils at this key stage are appropriate to their age. Insufficient evidence was seen for an informed judgement of attainment of Key Stage 1 to be made. However, plans show that these pupils are taught to develop an understanding of chronology and use their own lives as a starting point, for example, looking at life when their grandparents were young. They study the lives of famous people and important events in British history, for example, Guy Fawkes and the Gunpowder Plot.
88. At Key Stage 2, pupils look closely at the culture of the people who invaded and settled in Britain. They confidently compare the similarities and differences between their own lives and those in Tudor times. Pupils have opportunities to interpret history, as written by people who were there, and by looking at photographs and pictures. A good example was seen in a lesson about the Spanish Armada. Pupils decided that the inscription on an English medal, "God breathed, and they were scattered" refers to the storms that damaged the Spanish ships. Studies of ancient civilisations, for example, the Egyptians give pupils a wider view of world history to really involve them in their learning. Studying local artefacts such as the church records, gives pupils good opportunities to understand their own cultural heritage whilst at the same time developing good historical enquiry skills.
89. Evidence from the lesson seen suggests the quality of teaching is good. Its greatest impact is the conscious effort made to give the pupils experiences designed to 'suspend belief' and make them fully involved in their learning. Visits out of and visitors to school complement this approach. For example, dressing in clothes of the period on the visit to the Victorian street in Preston Hall Park. History is successfully seen as an opportunity to involve other subjects. Portraits of Tudor monarchs, pencil sketches of bullet presses and pomanders give good links with art, and design and technology. History is used as a stimulus for work in the literacy hour. Pupils use CD-ROM's to find information and word processing for recording their findings.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

90. There has been a considerable improvement in the quality of the school's provision since the last inspection. Grants from the National Grid for Learning have allowed the school to buy new computers and software. For pupils at both key stages attainment is in line with national expectations and they make satisfactory progress.
91. At Key Stage 1, pupils use their developing word processing skills to present their work. They collect information about their classmates using a simple database and print graphs of their findings. All pupils use art packages confidently and use shading, colour mixing and colour fill when making their pictures. They discuss with their teacher, the different ways information and communication technology is used in every day life. They recognise that many everyday devices respond to signals and commands. This understanding is applied to confidently program a floor robot to move forward, backward and turn through a right angle.
92. In Key Stage 2, there are opportunities for pupils to develop their word processing skills. They confidently use CD ROM encyclopaedias and the Internet for research and download images to include in their work, for example, about the Tudors. Pupils use databases to enter and save information from their science investigations. They keep up to date with news from the Round the World Yacht race by weekly visits to

the website. Recently, E-mails have been exchanged with the yacht giving the pupils graphic accounts of life at sea, such as flying fish landing in the bunks.

93. No direct teaching of information and communication technology was seen during the inspection. It is clear that pupils enjoy working with computers and many have access at home. This has a positive impact on standards. Of particular note is the ability of all pupils to work independently. There are some opportunities to use the computer suite at Allertonshire Comprehensive School where pupils used clip art to make Mothers' Day cards. A visit to a local printer widened pupils' awareness of the practical application of information and communication technology. Although staff are generally confident in teaching the subject, they are in line for further training. The school recognises that there is still a challenge ahead to further improve standards, for example, extending the range of software. Priorities are mainly at Key Stage 2, for example, using spreadsheets, the application of control technology, and monitoring, for example, using sensors for data logging.

## MUSIC

94. Only one lesson was seen in music during the week of inspection. However from the evidence obtained through observing music in assemblies, discussions with pupils and teachers it is possible to draw positive conclusions about music. Standards of attainment in music are good and all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. Provision covers the requirements of the National Curriculum in performing, listening, appraising and composing.
95. The youngest pupils in Key Stage 1, enjoy singing, clapping and playing rhythm patterns together and in groups. They successfully sing 'Oats and beans and barley grow'. They can name and choose an untuned instrument to sing and play rhythm patterns of soft toy names, for example, 'Little Ted frog, scottie dog hedgehog'. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are able to listen to music and sing, by heart, a good range of songs, confidently and tunefully. They talk fluently about sounds and understand how musical sounds are made in different ways. They appreciate the difference between loud and soft tones and how these can express character and mood. Most pupils have a sound grasp of musical elements and are able to keep time and recognise rhythm. By the time they are ready to move into Key Stage 2, all pupils can compose simple percussion pieces using, for example, cymbals, chime bars, bells, wood blocks, tambourines and castanets.
96. The youngest pupils in Key Stage 2 listen to jazz, well known popular classics and music from films such as West Side Story. They extend their music vocabulary by discussing the similarities between instruments, for example, the clarinet and recorder. By the end of the key stage they are beginning to recognise pieces by famous composers, such as, Johann Strauss. The majority of pupils have a good knowledge of musical ideas and understand words, such as pitch and tempo. They are beginning to understand note values and can read simple notation. Many pupils can hold and compose a rhythm, follow dynamics, perform together and practise and perfect pieces. Pupils receiving instrumental tuition, on brass, woodwind and guitar, can sight read accurately and show good technical skills.
97. The quality of teaching is very good. Pupils are actively encouraged to learn to play a musical instrument and to be self critical of their performance, for example, all pupils play the recorder and enjoy demonstrating their achievements. Teachers ensure that all pupils take part in music making and encourage them to be self critical of their performance. They provide good opportunities for all pupils to sing and perform music

in the local church of St Eloys, at school concerts and during morning assembly. Throughout the school pupils have good attitudes to music. They enjoy participating in musical activities both individually and in groups. They particularly enjoy the variety of visitors who discuss and perform music from other cultures and countries, for example, African and Indian dance music and an opera singer.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

98. Only two lessons were seen in physical education during the week of inspection. However, evidence from these lessons together with evidence of teachers' planning and from discussions with teachers and pupils it is possible to draw positive conclusions about the subject. Standards of attainment in physical education throughout the school are in line with what might be expected of pupils of this age, and all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make sound progress. Pupils are taught games, gymnastics, athletic activities, outdoor activities and swimming. By the time they leave the school all pupils can swim at least 25 metres. Dance takes place in the form of country dancing and music and movement.
99. The youngest pupils in Key Stage 1, exercise their bodies well, stretching and relaxing in time with instructions. They travel on the floor and on apparatus using a variety of methods, for example, running, jumping, hopping, turning, balancing, swinging and climbing. A good example of balancing was seen when pupils balanced on three and two points. By the end of the key stage, all pupils can find a space and perform a series of controlled movements, for example, travelling with a partner, passing a ball. All pupils are aware of each other's movements and can look and move in relation to everyone else. They work successfully with a partner and observe and comment on their performance. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils practise, improve and refine their performance through increasingly complex sequences of movements in individual activity, working in pairs and working in groups. They develop good co-operative skills in athletics and appreciate a winner in a game.
100. Pupils have good attitudes to physical education. They enjoy it and respond enthusiastically in lessons. A good example of this enthusiasm was seen when older pupils made up their own eight beat sequence of music in response to 'Rhythm in the Street'. All pupils dress properly, behave well, concentrate on their work and show confidence in performances. From an early age pupils are taught to put out and tidy away items of equipment and this assists the organisation and pace of lessons. It also makes them aware of the safety rules and the need to give other members of the class due consideration.
101. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers work hard to provide interesting opportunities for pupils, for example, games and competitive sport within the school cluster. There is an adequate range of small equipment. Extra-curricular activities, for example, football, netball, kwik cricket, rounders and residential visits to outdoor pursuit centres help to sustain and enhance provision.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

102. During the week of inspection, opportunities to observe religious education lessons were few. Judgements are therefore based on the two lessons observed, a scrutiny of documentation and pupils' work and discussions with pupils and staff. These show that standards of attainment in religious education, throughout both key stages, are in line with the locally agreed syllabus and all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make sound progress.

103. In addition to gaining knowledge from within the school's main focus on Christianity, pupils in Key Stage 1 are beginning to understand some basic aspects of customs and beliefs of other major religions, for example, Judaism. They know and understand, for example, Christian and Jewish attitudes towards the Sabbath. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils understand that Jesus was not just an historical figure but a special person. They know that He was a healer and storyteller and are familiar with some of His stories, for example, the Good Samaritan and the feeding of the five thousand. They know that He performed miracles to enable the blind to see and the deaf to hear. They are familiar with the local church of St Eloy and can talk with confidence about the things they have seen on their visits.
104. The youngest pupils in Key Stage 2 can talk about the creation and compare Christian teaching with other faiths. They talk about Christian festivals of Christmas and Easter, and the Hindu festival of Diwali. Most pupils know that Diwali is a special celebration for Hindus and that it is known as the Festival of Light. By the end of the key stage, pupils have acquired a good knowledge of Christianity and a sound understanding of the basic principles of Judaism and Sikhism. Many are able to talk about special people who gave much of their own time and energy in helping others, for example, Mother Teresa and Florence Nightingale. They are familiar with terms such as font, lectern and pulpit and understand the symbolism of bread and wine at communion. Most are beginning to talk confidently about the religious festivals and holy books of some of the world's major faiths. For example, they know that the Torah is part of the Jewish Tenakh and that the Guru Granth Sahib is central to the beliefs and practices of Sikhs.
105. Pupils have good attitudes to the subject. They are quiet, well behaved and respectful when listening to stories and are usually eager to join in with discussions.
106. The quality of teaching in the two lessons seen was very good. The school follows the local authority's agreed syllabus, delivered as a discrete subject and also within topics. There is a good collection of books covering a range of moral issues and a variety of artefacts relating to the major faiths studied. Collective acts of worship during assembly make a good contribution to the school's teaching of religious education.