

# INSPECTION REPORT

**BALDERSBY ST JAMES CHURCH OF  
ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Thirsk

LEA area: North Yorkshire

Unique reference number: 121478

Headteacher: Mrs S E Gall

Reporting inspector: David Figures  
10269

Dates of inspection: 19 – 21 March 2001

Inspection number: 234660

Full inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

© Crown copyright 2001

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

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

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Baldersby St James Thirsk North Yorkshire
Postcode:	YO7 4PT
Telephone number:	01765 640277
Fax number:	01765 640277
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Major M R C Pallott
Date of previous inspection:	22 September 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
10269	David Figures	Registered inspector	English	What sort of school is it?
			Art and design	The school's results and pupils' achievements
			History	How well are pupils taught?
			Music	How well is the school led and managed?
			Religious education	What should the school do to improve further?
9224	Mike Vineall	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 and carers?
19117	Margaret Handsley	Team inspector	Mathematics	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
			Science	
			Information and communication technology	
			Design and technology	
			Geography	
			Physical education	
			Foundation stage	
			Equal opportunities	
			Special educational needs	

The inspection contractor was:

Leeds Metropolitan University  
Schools Inspection Service  
Fairfax Hall  
Beckett Park Campus  
Headingley  
Leeds  
LS6 3QS

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

The Complaints Manager  
Inspection Quality Division  
The Office for Standards in Education  
Alexandra House  
33 Kingsway

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 pupils' 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>16</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 a voluntary controlled primary school much below average in size serving the villages of Baldersby, Baldersby St James and Rainton in North Yorkshire. It caters for 34 boys and girls between four and eleven years of age. English is the first language for all pupils, all of whom are white. There are no statements of special educational need and the proportion of pupils otherwise on the register of special educational needs is very low. The majority of the pupils in the reception year have been to a playgroup. The attainment of children on entry to the school is average. The movement of a large proportion of pupils in and out of the school creates some untypical circumstances. There were no pupils in Year 2 at the time of the last National Assessments, and three of the four members of the present Year 6 have joined the school during the present academic year. For this reason, the comparison of results from year to year is undertaken with caution.

Both full-time teachers are new since 1999 and the present headteacher took up her post in September 2000. A significant number of the governors is also new to the school.

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

The school stands at the beginning of a new chapter in its life. It is a school providing a sound standard of education but it is on the move. The quality of the leadership and management of the school is good. The headteacher has made a careful appraisal of the school's strengths and weaknesses, and with the support of the committed governing body, has prepared detailed plans for development which put the school in a good position to become very effective. At present, pupils' standards of attainment and the quality of teaching are satisfactory. Standards of pupils' behaviour are good and the relationships they establish are very good. The costs of running the school are firmly in the middle of the range for schools of a similar size and it therefore gives satisfactory value for money.

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

- It creates a generous, caring and supportive atmosphere in which pupils are nurtured and enabled to do their best.
- Pupils' relationships are very good; they care for one another well.
- Pupils have good attitudes to school and behave well.
- The school is well led. It is committed to improvement, for which it has good potential.

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

- The balance of the curriculum is unsatisfactory.
- Standards in information and communication technology, design and technology and art and design are not high enough.
- Provision for the physical, social and creative development of pupils under the age of five is unsatisfactory.

*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 satisfactory progress in addressing the issues raised by the last inspection in September 1997. The quality of teaching is now good in English and mathematics, supported by the framework of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy. Approaches to teaching reading, now based on the National Literacy Strategy, make better use of pupils' time. Satisfactory arrangements have been made for curriculum co-ordination and include the monitoring of teaching. The governors now comply with their statutory obligations. They manage the budget with great care, and are beginning to define their role in overseeing the curriculum. Parents report significant improvements. They experience the school as more open and more welcoming and appreciate the improved resources. The governors, headteacher and staff have a clear commitment to the school's continued improvement and are well placed to ensure that it happens.

## STANDARDS

Standards of pupils' social, language and mathematics development are above average when children begin Year 1, having joined the school with average attainment. Their knowledge and understanding of the world is average. Small numbers make the analysis of national test results difficult to interpret and assessment results are not published if there are ten or fewer pupils in the age group. However, the results achieved by eleven-year-olds in recent years have been well above average in mathematics, above average in science and broadly average in English, rising in line with national trends. As measured by the 1999 and 1998 national tests, pupils' attainment at the age of seven has been well above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics and also well above the average for similar schools in reading and writing. The school set realistic targets for attainment in 2000 which were achieved and in some cases exceeded. Work seen during the inspection was consistent with average results in English, mathematics and science at both seven and eleven, but the small size of the age group in each case means that the difference from past test results is unlikely to be significant. Standards are in line with that expected for pupils of the same age in geography, history, music and religious education. They are below expectation in information and communication technology, design and technology and art and design largely because pupils have not had sufficient experience of the full curriculum of these subjects. Insufficient physical education was seen to make a judgement.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils come readily to school and enter into the activities prepared for them with enthusiasm.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. In most instances pupils' good behaviour arises from their own mature attitudes.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils respect and care for one another and cooperate very well. Relations between pupils and with the adults who work with them are very good
Attendance	Good

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and has some good features; it caters suitably for all pupils. As a result, pupils learn effectively and achieve appropriately. In all but one of the lessons seen it was at least satisfactory and in 58 per cent it was good. The best teaching was seen with the pupils between five and seven. Pupils with special educational needs are well taught. The quality of teaching in English and mathematics is good and literacy and numeracy skills are well taught. The quality of teaching is good in music; in other subjects, insufficient teaching was seen for a judgement to be made. Most lessons are characterised by good relationships, good planning, clear learning objectives and high expectations of pupils' attention, diligence and commitment. Work is well matched to the needs of all pupils: this challenges them and maintains their interest. They work conscientiously, behaving well and achieving well as a result. Occasionally, planning in less formal lessons lacks sufficient rigour and, sometimes, the pace of lessons is too slow to maintain the pupils' interest. The children in their first year in school lack opportunity in the wider curriculum.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Unsatisfactory. There are strengths in medium and long term planning. However, the distribution of time to the different subjects is poorly balanced. Cross-curricular links are not well enough developed. Opportunities for gymnastics and dance are insufficient. There is insufficient emphasis on physical and creative development for the children in reception.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Provision is effectively organised and well co-ordinated with good support from the responsible governor.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. Provision for pupils' moral and social development is good; for their spiritual and cultural development it is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactorily. Pupils' good behaviour is well supported. Information gained from assessing pupils' achievement is not sufficiently used to plan their future learning.
How well the school works in partnership with parents	Well. The school has effective links with parents and provides them with good information about their children's progress.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher's vision, energy and drive provide good momentum for improvements in standards.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactorily. Governors are committed and supportive and have a clear view of the school's future, but their role in some key areas of school life, such as supervising the curriculum, is not fully established.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. Boys' and girls' assessment results are monitored. The quality of teaching is monitored but a systematic scrutiny of pupils' work is yet to be established.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. The current allocation of space denies the school a hall, needed for the physical education curriculum and valuable for assemblies and other whole-school events.
The adequacy of staffing accommodation and learning resources.	Satisfactory. Resources are very good for information and communication technology but unsatisfactory for physical education. The accommodation for children in their first year in school is without a secure outdoor play area which, with suitable equipment, is required to promote their physical and social development.

## 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>• The children are happy and confident at school; they behave well.</li><li>• The school promotes excellent values: the children learn to be responsible and think of others.</li><li>• There are very good relationships between the school and parents. Any concerns raised are quickly dealt with.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The range of extra curricular activities is not wide enough.</li></ul>

The inspectors endorse parents' positive comments. They acknowledge the criticism on extra curricular activities but believe the school's position is reasonable at the present time of transition and consolidation and that provision is satisfactory.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

- 1 Small numbers and changes in the school population make the analysis of national test results difficult to interpret and assessment results are not published when there are ten or fewer pupils in the age group. Taking the results for 1999 and 1998 together (there were no seven-year-old pupils in 2000), pupils aged seven have been reaching standards in reading, writing and mathematics that are well above the national average and, in reading and writing, well above the average of similar schools. In mathematics, results have been above the average for similar schools. In the teachers' assessments for science, attainment has also been well above both the national average and that of similar schools. Boys and girls attain similarly in the national tests. The work of the present generation of seven-year-olds seen during the inspection was more consistent with average results but bearing in mind the size of the age group and the period that has elapsed since the last seven-year-olds were tested, this difference is unlikely to be significant.
- 2 In the national tests taken by eleven-year-olds in recent years, standards of attainment have been well above average in mathematics, above average in science and broadly average in English. In mathematics, their scores were above the average seen in similar schools, in English they were below that average and in science well below the scores of similar schools. The trend in the three subjects rises and keeps pace with national trends. The results suggest that the performance of boys has improved and, in mathematics and science, exceeds that of the girls. In English, the girls do better. The school is aware of these differences and is taking measures to rectify the situation through the purchase of new books and other resources and by introducing monitoring arrangements based on formal assessments at the end of Years 3, 4 and 5. The work seen of the present generation of eleven-year-olds was consistent with average results in English, mathematics and science.
- 3 High-attaining pupils make good progress and many achieve high levels in national tests. The proportion of pupils attaining at Level 5, the standard expected of 13-year-olds, is above average in English and science, and well above in mathematics. The school sets targets for pupils' achievements in the national tests that are realistic in the sense that they are based on the pupils' earlier achievements. Targets set for 2000 were achieved and in two cases were exceeded. In the light of this, the school seems well on course to meet its targets for the next two years.
- 4 On entry to the school, the majority of pupils have behavioural attributes and learning skills that are above average. Their language development and understanding of number is slightly below average. Pupils settle well to school, allowing teachers to build on these good foundations. Attainment in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and personal, social and emotional development improves well and, by the time they begin Year 1, children's attainment is above that generally expected. Their knowledge and understanding of the world is average. There was insufficient evidence to reach a conclusion about standards in pupils' physical and creative development.
- 5 At the age of seven, standards of attainment are average in all aspects of English, mathematics and science, and the achievement of these pupils is satisfactory. At the

age of eleven, standards in the same subjects demonstrate a wide range of attainment but are average overall, representing satisfactory achievement.

- 6 Attainment in information and communication technology, however, is below expectation both at seven and eleven because pupils' skills and knowledge are not well enough developed for their age. With the vastly improved level of resources, notably the provision of eight new computers, the subject is well placed to improve. In geography, history and religious education pupils make satisfactory progress and reach the expected standard. Knowledgeable and imaginative teaching of music helps pupils achieve satisfactory standards: listening to music and appraising it are well done, but the quality of pupils' singing is average. In art and design and design and technology standards are below what is expected. This is because, in art and design, pupils have had insufficient experience of some aspects of the subject and in design and technology because the design and evaluation processes are insufficiently developed. Not enough physical education was seen for a judgement to be made on standards.
- 7 Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and achieve standards in line with those expected for their age and prior attainment. This is because all aspects of the provision for them is effectively organised.
- 8 The school has maintained the overall position reported at the time of the last inspection and most pupils achieve as expected in most subjects. Planning is now in place to provide pupils with appropriate experiences in the subjects where standards are below expectation and the school is in a good position to make progress.

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

- 9 The very good, positive ethos of the school is an important strength and continues to be reflected in the pupils' good attitudes to school. Relationships between pupils, and between pupils and the adults who work with them, are very good, maintaining the standard reported when the school was last inspected. Pupils co-operate, working together well in pairs and groups, and they also work well on their own. Behaviour is good and many examples were noted where the good behaviour of individuals and whole classes arose from pupils' self-control as opposed to their accepting an externally imposed discipline. There is, accordingly, a secure atmosphere in which pupils feel safe and can concentrate on their lessons without distraction and make progress. There were no indications of any type of oppressive behaviour and there have been no exclusions.
- 10 Pupils respect one another, listen to each other's views and show a good maturity and growing understanding of each other. Older pupils were frequently seen caring for younger ones and also displaying initiative in the absence of teachers. They are eager to take responsibility and carry out given tasks with great pride. Thus, for instance, when, as part of their music lesson, the older infants were asked to find a partner, both boys and girls unselfconsciously came forward without hesitation, took a younger child by the hand and led them to a space where they could work together. On another occasion, when the juniors arrived early for assembly, they all sat very quietly and a girl put on the CD of the week's chosen music.
- 11 Pupils come readily to school and enter into their work and play with enthusiasm. They respond to the good role models of all the staff (teaching and non-teaching) and the caring ethos undoubtedly assists the pupils' personal development. It engenders greater confidence amongst pupils, although some older children remain reluctant to commit themselves in class for fear of being wrong.

- 12 Attendance is good, is well above national norms and has improved since the last inspection. This is clearly the result of a culture of good attendance with parents usually telephoning the school on the first morning of absence.

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

- 13 The quality of teaching is satisfactory for the children in the reception year, good for pupils in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory for pupils over seven. The quality of the teaching seen was satisfactory or better in all but one of the lessons observed. In 58 per cent of the lessons it was good. Most parents say they are satisfied with the teaching their children receive.
- 14 The quality of the teaching in English and mathematics is good; literacy and numeracy skills are well taught. In music, the teaching is good in quality for all pupils. It helps them appreciate the work of different composers and develop into competent performers. Because insufficient teaching was seen in the other subjects no judgement is made of the overall quality of teaching in them.
- 15 The best teaching was characterised by very good planning which drew on the teacher's expertise in the subject, making clear precisely what pupils were going to learn but leaving space for responding to pupils' contributions. As a result, pupils felt closely involved in learning and so they achieved well. For example, in both English and mathematics, because the planning was based on a good appreciation of the subject and of the learning needs of pupils of different ages, time was used well and suitable ground was covered, with key concepts and skills being presented in a coherent and interesting way. High demands were thus made of pupils' ability to work hard and make good progress.
- 16 More generally, teachers' knowledge and understanding of their subjects and their grasp of pupils' abilities are usually satisfactory, so that the activities they plan are well matched to pupils' learning needs, and pupils are industrious and make progress. Teachers' planning is usually good; this ensures that learning moves at a good pace and that effective use is made of the high-quality learning resources. For example, in music, the teacher's clear objectives and careful planning provided a variety of musical experiences from different sources; pupils' interest was retained and they worked hard as a result. Teachers form warm and productive relationships with pupils and manage them and their learning well. This ensures that discipline is usually good. It contributes substantially not only to academic achievement but also to pupils' personal, social and emotional development by providing the opportunity for them to grow in confidence. In particular, teachers are good at ensuring newcomers to the school quickly feel secure and able to participate fully in lessons.
- 17 Teachers successfully use a good range of teaching strategies. Frequently, the good use of questioning assesses pupils' understanding and enables them to recall relevant existing knowledge and focus on the topic of the lesson. In a good literacy lesson for the younger pupils, the questions encouraged the pupils to think about the story so that they took an active part in the reading activity. Good story-telling skills further extended their interest. As a result, pupils responded with enthusiasm, genuinely enjoyed working with words and offered plausible suggestions about what would happen next in the story. Explanations, instructions and demonstrations are clear so that pupils know exactly where they stand and what is expected of them. As a result, they settle quickly, work industriously and concentrate well, producing good work. Praise is well used to bolster

pupils' self-esteem and encourage the more diffident, and pupils are manifestly pleased when they succeed.

- 18 Where lessons are less successful, although satisfactory overall, it is sometimes because teachers are insecure in their subject knowledge, and sometimes because planning is not rigorous enough. This led in one instance to pupils being confused when they were given incorrect information and, in another, to too much discussion and not enough practical activity on the part of the pupils. Occasionally, the pace of a lesson or part of a lesson is insufficient to sustain the pupils' attention. Where teaching was unsatisfactory, it was because the teacher's expectations of the pupils were over-optimistic and the planning did not clearly identify the purpose of the lesson and what the pupils were intended to learn. As a result, the lesson lacked focus and the pupils did not make satisfactory progress.
- 19 Classroom support assistants are deployed well and make effective contributions to pupils' progress; volunteer helpers also make positive contributions to progress, especially in literacy and numeracy lessons.
- 20 Homework makes a good contribution to learning. Parents feel that the volume and nature of homework is well judged. It helps children into a good routine. Children come home wanting to do their homework which, they say, is suitable at each age group. Marking is supportive, although sometimes it gives insufficient guidance to pupils on how to improve.
- 21 Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and taught well. Teachers know pupils well and plan work that matches their learning needs. This enables them to gain confidence because the work builds gradually on their prior learning.
- 22 Some use is made of opportunities presented in other subjects to develop pupils' skills in literacy, numeracy, information technology and citizenship. For example history topics provide opportunities for pupils to write at length. Overall, however, in parallel with the under-developed cross curricular links, this aspect of teaching remains to be developed.
- 23 The school has maintained, and in some respects improved, the quality of teaching since the last inspection. The proportion of good teaching has increased. Teachers are better at maintaining the pace of lessons, and the introduction of the National Literacy Strategy has resulted in a new approach to the teaching of reading and encouraged the practice of using the last section of a lesson to review what has been learned. With systematic monitoring of teaching newly established, the school is well placed to improve the quality of teaching further.

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

- 24 The school provides a broad curriculum which meets statutory requirements. There are strengths in the provision for pupils with special educational needs and significant strengths in long-term and medium-term planning for mixed-age classes. However, there are weaknesses in the provision that make its balance and relevance unsatisfactory. The curriculum is not sufficiently well balanced in a number of areas. The use of the accommodation and lack of large apparatus limit opportunities for gymnastics and dance, particularly for pupils between seven and eleven. The amount of time allocated to swimming is disproportionately high. The lack of a suitable outdoor play area for children in reception restricts their opportunities for physical development. The weekly timetable does not allow enough variety of experiences for these children,

nor does it make the most efficient use of the time available for each subject in the rest of the school. Cross-curricular links are not well enough developed to enable learning in one subject to support learning in other subjects and avoid repetition. Provision for information and communication technology was held back by lack of resources until very recently, resulting in a weakness in the use of information and communication technology for real, practical purposes in other subjects. Nevertheless, the school has made improvements in structuring the curriculum since the last inspection and the headteacher, supported by the local education authority adviser, has reviewed the provision for pupils in the reception class and formed a good quality action plan to address the weaknesses.

- 25 The school is reviewing policy in all subjects and other aspects of its curricular provision. The policies for subjects already reviewed, such as those for English and mathematics, take into account equality of opportunity for all pupils. These subjects are very well planned to meet the needs of individual pupils in mixed-age classes. Good quality schemes of work are in place for all subjects. Although there is no formal scheme of work yet for personal, social, and health education or for citizenship education, the provision is satisfactory because teachers make appropriate reference to them in the course of their lessons. Health education as part of the science curriculum enables pupils learn about what they need to do to stay healthy, for example. The mixed-age classes, with pupils working in pairs or in groups, promote good relationships.
- 26 The quality of the provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. All aspects of the provision are effectively organised and co-ordinated. The policy for pupils with special educational needs meets statutory requirements and provides the basis for good quality provision in this area of the school's work.
- 27 Teachers make good use of literacy and numeracy lessons to meet the needs of individual pupils. Teachers recognise the need for some pupils to have extra practice in English and mathematics so booster lessons have been arranged for these. However, pupils do not have enough opportunities to develop their literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects.
- 28 The provision for extra-curricular activities is satisfactory, although some parents would like to see more. The fact that almost all pupils travel to school from a distance places severe restrictions on the time available for activities outside the school day. Nevertheless, teachers and parents offer netball sessions and a computer club, for example, for pupils who can arrange to stay after school. All pupils have a series of daytime football coaching sessions during the summer term. Teachers arrange for pupils to join those from nearby schools for activities, such as drama workshops, and to take part in a local music festival. Out-of-school visits, to Whitby, for example, enhance pupils' learning.
- 29 Teachers are aware of some gender differences in attainment and make sure that boys and girls have equivalent experiences. Pupils with special educational needs are well catered for. Higher attainers are set appropriately challenging tasks. The content of the curriculum and learning resources, such as library and reading books, reflect cultural diversity and present positive role models. Planning and assessment arrangements show that all pupils have access to the curriculum.
- 30 A close relationship with the local church is successfully developing and welcomed by parents. Pupils present a Christmas concert to which all members of the local community are invited. Links with other local primary schools successfully provide

learning opportunities - such as a Shakespeare workshop - otherwise not available to pupils in a small school.

- 31 The good provision the school makes for pupils' personal development continues the practice recorded in the last inspection report. It is based on the supportive, family-like atmosphere in which every pupil is well known, nurtured and valued. This helps them grow in confidence. Similarly, the good provision for pupils' moral and social development arises in large part from the good role-models supplied by the adults. There are clear rules and pupils know where they stand; in the mixed-age classes, pupils are encouraged to work together and take responsibility for each other. Arrangements to support their spiritual and cultural development are satisfactory but are not planned or sufficiently integrated into the broader curriculum. There is a recognition of the need to introduce pupils to cultures other than their own and new resources have been purchased with this in mind. For example, the big book used during the youngest children's literacy hour was an African story with African images. Pupils' rich musical experiences contribute well to their cultural development.

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

- 32 The arrangements to ensure pupils' welfare and safety flow from the caring, family atmosphere of the school and the commitment to provide an environment in which children feel secure and happy.
- 33 The good attendance levels testify to the good relationship the school has created with parents and the establishment of a culture of attendance. The good behaviour, consistently and well supported by all adults, is a product of the very good relationships that exist in the school, as is the absence of bullying or similar problems. Informal monitoring has become a part of the culture of the school rather than relying upon formal procedures and is effective in the context of the small number of pupils.
- 34 All staff are alert and aware of potential gender issues and take them seriously. For example, through monitoring test results, the school has discovered that girls are doing better in English and boys in science and is working out its response. A pupil's inappropriate remark was quickly corrected by a class teacher alive to the danger of gender stereotyping.
- 35 The assessment of academic attainment and the monitoring of pupils' progress is currently being addressed with considerable vigour in a context which has moved on since the last inspection when it was judged to be strong. Formal procedures have been improved and this is well documented in the school development plan. They include, for example, the introduction of formal assessments in English, mathematics and science each year-end and arrangements for tracking individual pupils' progress. An analysis of the national assessment results has been successfully established and produces data on the differential in attainment between boys and girls. The pupils are known very well by the teachers and, gradually, more formal procedures for recording this information are being introduced. Where these processes are unsatisfactory, however, is in the use of the available assessment information to guide long and medium term curriculum planning. Assessment for subjects other than English and mathematics is under developed.
- 36 Personal support and guidance is similarly in the process of being formalised. The very good relationships and the good knowledge of all pupils by all adults in the school ensure that achievement is well supported, but formal records are not yet standardised across the school.

- 37 All aspects of health and safety policy are well expressed and carried out in a way that fully involves the governing body.

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

- 38 Parents think well of the school and like the way it has become more open and welcoming since the last inspection. They see this as a significant improvement. In a school where nearly all the pupils travel from a distance, informal day-to-day contact is difficult, yet much good work has been done to improve both direct and indirect communication with parents. This is recognised and appreciated by the parents who state that they feel welcome in the school at any time.
- 39 The communications go beyond just informing parents of events and have been directed also to involving the parents in their children's work. The recently introduced home-school book provides useful two-way communication. Parents like the annual reports and feel they are helpful. They are very full, if mainly descriptive. They lack a standard approach yet, but some show good practice, such as indicating a child's progress in relation to national norms, and all include some general targets to be achieved. Three parents' evenings in the year and regular open afternoons when all the work of each pupil is available for scrutiny provide the means for parents to be well informed about their children's progress.
- 40 The parents are responding to the school's initiatives to achieve a closer relationship with them by becoming more involved in the life and work of the school. Individual parents help with games, science, literacy, numeracy and art. They provide transport when needed, and offer additional support on school visits so that the pupils' social and personal development can be extended and their learning in the subjects enhanced.

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

- 41 The quality of leadership and management provided by the headteacher is good. Her vision makes the educational direction of the school very clear; her energy and drive provide the momentum for developments designed to raise pupils' attainment, particularly in English, mathematics and science. Within a very short time, she has quickly and accurately identified the strengths of the school and the areas which need development. Her programme for development, supported by a suitable statement of aims, and the first of a suite of newly prepared relevant policy statements, has already made significant improvements although it is too soon for this to be apparent in national assessment results. The aims reflect the school's very good ethos as a caring Christian community and their effect is to contribute significantly to the pupils' confidence and positive attitudes to work.
- 42 The governing body has an accurate view of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and, working through a suitable committee structure, is beginning to devise suitable strategies for school improvement. Governors are concerned, interested and very supportive of the school and committed to helping it to improve standards. The literacy governor, for example, has a regular commitment to help in literacy lessons in both classes and the governor responsible for special educational needs provides good support. This illustrates a much clearer appreciation of the governors' role than that reported at the last inspection. Nevertheless, many governors are new to the role and are still in the process of becoming fully briefed. The governors' role in some key areas of the school's life, such as overseeing the curriculum, is still developing.

- 43 The headteacher provides good professional support to staff and pupils. There are now properly defined roles with arrangements for regular review. This clarity contributes to a growing sense of team-work. Results of the national assessments in English and mathematics for eleven-year-olds are now analysed and appropriate action taken to remedy weaknesses, but there is as yet no school programme to scrutinise pupils' work systematically as a means of monitoring the quality of teaching and learning. Curriculum co-ordination is at an early stage, but because a suitable framework is now in place, the school is well placed to improve the position reported at the last inspection and make progress.
- 44 The school development plan is good and indicates clearly the main lines of development for the next three years. The headteacher knows what needs to be done to improve standards, and the document has a suitable order of priorities specifically designed for this purpose, with suitable timescales. Spending decisions are carefully considered, and governors rigorously pursue the best value for the money they spend; at the same time, however, they have yet to make satisfactory arrangements to evaluate spending decisions in the light of their effect on pupils' attainment. Nevertheless, grants to the school earmarked for particular purposes are identified and effectively used. An accumulated budget surplus is being held so that the planned developments can be financed without delay as the detailed preparation for them is completed.
- 45 The quality of the accommodation is satisfactory: there is sufficient space for the current number of pupils and outside play areas for the older pupils are good. However, the accommodation for children of reception age is without a secure fenced-off outdoor play area and suitable equipment and resources to promote their physical and social development. The current allocation of space denies the school a hall, which is needed – along with suitable apparatus - to complete the physical education curriculum. A hall would also be valuable for assemblies and other whole-school events.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

46 The school should:

- improve the balance of the curriculum.

To do this, it will be necessary to:

- ensure that all aspects of the physical education curriculum are fully represented;
  - review the distribution of time to the subjects to ensure that it is appropriate in every case;
  - make more effective use of cross-curricular links;
  - manage the programme for children under the age of five so that it fully takes account of all the prescribed areas of learning.
- improve standards in information and communication technology, design and technology and art and design, in part by improving curriculum balance and in part by raising teachers' confidence, knowledge and skills in the subjects.
  - ensure that children in the reception year have the required opportunities for physical, social and creative development by providing a secure outdoor play area and suitable large play equipment.

47 In addition to the key issues above, the following weaknesses should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

- Improve assessment arrangements for subjects other than English and mathematics; and improve the use of assessment information in curriculum planning.
- Establish arrangements to evaluate spending decisions in terms of pupils' improved standards.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

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

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	0	58	34	8	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)	34
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR - Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	1

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	6
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	8

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.9
National comparative data	5.2

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

### ***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	34
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)	2.3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	14.8
Average class size	17

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

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	16

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	1999-2000
----------------	-----------

	£
Total income	105893
Total expenditure	100909
Expenditure per pupil	3255.1
Balance brought forward from previous year	24867
Balance carried forward to next year	29851

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

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	34
Number of questionnaires returned	29

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

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	72	24	3		
My child is making good progress in school.	59	31	10		
Behaviour in the school is good.	31	59	10		
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	34	55	10		
The teaching is good.	59	34	3	3	
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	45	45	7	3	
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	55	34	7	3	
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	48	45	7		
The school works closely with parents.	24	55	17	3	
The school is well led and managed.	28	52	10	7	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	38	59		3	
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	7	32	36	25	

## **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**

- 48 The curriculum for children in the reception year is based on the areas of learning and early learning goals, as recommended by government agencies. The children are accommodated in a class together with pupils aged six and seven, whose curriculum is planned using the subjects of the National Curriculum. This presents complex organisational challenges but at the same time allows the pupils to make a smooth transition from areas of learning to National Curriculum subjects. However, the way the curriculum for children in reception is organised makes unsatisfactory use of time and does not provide the variety needed by children of that age in the course of the day. Children spend a large part of the day in structured lessons and have little opportunity for learning through play. The class occupies a spacious teaching area but has no designated outside play area for them. This places restrictions on their curriculum; the children have too little experience of regular, well-planned outdoor play, which contributes to creativity, physical development and language development. However, the headteacher, supported by the local education authority adviser, has reviewed the provision for pupils in the reception class and formed a good quality action plan to address the weaknesses.
- 49 The quality of teaching and learning is generally good in personal, social and emotional development; it is satisfactory in communications, language and literacy and mathematical development. The teacher forms very good relationships with the children, inspiring trust and confidence. Careful planning ensures that the children are working at a suitable individual level and make good progress. However, literacy and numeracy lessons are too long for the reception children, who lose concentration and become distracted. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory in knowledge and understanding of the world. Pupils gain a suitable knowledge and understanding for their age in this area. However, this is taught in separate subjects, in line with the National Curriculum requirements, rather than in a more integrated way more suited to the reception stage. Teaching and learning in physical development and creative development are unsatisfactory. Too few regular opportunities are provided for pupils to develop physical and creative skills through regular physical activity and structured play.

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

- 50 Children reach standards in personal, social and emotional development that are good for their age. The friendly and supportive atmosphere encourages children to settle down quickly, make friends and be ready to learn. Children respond well to adults and to other children. They are able to dress themselves, including changing for physical education sessions, with little help. They relate well to adults. They enjoy working alongside other children at desk-based activities and learn to share equipment. Outdoor play is used too infrequently for it to make its full contribution to these personal skills. Children behave well, although they become restless on some occasions when the teacher's explanations are directed more at older pupils and lessons go on too long for them. However, they also benefit from working alongside older pupils, who set good examples.

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

- 51 In language and literacy, five-year-olds make good progress: they achieve standards above those expected for their age. Children work well alongside older pupils, joining in their conversations. They reach good standards for their age in speaking and listening, reading and writing. Children listen and respond well. They talk freely about their work and explain things of immediate interest.

### **Mathematical development**

- 52 In mathematics, children make good progress with number work. By the time they start Year 1, they attain all-round standards that are good for their age. They develop mathematical language, such as 'less, 'more' and 'take away'. They recognise and extend simple patterns and know the names of shapes, such as square, rectangle and circle. They count confidently at least up to twenty; most can count in tens and can double small numbers. The teaching methods of the National Numeracy Strategy benefit the older children but the younger ones sometimes find the concentration required in the whole-class sessions too difficult.

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

- 53 In knowledge and understanding of the world, children achieve satisfactorily and reach standards in line with the national expectation. Children were observed in a design and technology task where they very carefully cut a length of wood and hammered nails into it. It was then decorated with wool to make a sculpture. The children, very carefully supervised by the classroom assistant, worked confidently and safely and were satisfied with their work which was of a satisfactory standard for their age. In a science lesson, pupils were able to sort materials according to simple criteria, such as colour.

### **Physical development**

- 54 It is not possible to make a judgement about pupils' standards in physical development. They have too little opportunity for structured outdoor play for it to make its full contribution to pupils' abilities to control moving toys, such as tricycles, and large-scale construction apparatus. They play with balls with a reasonable level of skill. Pupils develop manual dexterity in classroom activities such as writing, drawing and crayoning.

### **Creative development**

- 55 It is not possible to make a judgement about pupils' standards in creative development. There are too few opportunities to use a range of materials such as paint, play-doh, paper, card and crayon to explore colour, shape, texture and space. There are too few opportunities to develop children's imaginations through play. They enjoy music lessons and join in confidently with pupils in the five- to seven-year-old age group.

## **ENGLISH**

- 56 Small numbers make the analysis of national test results difficult to interpret and assessment results are not published if there are ten or fewer pupils in the age group. However, results achieved by eleven-year-olds in recent years have been broadly average, rising in line with national trends, but with some higher-attaining pupils doing well. As measured by the 1999 assessments and those of the previous year, pupils' attainment at the age of seven has been well above the national average and also well above the average for similar schools in both reading and writing. Work of the present generation of pupils seen during the inspection was consistent with average results and satisfactory achievement at both seven and eleven.

- 57 Standards of speaking and listening by the age of eleven and the age of seven are average. In Years 1 and 2, pupils listen carefully to their teacher and Year 2 pupils speak confidently when answering the teacher's questions. In discussing their reading or their work in other subjects, the most articulate pupils use a good vocabulary and their ideas are expressed in well-constructed sentences. Those of average- or below-average attainment have more difficulty in listening effectively or articulating their ideas clearly.
- 58 Most pupils between the ages of seven and eleven are confident talkers in informal situations when they are in charge of the conversation. As speakers, pupils display a range of skills. Year 4 pupils listen with care to stories and questions and, when carefully coached, confidently present the poem they have written to the rest of the class. By the age of eleven, the most able pupils confidently discuss their interests and their work using a suitable vocabulary to justify their opinions, but others, in class or when talking to adults, are much less skilled in expressing their ideas.
- 59 Standards of reading are as expected for pupils at both the age of eleven and seven. The highest-attaining seven-year-olds read fluently, accurately and expressively, using different ways of tackling unfamiliar words. They talk about what they are reading and compare books they have read. Average attainers also read skilfully, recognising many words; the lower attaining pupils know their letter sounds but lack the skills to integrate them into words. By the age of eleven, the highest-attaining pupils read widely and talk enthusiastically about the kind of book they enjoy. They read aloud fluently, with expression and good characterisation. The lower-attaining pupils find many familiar words difficult, and have not yet developed suitable strategies for reading unfamiliar words. Most pupils at this stage have satisfactory library skills and can use a contents page or index effectively. The most able are beginning to use skim-reading as a way of finding information quickly.
- 60 The standard of pupils' writing displays a big range, but taken overall it is average. At the age of seven, the highest-attaining pupils write a well-sequenced story and show a delight with words, especially unusual words. Their handwriting and spelling are usually accurate; capital letters and full stops are properly used. Other pupils have plenty of ideas but lack the narrative skills to record them. Their handwriting is legible but not even and not placed accurately on the page.
- 61 Pupils between seven and eleven satisfactorily tackle a suitable range of writing styles. Year 4 pupils write attractive poems with telling metaphors and similes: for one, for example, the wind sounds like 'a cacophony of untrained recorders.' The higher-attaining pupils in Year 5 write fluent, structured narrative containing good ideas; the work of others displays a more limited range of ideas and a simpler style of writing.
- 62 By the age of eleven, the higher-attaining pupils record recent activity describing a clear sequence of events in well-constructed sentences. They argue persuasively, using well-balanced arguments. Their narrative shows an accurate use of dialogue, seen, for example, in the Western-style story of Shane. Handwriting is neat and spelling accurate. The writing of the less able pupils is often brief and does not show a secure grasp of narrative structure. Their handwriting is legible but irregular and ill-formed, and spelling is uncertain.
- 63 The achievement of pupils including those with special educational needs, is satisfactory because they make steady – in some cases good - progress over time. Their folders show the handwriting of the younger pupils becoming more controlled and fluent. Sentences have a better structure and punctuation becomes better established. The

work of pupils in the upper part of the school also shows satisfactory progress over time. The most able improve their story writing and extend their choice of words. The work of others becomes more organised and its legibility improves. The understanding of narrative structure – how to ensure that a composition has a beginning, a middle and an end – remains a problem to some, however.

- 64 Pupils' work is satisfactorily presented. Pupils' other literacy skills are satisfactorily supported in some other subjects but not widely. There are opportunities for extended writing in history, for example. Pupils are given practice in interrogating different sources for research in history topics. Information and communication technology provides satisfactory support for the subject but does not extend beyond word processing.
- 65 The quality of the teaching pupils experience is good both for six and seven-year-olds, and for pupils between seven and eleven. The teachers are skilled at enabling newly-arrived pupils to settle quickly and begin to make progress. They have appropriate strategies for managing pupils' behaviour based on establishing a warm but firm relationship with them.
- 66 These successful lessons are based on thorough organisation so that pupils of different ages and different needs including those with special educational needs, are provided with work that is suitably challenging, particularly in the lower part of the school. A supportive relationship gives pupils confidence. Good story-telling skills retain their interest. Questioning encourages pupils to think about the text being studied and to be active as readers. Explanations and instructions are clear so that pupils know what they have to do and can get on at once. Lessons are well paced so that pupils make progress. The use of whiteboards with the younger children is effective because it obliges them to commit themselves and provides the teacher with a means of instantly assessing what the children can do. The final plenary is used well to celebrate achievement and review what has been learned in the lesson. Homework consolidates this learning. Marking is supportive, although sometimes it gives insufficient guidance to pupils on how to improve. Occasionally, teachers display weaknesses in subject knowledge which lead to pupils being confused.
- 67 There has been satisfactory progress since the last inspection. Standards have matched the rising national trend and the quality of teaching, then satisfactory, is now good, although the teachers and a high proportion of pupils having comparatively recently joined the school, it is too early to see its effect in national assessment results. Approaches to teaching reading are now based on the National Literacy Strategy and use pupils' time better. Monitoring of teaching is now in place. The subject is well placed to make progress.

## **MATHEMATICS**

- 68 The number of pupils in each year group is too small to allow a reliable analysis of the school's National Curriculum test results for any one year. The results of the National Curriculum tests for eleven-year-olds in 2000 were not published as there were fewer than 10 pupils in the age group. However, putting together the results over the past three years, standards of attainment at the age of eleven have been well above the national average, with boys performing better than girls. The school is addressing this apparent difference by tracking individual pupils' progress. The work seen of the very small number of pupils in the present Year 6 shows their attainment to be reaching the required level for their age. All aspects of the mathematics curriculum are well represented, except for data handling where very little work is evident at an appropriate level.

- 69 There were no pupils in Year 2 last year; therefore there are no National Curriculum test results for 2000. The work of the very small number of pupils in the present Year 2 was seen to be consistent with the required level for their age. It shows number and algebra, shape, space and measure to be well represented. Work in handling data and solving mathematical problems is less well represented. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory during their time in school.
- 70 The quality of teaching and learning is good. The teachers are knowledgeable and competent in teaching numeracy lessons. Pupils are kept interested by skilled teaching and challenging activities. Pupils particularly enjoy activities that include an element of fun, such as 'follow on' games, played against the clock.
- 71 Teachers make clear to pupils what they are learning, provide suitable activities for pupils of different ages and abilities, and make good use of the concluding part of the lesson to reinforce the learning. This enables pupils to work with a degree of independence and is effective in promoting good progress. As a result, pupils have a sound understanding of addition and subtraction by the time they are seven, and are learning multiplication and division of numbers up to 20. They understand the language associated with these operations, such as 'more than', 'less than' and 'difference between'. Pupils can double and halve numbers up to 100. They are beginning to understand the two times table, associating it with doubling, and to remember it. They can count on and back in tens from any two-digit number with alacrity. By the age of eleven, pupils know multiplication facts up to ten times, and use these when solving problems. They understand place value and use this competently when dealing with multiples of ten. They understand place value in decimal fractions and can add and subtract these confidently.
- 72 Teachers successfully plan lessons to meet the needs of all pupils in small mixed-age classes, including those with special educational needs. This is a strength of the teaching. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 work at their own level, estimating the weights of objects and weighing them in grams. They work well with money, calculating change from £1. Pupils' work on symmetry shows a reasonable level of accuracy. Pupils in the junior age range work hard on problems concerning time, which some find difficult. They work confidently, at their own level, on shape and space, finding and linking co-ordinates on a grid, or drawing accurate outlines of three-dimensional shapes, such as a cube. Pupils of all ages understand and use the subject vocabulary well.
- 73 Teachers make good use of parent helpers to provide support for pupils in the course of their group work. Pupils form very good relationships with adults and co-operate well with each other, in discussing mathematical investigations, for example. Older pupils carry out investigations involving ratios, such as, 'Investigate: - the taller the person, the longer the stride'. This develops pupils' reasoning skills and provides a good opportunity for using computers to process data.
- 74 Sometimes the pace of a lesson in the whole class session becomes too slow because questions are too complex for the situation. When this happens, some pupils become restless and distracted and their rate of learning is reduced.
- 75 The subject has been a recent priority for development. Good quality monitoring of teaching and learning has helped to provide a consistently good quality of provision for pupils in all year groups. The scheme of work, based on the National Numeracy Strategy, is comprehensive and planning is very well constructed to make sure that all pupils' needs are met. The newly planned provision includes additional lessons for

pupils to improve their skills in preparation for the National Curriculum assessment tests. The school has maintained a good level of provision for the subject since the last inspection and standards have been maintained.

## SCIENCE

- 76 The number of pupils in each year group is too small to allow a reliable analysis of the school's National Curriculum test results for any one year. The results of the National Curriculum tests for eleven-year-olds, 2000, were not published as there were fewer than 10 pupils in the age group. However, putting together the results over the past three years, standards of attainment of eleven-year-olds are slightly higher than the national average overall, with boys performing better than girls. Work seen shows the overall attainment of pupils in the present Year 6 to be in line with the national average overall, with strengths in knowledge and understanding of living things and a need for further development in skills of scientific enquiry. There were no pupils in Year 2 last year: therefore no teacher assessments in science were made. The work seen indicates that pupils in the present Year 2 have a secure knowledge and understanding, in line with national expectations, but that their recording skills are not yet well enough developed, when recording their findings about properties of materials, for example.
- 77 The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall, with some strengths. The strengths in teaching are apparent when teachers hold lively discussions that help the pupils understand the lesson. Pupils respond well, showing interest and involvement so that, by the age of eleven, they are developing a sound understanding of the effects of variables on an investigation and the importance of recognising that in a fair test only one variable is changed at a time. Pupils plan and carry out investigations, for example, into the transportation of nutrients in a plant, recording their findings appropriately and drawing valid conclusions. However, they lack sufficient confidence to carry this out unaided. They make appropriate use of information and communication technology to support their learning, particularly in recording and presenting information.
- 78 Teachers plan work to build on pupils' knowledge and understanding so they make sense of new learning by relating it to their existing scientific knowledge. For example, pupils know that plants reproduce by producing seeds and refer to their own knowledge and experience to suggest different methods of seed dispersal. Teachers' probing questions make pupils think and help them bring relevant knowledge to mind.
- 79 Teachers support pupils with special educational needs well in lessons. They help them in a variety of ways, such as providing individual work or additional adult help.
- 80 The relationship between teachers and pupils is very good, encouraging pupils to work hard. When lessons are well managed and have a brisk pace, pupils remain interested and involved. Pupils' achievement, compared with their prior attainment, is good overall. They build on their knowledge of living things and their understanding of life processes within plants and animals, such as growth and reproduction. Their understanding of materials and their ability to observe changes develop and they learn to use a broader range of vocabulary. Pupils' understanding of the world grows as they build on their knowledge of physical processes such as heat and sound. Pupils make progress in developing the skills of scientific investigation and drawing conclusions based on scientific knowledge and their experience of the world. Sometimes, however, lessons are less successful because they are planned with a narrow range of teaching methods and learning opportunities are reduced as a result.

81 The subject has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection. The school is making good use of the scheme of work for science to ensure that pupils cover appropriate work at the right level for their age and ability in mixed-age classes. The subject has recently been reviewed, resulting in more emphasis being placed on teaching the skills of scientific enquiry to address this relatively weaker area of pupils' attainment.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

82 A good quality scheme of work for information and communication technology has recently been put into place. This plans for the subject to be taught in a progressive way, so that pupils systematically build up their skills. The learning resources have been significantly improved by the acquisition of new computers with access to the Internet. This greatly improves the provision for the subject, which is significantly better than at the time of the last inspection. Nevertheless, standards of attainment are below the national expectation at the ages of both seven and eleven and below those reported in the last report, partly because pupils have only recently benefited from the quality of provision that they need to achieve satisfactory standards in all aspects of the subject. Pupils demonstrate a positive attitude towards the subject and are making good progress.

83 The small amount of teaching seen was effective, with good, clear explanation and the right amount of support to help pupils learn at a good pace. Pupils enjoy the subject and are keen to learn. By the age of seven, pupils are writing short pieces of text. They know that this can be saved and retrieved. They have experience of using graphic programs effectively, using the toolbar to create and change their work. Pupils play educational games, such as those designed to develop mathematical skills, and have experience of programs that model the real world, such as 'Dressing Teddy', where younger children learn about dressing appropriately for the weather. However, pupils do not remember using the computer to create a bar chart, for example, or using programming to control a floor robot. By the age of eleven, pupils produce pieces of text, such as reports, stories and poems, using different fonts and sizes of text. They can save and retrieve their work. Some pupils know how to illustrate this using clip art. However, they have not yet reached the level of skill required to create a page, such as making a poster or newspaper. Their knowledge and understanding of using a data-handling program is underdeveloped. They know how to enter information, about their mathematical investigations, for example, but have not yet learned to process it.

84 Teachers are confident in the subject and now that they have suitable resources they are able to teach information and communication technology lessons. Teachers plan lessons clearly so that pupils know what they are learning and keep focussed on the task. Well-prepared help sheets enable pupils to become more independent in their use of computers for their own purposes. They work well both individually and in pairs, helping each other in the learning activity. This contributes well to their personal development and helps them to make good progress.

85 Teachers revise previous learning and encourage new learning through clear instructions and careful questioning. The lessons are well paced to keep pupils' attention. Pupils are well motivated and work hard to acquire new knowledge and understanding. Pupils have a sound knowledge of the Internet. Some pupils have experience of this at home and understand the code of practice for using it appropriately. Older pupils can research information from a CD-ROM, about living things, for example, but have not yet had experience of compiling their own presentations. They demonstrate a sound knowledge and understanding of the use of technology in the real world, such

as the use of electronic mail. However, pupils' knowledge and understanding of control technology is unsatisfactory. They have little experience of programming a sequence of events, such as working traffic lights, or in using a sensor for monitoring changes, in temperature for example.

- 86 Teachers plan for computers to be used in other subjects, particularly science and mathematics, but this aspect of information and communication technology is at an early stage of development. Nevertheless, pupils' learning is improving significantly, resulting in rising standards of attainment.
- 87 Teachers are aware of equality of opportunity and make sure that all boys and girls, including any with special educational needs have a fair turn and appropriate support to help them make good progress. The leadership and management of the subject are good so that the subject is well placed to continue to improve.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

- 88 Standards are in line with those expected but pupils are more secure when discussing facts about religion than describing what they have learned from religion.
- 89 There have been relatively few changes in the position of religious education since the previous inspection. A new scheme of work, based on the local agreed syllabus and the national model scheme of work but adapted to the circumstances of the school, has recently been adopted and with it the school is in a good position to improve.
- 90 Younger pupils have a satisfactory recall of the vicar's recent visit to explain about Holy Communion and can name some features of the service, repeating key words and phrases. When talking about festivals, they describe Lent and Easter but only the highest-attaining pupils go on to describe the significance of the crucifixion, burial and the empty tomb. They can recount some stories about Jesus. An attractive collaborative display on the classroom wall tells the story of Noah.
- 91 Older pupils produce carefully presented work on a range of topics: symbols in Christianity, the meaning of Candlemas, the meaning for Jews of the Torah and the significance of such words as kosher. They have studied the features of an Anglican church, and learned about Easter and other Christian festivals. They have reflected on the meaning of harvest and prepared suitable prayers of thanksgiving. In conversation, they satisfactorily relate their work on signs and symbols to the Communion service, accurately explaining the significance of the Elements. They can name some world religions – Judaism and Hinduism - but no more.
- 92 This suggests that overall, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. However, the single lesson seen was unsatisfactory because the teacher's expectations of the pupils were over-optimistic and the planning was not clear enough on the purpose of the lesson and what the pupils were intended to learn. As a result, the lesson, although potentially making good use of St James's Church as a resource, lacked focus and the pupils did not make the expected progress.
- 93 Pupils' attitudes to religious education are generally positive and individual pupils often think deeply about the subject matter, as shown in the harvest prayers. A Year 5 pupil's project on the environment raised relevant ethical and moral questions. The behaviour of pupils is good.

- 94 The co-ordinator monitors teachers' planning to ensure a satisfactory coverage of the subject but has yet to establish monitoring of teaching and of pupils' learning. It is thus possible for teachers' comments to respond to presentation rather than content and conceptual substance. There are no formal arrangements for assessment in the subject and this is an area for development. Information and communication technology has had little impact on the subject and this also is an area for development. Visits to local churches are successful and enrich the provision for religious education but this does not extend to visits to places of worship of other faiths.

## **OTHER SUBJECTS**

- 95 At the ages of seven and eleven, standards of attainment meet expectation in geography and history maintaining, overall, the position reported at the time of the last inspection. Pupils at all levels of ability demonstrate satisfactory achievement in relation to their prior attainment. Attainment in art and design, and design and technology, is below national expectation and pupils' achievement in these subjects is unsatisfactory. Insufficient physical education was seen to make a judgement. Pupils with special educational needs receive good quality support and make good progress.
- 96 Improvement made in the provision for these subjects overall has been satisfactory since the last inspection. The recently appointed headteacher, together with the staff and governors, has put in place a scheme of work for each subject that ensures that pupils cover all the required work appropriate for their age in the context of mixed-age classes. This provides the necessary structure for pupils to build up knowledge and skills in a systematic way, forming a secure foundation for future learning and so the school is well placed to improve.
- 97 Teachers' planning shows the schemes of work being implemented for each key age group, and the curriculum is sufficiently well covered although the planning for some less formal lessons lacks sufficient rigour. Resources for learning are satisfactory in quantity and quality except those in physical education. The absence of sufficient suitable large apparatus compromises the quality of provision in this subject. Pupils demonstrate a good attitude towards their work and are usually keen to talk about their ideas.
- 98 Literacy and communication skills are reinforced satisfactorily by the study of history, but not more widely. Pupils have opportunities for extended writing and also for discussion, both of which extend their skills and vocabulary.

## **Art and Design**

- 99 Pupils work confidently in pastels, water colour, crayon and pen and ink. For example, the attractive pastel studies of spring flowers made by the younger pupils and displayed in St James's Church show them observing with care, and manipulating the materials effectively. Colourful and arresting posters about the seaside made by the same pupils are the result of a confident and exuberant use of colour. The work of pupils in the seven to eleven-year-old age range includes a class portrait gallery. Here, pupils have made photographs, developed pencil sketches and prepared final pictures using water colour with added paint and ink detail. The best show character and an assured technique.
- 100 However, standards are below expectation because pupils' experience of art is in a comparatively narrow range. Pupils have insufficient experience of three-dimensional work, for example, and have not worked enough with textiles. They have not studied established artists, partly because the school has few reproductions of their work for pupils to study.

- 101 The quality of teaching for the youngest pupils is good. The lessons are well planned to stimulate pupils' enthusiasm and help them learn new skills. As a result they work well, concentrating on improving their work. Insufficient direct teaching was seen in the upper part of the school to judge its quality.
- 102 Assessment arrangements for art are not fully established. The role of pupils' sketchbooks as a means of assessment and recording is not developed nor is the collection of individual or group portfolios of work which could be used for moderation purposes. While consumable resources are in good supply, there is a shortage of good-quality prints and artefacts to stimulate learning and enliven the environment.

### **Design and Technology**

- 103 Pupils gain experience in working with a good range of materials, including card, plastic, fabric, food and wood. The younger pupils, for example, make attractive sculptures with wood and nails, finished with wool in a range of colours. They talk enthusiastically about making jointed puppets, moved by simple levers. Pupils in the junior class make electrical 'steady hand' games in which the player moves a metal ring over a shaped wire without making contact and activating a buzzer. These are competently made and carefully finished.
- 104 However, pupils have insufficient understanding of the process of designing and making an artefact to fulfil a specific need, such as considering why they are making an object, whether it works well enough, and whether changes need to be made in order to improve its effectiveness.
- 105 Thus, although the quality of pupils' work on display is generally good, the emphasis is on making the object. The skills of developing detailed designs with set criteria, and evaluating the finished product against the criteria, are underdeveloped. It is not possible to reach a judgement about the quality of teaching and learning as no lessons were seen in this subject.

### **Geography**

- 106 Pupils gain satisfactory understanding of maps and plans and the use of keys. Pupils aged up to seven follow a simple map of the locality and recognise the prominent features. They talk about their experience of flooding and the changes they saw in the local landscape.
- 107 The older pupils study maps on a countrywide scale, in their investigation of settlements, for example. They understand the climatic differences between countries in different parts of the world and how this affects people's lives. They develop an awareness of the geographical features of their own locality. These pupils become more aware of the effects of pollution on the environment and develop a sense of responsibility for it.
- 108 Pupils' learning is enhanced by field studies, for example, by visiting a recycling station. As no geography lessons were seen, it is not possible to make a judgement about teaching and learning. Pupils express enjoyment and interest when talking about the subject.

### **History**

- 109 Pupils' knowledge of history develops satisfactorily as they move through the school but their skills are less secure: older pupils are uncertain, for example, about the processes of evaluating different sources of evidence.
- 110 Pupils aged six and seven are clear about events in the past and know that some things were different in the past. After a visit in which they studied toys of different periods, they know that children played with different kinds of toy in the olden days and can describe some of the differences. For example, 'You had to push them!' They offer explanations for the differences: 'There was no electricity in the olden days.'
- 111 Older pupils, studying invaders and settlers, have a good knowledge of the influence of the different waves of settlers on local place names. They have a satisfactory recall of facts about the Vikings, where they came from and the boats they came in. They know they were fearsome warriors with a particularly brutal way of killing people. Their books show pupils building up knowledge about the Angles, Saxons and Vikings, and making comparisons with other times.
- 112 The quality of teaching for the older pupils is satisfactory. The teacher is skilled at helping the pupils remember what they already know, and at providing information which helps them understand better about different times. A steady pace to the lesson carries the pupils forward: they are well managed so that they can get on without interruption. Extra help is given to the younger pupils or those with difficulty in understanding and ensures they get the most from the lesson. As a result, pupils are attentive, interested and willing to learn. One group were so intrigued by the idea of writing in runes that for the rest of the week they communicated with the teacher using Viking script only. Insufficient direct teaching was seen in the lower part of the school to judge its quality.
- 113 The locality is used well for local history study, for example, through visits made to Whitby, where the younger pupils find out about holidays in former times and the older pupils learn about Celtic times.

## **Music**

- 114 Pupils' singing is satisfactory. In assemblies and lessons, they sing mostly in tune with an accurate rhythm, although sometimes lacking in confidence and conviction partly because the teacher does not coach them enough in singing technique.
- 115 Younger pupils listen carefully to music and respond to the rhythm they hear with reasonable accuracy. They know the names of many percussion instruments and know how to play them: that they must be struck, scraped, plucked or shaken to make a sound. They compose and perform a short piece. Older pupils listen intently to the selected music, having been carefully prepared by the teacher for what to expect. They respond by composing their own music on the same theme. They handle instruments with skill, working in pairs, developing their own compositions by rehearsing them carefully. They progress well in making their own music because the teacher manages the discussion of ideas well, respecting the pupils' contributions, and gives them ample opportunity to perform.
- 116 The quality of teaching is good. Lessons are well planned from the basis of a good knowledge of the subject and provide a good variety of musical experiences. This retains pupils' interest throughout and they concentrate well. A good pace, too, keeps pupils involved. Demonstration and explanation are good so that pupils can hear what is expected of them. Praise encourages pupils: as a result, they have the confidence to

perform their compositions. Supported in this way, pupils behave well, enjoy the lessons and make satisfactory progress.

### **Physical education**

- 117 Provision for physical education is limited by the fact that a class occupies the hall. Accordingly, teachers largely rely on outdoor lessons for games. Although the playground or the field are appropriate for teaching and learning games skills, these spaces do not provide suitable floor areas for gymnastics and dance. For these activities, teachers are obliged to use the classrooms. The juniors' classroom is not spacious enough or supplied with appropriate large apparatus to meet the demands of the curriculum.
- 118 However, pupils have swimming lessons every week throughout their time in the school. This entails them being out of school for two hours or more each week. Whilst standards in swimming benefit - every pupil learns to swim at least 25 metres - the time spent on this is about ten per cent of the available teaching time per year. The provision for physical education, therefore, lacks appropriate breadth and balance.
- 119 As only one lesson was seen, it is not possible to make a judgement about pupils' attainment in all aspects of physical education. Nevertheless, pupils at the age of seven demonstrate skills in throwing, catching and dribbling a ball that are in line with national expectations. Teaching and learning are satisfactory, with a good balance of instruction and activity leading to a busy and enjoyable lesson. Resources, however, are not always appropriate for outdoor conditions, leading to frustration in practising and developing skills. Pupils benefit from a programme of professional football coaching each year. Teachers and parents offer extra-curricular sessions in games, such as netball.