

INSPECTION REPORT

COWLING COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Cowling, Keighley

LEA area: North Yorkshire

Unique reference number: 121388

Headteacher: Mrs Kathleen Pick

Reporting inspector: Mrs Pat Kime
25350

Dates of inspection: 3rd – 5th December 2001

Inspection number: 243401

Full 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:	Gill Lane Cowling Keighley West Yorkshire
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Maria McEwan
Date of previous inspection:	September 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
25350	Mrs Kime	Registered inspector	Mathematics	What sort of school is it?
			Art and design	The school's results and pupils' achievements.
			Music	How well are pupils taught?
			The Foundation Stage	What should the school do to improve further?
			Equal opportunities	
12536	Mrs Bullerwell	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils?
				How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
30346	Mrs Lowrie	Team inspector	English	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development.
			Geography	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
			History	
			Physical education	
			Special educational needs	
23887	Mr Nettleship	Team inspector	Science	How well is the school led and managed?
			Information and communication technology	
			Design and technology	
			Religious education	

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33 Kingsway
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Cowling Community Primary School is a smaller than average school serving the mixed village community of Cowling, situated a few miles south of Skipton and west of Keighley. The 125 boys and girls are taught in five classes. Twenty-three of them are in the Foundation Stage and are taught in the reception class. Nearly all the pupils are white and of UK heritage and there are no pupils for whom English is an additional language. When children start in reception their attainment, taken overall, is broadly average. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals (almost ten per cent) is below average. The school has identified 26 pupils as having special educational needs. Four of these pupils carry statements of special educational needs. Only two of the others have significant learning difficulties. Last year, ten pupils came to Cowling late and three left early. Several of the pupils who joined the school part way through their primary education have special educational needs. Since the last inspection there have been a lot of staff changes and two of the class teachers are new this term.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a school with many strengths. The teaching is good. Pupils follow a rich curriculum and most of them are now achieving well. Pupils flourish at Cowling; their attitudes, behaviour and relationships are very good because of the school's very good provision for personal development. Academic standards are average. The head teacher and governors manage the school satisfactorily. Costs are a little higher than average but the school still provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards are above average in religious education and well above average in art and design at the top of the school.
- The quality of teaching is good, especially in Key Stage 2, so most pupils are making good progress in their learning.
- The school promotes pupils' personal development very well and provides very good pastoral care. These features underpin the very positive atmosphere for learning.
- Pupils achieve high standards in their attitudes, behaviour, personal development and school attendance.
- The school provides well for pupils with special educational needs.
- The school is very much part of the local community and uses these links very well to support pupils' academic learning and personal development.

What could be improved

- Standards are not high enough in information and communication technology (ICT) and design and technology in Key Stage 2 and in science in Key Stage 1.
- The provision for children in the Foundation Stage.
- Some aspects of the school's leadership and management.
- In the mixed age classes the older pupils and higher attainers progress less well than the others.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in September 1997. It has made satisfactory progress since then, despite the staff changes.

Improvement on the key issues for action

- Monitoring of the school's work and pupils' performance has improved satisfactorily.
- On the whole pupils' skills in mathematical problem solving, scientific enquiry, and information and communication technology (ICT) are now developing quite well. However, this is only a very recent development in Information and communication technology and, in Key Stage 1, work in scientific enquiry is still too closely prescribed by the teacher.
- Just enough has been done to provide appropriate challenge for higher attaining pupils in Key Stage 1 but more remains to be done to ensure they do as well as they can.

Progress on other matters

- Standards have improved at a similar rate to nationally.
- The quality of teaching has improved considerably.
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are better.
- The school has done well to maintain its very good provision for pupils' personal development and pastoral care.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				<i>Key</i>
	all schools			similar schools	
	1999	2000	2001	2001	
English	C	E	C	C	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
Mathematics	D	C	C	C	
Science	C	C	D	D	

In most years only a small number of pupils take the national tests (SATs). In 2001 just 15 pupils took the end of Key Stage 2 SATs and 11 pupils took the tests at the end of Key Stage 1. Each Year 6 pupil represented seven per cent of the cohort. Consequently the results should be interpreted with caution. A comparison of the 2001 leavers' results with the standard they had reached at the end of Year 2 shows that they made good progress overall in Key Stage 2.

- The 27 pupils **in the present Year 6** are attaining broadly average standards in English, mathematics and science. They have a good chance of reaching the school's challenging target in mathematics but they may not make the target in English, because, although reading is strong, writing is not as good.
- When they start school, most children's attainment is average. Their achievement in reception is satisfactory and, **by the end of the reception year**, attainment meets the targets for their age.
- In Key Stage 1 (Years 1 and 2) pupils continue to make satisfactory progress in learning and generally achieve the standards they should. In the SATs at the end of this key stage in 2001,

the 11 pupils' attainment, compared with the national results, was broadly average in reading, below average in writing and well above average in mathematics.

- **The present Year 2** pupils are achieving an average standard for their age in English and mathematics. In science their attainment is below average.
- Pupils are now achieving well in Key Stage 2 (Years 3, 4, 5 and 6) because they are well taught.
- Standards in information and communication technology (ICT), and design and technology are satisfactory in Key Stage 1 but **below average** in Key Stage 2. Pupils are now making satisfactory progress in learning Information and communication technology in Key Stage 2 and are beginning to catch up. However, they do not do well enough in design and technology.
- Standards are **above average** in religious education in both key stages and in art and design in Key Stage 1. Standards in art and design are **well above average** by the end of Key Stage 2. In physical education the standards seen were above average in Key Stage 1 and average in Key Stage 2.
- In the other subjects standards are average.
- No judgement has been made on standards in music in Key Stage 2 because not enough work was seen.
- Despite the inevitable year-by-year fluctuations seen with the small year groups, standards have broadly kept up with the national rate of improvement.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good; pupils enjoy school life, they want to achieve and they take pride in their school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils are very well behaved in the vast majority of lessons and they conduct themselves very well around the school.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships among pupils and between staff and pupils are very good. Pupils' personal development is good. They are considerate of others and they willingly accept responsibility for jobs in classrooms and around school. They grow in maturity but do not have the opportunities they could to use their initiative and develop independent learning habits.
Attendance	The rate of attendance is well above the national average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	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.

- Taken overall, the quality of teaching is good and, as a result, pupils are now making gains in their learning at a good rate.

- Teaching is most effective in the top two classes, especially in Year 6. All the teaching seen in these classes was at least good. The strength in teaching also shines through in pupils' books.
- The most effective teaching is rooted in teachers' clear grasp of exactly what they want pupils to learn in each lesson combined with very good marking, and high expectations for all the pupils, with work matched closely to their different needs.
- All the teachers organize and manage the pupils well. They get very good behaviour in orderly lessons.
- Literacy and numeracy skills are taught well because the teachers implement the National Literacy and Numeracy strategies effectively.
- In the reception class the teaching is sufficiently effective for children to make average gains in their learning. However, its quality is undermined because the activities provided are not always sufficiently well matched to the needs of the age group.
- In the Year 1 and 2 and Year 3 and 4 classes, although most pupils make satisfactory overall gains in their learning, expectations are sometimes not high enough for the older pupils and the higher attainers.
- The school meets the bulk of its pupils' needs well overall. Pupils with special educational needs get the help they need and therefore make good progress in view of their learning difficulties. Particularly able pupils are fast-tracked in appropriate subjects. Those with particular talents, for instance in music or sport are encouraged to take up opportunities outside the main curriculum or indeed beyond the school.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good; the school provides a broad and rich curriculum. It fully meets the requirements to teach all subjects of the National Curriculum and is enhanced by a good range of educational visits and visitors. Strong links with the local community make a very good contribution to pupils' learning. The range of activities outside lessons is good for a school this size.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good; work is planned to meet these pupils' needs. Good support from classroom assistants enables them to be fully included in lessons and other activities.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good overall; the school gives high priority to personal development and its provision for pupils' spiritual and moral development is very good. Provision for pupils' social and cultural development is good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good overall; pastoral care is very good and the attention to health and safety and child protection matters is generally good. Teachers keep a good check on pupils' progress in English and mathematics. They use this information to set suitable targets for pupils' learning but are less systematic about making changes to the whole-school plans of work. In the other subjects assessment of learning is usually satisfactory.

Relationships between home and school are strong and parents think highly of the school. They are well informed about the work their children do and how well they are progressing.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the head teacher and other key staff	Satisfactory; the head teacher's leadership sets the school's positive ethos very well. Her leadership of the school's academic work is satisfactory. The role of the other senior teachers is underdeveloped. The arrangements for teachers to lead and manage the various subjects are unsatisfactory. However, this has not so far had a detrimental effect on standards.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory; governors are strongly supportive of the school. The head teacher keeps them informed about school life, pupils' performance, and plans for future development. Governors do not take a lead in setting the agenda for school improvement or questioning how well the school is doing.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory but improving. Assessment findings in English and mathematics are now analysed quite thoroughly and steps are taken to tackle weak areas in pupils' performance.
The strategic use of resources	Good overall; funds are spent wisely to support development in the school's educational priorities. Better use could be made of the support staff's time in some class teaching sessions. The principles of best value are applied soundly.

The school is generously staffed. The accommodation and resources for teaching and learning are satisfactory overall.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school and work hard. • The teaching is good, their children are making good progress and are becoming mature and responsible. • Behaviour is good. • The school is well led and managed, it works closely with parents and they find the staff approachable. 	<p>A small number of parents are not happy about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the range of activities outside lessons; • the amount of homework their children get; • the information they receive about their children's progress.

There was a good return rate of the inspection questionnaire. Twenty-five parents attended a meeting with the Registered Inspector prior to the inspection. Most of the pupils' parents are very happy with the education the school provides. The inspectors endorse most of the parents' positive views of the school. They found no evidence to back up the criticisms of a small minority. Indeed, the extra-curricular provision and the information about pupils' progress are good.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

Results in the national tests (SATs)

1 The test results should be interpreted with caution for the following reasons:

- In most years only a small number of pupils take the tests so each pupils' results have a significant effect on the school's overall performance, much more so than in the average sized primary school. For example, in 2001, 11 Year 2 pupils took the end of Key Stage 1 tests and 15 Year 6 pupils took the end of Key Stage 2 tests; each of these pupils represented 7 per cent.
- The ability of each year group varies. This is seen in the differences between year groups in the results of the 'baseline assessments' carried out when they start school. The impact of this variation is magnified because of the small numbers of pupils in each year.

2 In the end of **Key Stage 2 tests** in 2001, the Year 6 pupils' performance was in line with the national average in English and mathematics but below average in science. Taken overall, these pupils' results were broadly in line with the national average. The picture is the same when the pupils' results are compared with the average achieved by pupils in similar schools*.

3 Several pupils in this year group came to the school late and others left early. The pupils who sat the tests were a weak group for the school. The school's records show that they made good progress in Key Stage 2 in English and mathematics, but their progress was not good enough in science.

4 In the end of **Key Stage 1 tests** in 2001, the Year 2 pupils' performance was in line with the national average in reading, below it in writing, and well above it in mathematics. This was a good year group for the school. When compared with similar schools, their performance was above average in reading, below average in writing but in the top five per cent in mathematics. The mathematics results were so good because all the pupils were at least securely at the level expected for their age and a third of them attained a higher level. Year 2 pupils do not sit a science test; their attainment in this subject is assessed by their teachers. In 2001 the pupils did very well. All of them reached the level expected for their age and a third reached a higher level. However, the standard of their experimental and investigative work was much below their scientific knowledge. This weakness was also seen in the work of the present Year 2 and it reflects a weakness in teaching.

** Similar schools are those across the country in which between 8 and 20 per cent of the pupils are known to be entitled to free school meals. Last year almost 10 per cent of Cowling's pupils were in receipt of free school meals.*

Trends in results and targets

5 It is not possible to draw many valid conclusions from variation in SATs results from one year to the next because of the differences in the ability profile between year groups and the small numbers of pupils involved. Nevertheless, some real differences are detectable between subjects. For instance, since 1998 the Key Stage 2 results have steadily improved in mathematics and science whilst

they have fluctuated a lot in English. In Key Stage 1, the mathematics results have improved more than those in reading and writing.

6 Taken overall, standards in the Key Stage 2 tests over the last four years have kept pace with the national rate of improvement.

7 In 2001 the Year 6 pupils' attainment in the SATs exceeded the school's targets. This was the result of intensive additional support in the form of extra spelling work with the head teacher, extra support in the classroom, and 'booster classes' begun when the pupils were in Year 5. This year's targets are challengingly high. They are likely to be met in mathematics but may not be in English because pupils' writing is not as good as their reading.

The standards seen on inspection and pupils' achievements

8 When children start in the reception class they can do as much as most children of their age. Their personal and social development is generally better than average. They make satisfactory progress in all areas of their learning (personal, social and emotional development; communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical development; creative development). Consequently, **by the end of the reception year**, their attainment meets the national targets for their age. In personal, social and emotional development they exceed the targets. These levels of attainment represent satisfactory achievement in the Foundation Stage.

9 In **Key Stage 1**, pupils make satisfactory overall progress in learning and the Year 2 pupils' attainment meets the expectations for their age in English and mathematics. However, in science, their attainment is below average. This is because they do not reach the standard they should in the skills of scientific enquiry. In most other subjects, standards in Key Stage 1 are broadly average. In religious education, physical education and art and design they are above average. Taken overall, pupils' achievement in this key stage is satisfactory but they get on better in Year 1 than Year 2. This is because in Year 2 the work is sometimes not demanding enough so pupils' rate of progress slips.

10 In **Key Stage 2**, most pupils now make good progress because the teaching is good. The Year 6 pupils' attainment, taken overall, meets the expectations for their age in English, mathematics and science. In English, speaking and listening and reading are better than writing. In mathematics the major strength lies in pupils' understanding of number and their ability to calculate. In science, these pupils have good skills in scientific enquiry and their knowledge base is satisfactory. In the other subjects, standards in Year 6 are broadly average in geography, history and physical education. They are well above average in art and design and above average in religious education. In information and communication technology (ICT), and design and technology standards in Year 6 are below average. However, as a result of recent improvements, pupils are now making satisfactory progress in learning ICT.

11 Throughout the school pupils' **literacy and numeracy** skills are at least average for their age; in Key Stage 1, pupils' reading is above average.

12 Pupils with special educational needs get on well. In both key stages they make good progress in the light of their learning difficulties. This is because work is matched well to their needs, they get extra help and the support staff help them in class lessons. Pupils with particular gifts or talents, for instance gifted young mathematicians and those with musical or sporting talent, achieve well because they are 'fast tracked' for some lessons or get additional opportunities like instrumental tuition and the chance to sing in the school choir. However, although all pupils make at least

satisfactory overall progress in their learning, the older and more able pupils in the Year 1 and 2 class and the Year 3 and 4 class do not progress as rapidly as the others.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

13 The high standards that pupils achieve in this aspect of their learning reflect the school's ethos and its very good provision for pupils' personal development. Pupils respond very well to this provision and, as a result, their spiritual and moral development are very good and their social and cultural development are good. Most elements of this aspect of the school are better than reported at the last inspection.

14 The main strengths are in:

- pupils' very positive attitudes to school;
- pupils' very good behaviour;
- the very good relationships between pupils and staff and among pupils;
- pupils' good personal development; and
- the well above average rate of attendance.

15 These strengths make a positive contribution to the standards achieved because pupils work hard in lessons and the school is an orderly community that provides a good climate for learning.

16 There are minor shortcomings in:

- the attitudes of a few younger pupils in Key Stage 2; and
- the limited amount of responsibility pupils take in school life and for their learning.

17 The vast majority of pupils have very good attitudes to school and to learning. Their enthusiasm for what the school offers is seen in their very good attendance and in their good take-up of opportunities to participate in extra-curricular activities. Pupils are proud of their school and all its achievements. In lessons pupils try hard do well at the tasks they are given. A small number of pupils have had behavioural difficulties. They have made good progress in learning to control their behaviour but are still less well behaved than the majority, even in well taught lessons. When teaching is very good or excellent pupils have a very high level of commitment to learning and achievement. For example, pupils in the Year 4 and 5 class were still suggesting new 'problems' after the end of their mathematics lesson. Parents recognise and appreciate how much their children enjoy school.

18 Pupils are generally very well behaved both in lessons and around the school. The school has a clear behaviour policy that is based on rewards and encouragement and is applied consistently by staff. As a result, the pupils know where they stand. They understand and accept the standards the school sets for their behaviour and they know the difference between right and wrong. They develop a spontaneous courtesy based on consideration for others and sensitivity to their feelings. In lessons they normally listen politely to teachers and other pupils. No pupils were excluded in the year prior to the inspection.

19 Pupils' personal development is good and relationships are very good. Pupils grow in self-esteem and confidence. They respect other people's values and beliefs and develop a good degree of empathy. For the most part they work co-operatively in group work sessions in lessons. They willingly accept the responsibilities they are given, for example, as 'monitors' in classrooms. However, they take only a limited amount of responsibility for school life and for their own learning and make limited use of their initiative. This is because they are given relatively few opportunities to do so. The very good relationships are based on mutual respect. Staff set a good example of consideration and respect for all and pupils follow their example. Pupils appreciate the staff's high level of care for their well-being.

20 The rate of attendance is well above the national average. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Pupils arrive at school on time, registration procedures are efficient and lessons start promptly. This very good attendance makes a positive contribution to pupils' achievement.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

21 The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. This is because of the high proportion of good teaching in Key Stage 2. In all the 32 lessons observed the teaching was at least satisfactory and in two-thirds it was good or better. The teaching is most effective in the classes containing the higher attaining pupils in Year 4 and all the Year 5 and 6 pupils. In all of the 12 lessons seen in these classes teaching was at least good and in five of them it was very good or excellent.

22 The main strengths in teaching and learning lie in:

- the very good teaching in Year 6;
- the good discipline achieved in a positive atmosphere, all through the school;
- in Key Stage 2, generally high expectations, clear objectives for pupils' learning, and useful marking; and
- the effort pupils make at their work.

23 There are shortcomings in:

- the methods used in some teaching in the reception class;
- teachers' expectations for the older pupils in two of the mixed age classes; and
- the deployment of support staff in some lessons.

24 Throughout the school, teachers manage their pupils well. They maintain discipline within very good, encouraging relationships. Consequently, classrooms are orderly and pupils get on with their work sensibly and they try to do it well.

25 There are many strengths in the most effective teaching. In the teaching that is satisfactory these features are either absent or not so well developed.

26 In the more effective lessons, teachers are clearer about exactly what it is that they want the pupils to learn in the lessons and they keep a very good focus on these 'learning objectives' all through the lesson. As a result, the pupils know what they are about and are motivated to try hard to achieve. For example, in a mathematics lesson with pupils in Year 4 and 5, the teacher introduced a new way of working out addition and subtraction 'sums' involving 3-digit numbers. She quickly checked that all the pupils understood the work and why they were doing it, and knew what to do, before setting them off on their tasks. The well-briefed support staff who worked with the lower attaining pupils gave extra support to help those who were a little unsure to understand so that they mastered the work. In the whole-class 'plenary' session at the end of the lesson the teacher pushed learning on even further by getting the pupils to use the new method to solve problems. They were very keen on this, so much so that they were loathe to stop; they were still eagerly suggesting more problems after the end of the lesson. Support staff are not always used so well. In some lessons their time is wasted in the whole-class teaching part.

27 In the more effective lessons, teachers have high expectations of what their pupils can achieve but still match work carefully to their different learning needs so that all the pupils experience success. This results in pupils making a real effort at work that moves them forward in their learning.

When teaching is not so effective, it is often because teachers do not take as much account of their pupils' different levels of attainment in the mixed-age classes. This means that the older pupils and the higher attainers are sometimes not stretched as much as they should be. For instance, in a Year 1 and 2 mathematics lesson on money, the whole class spent quite a lot of time on recognising different coins up to 50p. This was aimed at the Year 1 pupils but was much too easy for the Year 2s. Their attention was not held and they were easily distracted because they could do the work without making an effort. Pupils' books show that there is sometimes too little difference between the work set for average and higher attaining pupils.

28 Very good day-to-day checks on pupils' learning underpin the more effective teaching. Teachers adapt their plans to take account of how well pupils grasp new work. For example, in one class the lower attaining pupils had done so well on Monday and Tuesday that they were moved on to harder work sooner than the teacher had originally planned. The quality of assessment is also revealed in the marking. Comments that are closely related to the learning objectives, such as 'you have used the graph well to answer the questions, well done' and 'excellent, you can read coordinates in four quadrants' help pupils know how they are doing as well as providing a useful record for the teachers. Equally, pupils' mistakes are picked up on helpfully so they can learn from them. Not all marking is so helpful; sometimes pupils' work is marked right or wrong and teachers make encouraging comments but do not do enough to indicate to pupils how they might improve and occasionally unearned praise is given.

29 There is also a variation in the extent to which different teachers help pupils learn to think for themselves and develop an appropriate degree of independence in their learning. When this is done well pupils rise to the challenge, take their work seriously and are enthusiastic about it. This was seen, for example, in a Year 3 and 4 science lesson in which pupils were required to organize their own experiments to find out about magnetism.

30 In the best lessons teachers make learning very interesting for the pupils and generate an enthusiasm for learning. For instance, in an excellent Year 6 lesson about the meaning of the Jewish festival of Hanukkah, pupils learned from a rich first hand experience backed up by contributions from a Jewish visitor. They lit the candles, listened to Jewish music and ate 'latkes', traditional food. The pupils were very interested in the work; they consolidated their knowledge of the Jewish faith very well and made excellent progress in understanding the significance, for Jews, of Hanukkah and the celebratory communion associated with it. In a very good mathematics lesson the teacher used a game very effectively to get pupils thinking at a high level as they tried to identify three-dimensional objects from an overhead projection of just one face at a time.

31 The teaching methods in the reception class are sometimes not sufficiently well matched to the learning needs of young children and do not take sufficient account of national guidance for provision in the Foundation Stage. Consequently, although the children are well behaved and make satisfactory progress, they have fewer opportunities than they should to learn through play, to initiate learning activities, and to make choices.

32 The teachers generally implement the national strategies for literacy and numeracy well. As a result, pupils are making good gains overall in learning these skills. In Key Stage 1 the quality of teaching in science is diminished because of shortcomings in the teaching of the skills of scientific enquiry.

33 Teachers plan appropriate work for pupils with special educational needs and support staff give them extra help in lessons. Consequently, they make good progress in their learning in view of their difficulties. Pupils who are academically gifted are 'fast-tracked' so that, in suitable subjects,

they work with older pupils who are at the level as them. This supports their progress effectively. Pupils with musical or sporting talent are encouraged to take full advantage of opportunities within and beyond the school to develop their skills.

34 The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection. There is now more very good teaching. Nevertheless some work remains to be done to ensure that work is always properly matched to pupils' learning needs in reception and Key Stage 1.

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

The curriculum – the learning opportunities the school provides

35 Taken overall, the curriculum is good. It reflects the school's commitment to pupils' all round development. It meets the requirements of the law to teach the National Curriculum and religious education and places sufficient emphasis on developing the skills of literacy and numeracy. It is enriched by a good range of visits and visitors and first hand experiences. These extras make learning meaningful to the pupils. In Key Stage 2 the work is made interesting because it is often presented in lively and imaginative ways.

36 The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. It covers all the recommended areas of learning but, at times, in ways that are not entirely appropriate to children of this age. For example, the children have daily literacy and numeracy 'hours' that national guidance suggests for only the last term in reception. The children have opportunities to play but play is not utilized as much as it should be for learning. Furthermore, the children have limited opportunities to make choices and to plan their activities because they are closely directed by the teacher. For instance, in one lesson each child was told exactly which equipment or toys to play with.

37 The whole-school plans of work are carefully organised to ensure that, despite yearly changes to the composition of the classes, pupils cover all the content of the National Curriculum for Key Stages 1 and 2. In English and mathematics the school follows the national strategies for literacy and numeracy. In most of the other subjects it follows nationally recommended plans. The effectiveness with which teachers adapt these plans to meet the range of needs of their pupils varies, though it is always at least adequate. In some subjects, such as design and technology and geography, less attention is paid to planning for pupils to develop the skills they need in order to use their knowledge than to covering all the content. This contributes to the higher attainers and the older pupils in mixed age classes not always doing as well as they could.

38 The academic curriculum is enhanced and enriched in several ways.

- Pupils benefit from the expertise of visitors. For instance, they learn about hand loom weaving from a visiting specialist and the English curriculum benefits from visits by a story teller and a poet.
- Pupils benefit from educational visits, for example in history, that help to bring their studies to life.
- The staff provide a good range of activities outside lessons, particularly for pupils who want to develop their sporting and musical skills further. Additionally the school now provides a computer study support club for pupils who do not have access to computers out of school.

39 The provision for personal, social and health education (PSHE) is good. The school has recently begun to implement a new policy, which is of a very good quality. The arrangements for sex

education and to teach pupils about the dangers of the misuse of drugs are sound. The ethos of the school and its strong links with the community contribute positively to education for citizenship.

40 The school provides well for pupils with special educational needs. These pupils have sound individual education plans, teachers generally plan suitable work for them, and good support from non-teaching staff ensures that they are fully included in all activities. Consequently, they make good progress towards their learning targets.

41 The school has very good links with the community and uses these well to promote pupils' academic and personal development. A weekly pre-school group is run on the school's premises. This contributes to easing the transition from home to school because children become familiar with the school environment and the staff. The school has established very good relationships with the secondary schools to which pupils transfer so the move is eased. For example, staff and pupils from the secondary schools visit Cowling and the Year 6 pupils undertake a work project that is begun at Cowling and completed at secondary school. Pupils' learning is extended by the involvement of members of the community in school life, the school's contribution to village life, and the use of local resources in lessons. For instance, pupils participate in the village 'Gala'. In design and technology they worked on designs for the local play park and in history they study the local area.

The school's provision for pupils' personal development, including provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

42 Taken overall, this aspect of the school's provision is very good. The school gives high priority to promoting pupils' personal development and helping them grow into well-rounded individuals. It does this through:

- the richness of its curriculum;
- its ethos in which pupils flourish as individuals;
- the very good relationships between staff and pupils that show pupils that each individual is valued;
- the very effective, positive approach to discipline; and
- its involvement in the community.

43 These strengths are rooted in the way the head teacher sets the tone of the school. The effectiveness of the very good quality provision is seen in the very good attitudes that pupils bring to learning, their very good behaviour and the high quality of relationships. Pupils respond very well. They work hard in an accepting atmosphere, their relationships are characterized by consideration, mutual respect and tolerance of difference, and they are sensitive to the concerns and values of others.

44 For the most part the quality of this provision has been maintained since the last inspection and this is a good achievement. However, one aspect, the provision for multi-cultural education, is less good than it was. Pupils no longer visit the Interfaith Centre and a mosque in Bradford. This is a loss to the curriculum. It means that pupils now have fewer opportunities to develop racial, cultural and religious tolerance by meeting members of different cultural groups and religious faiths and learning about their traditions, values and beliefs first hand. Furthermore, it has reduced the quality of the school's work to promote racial equality.

45 The school nurtures the human spirit very well and thereby promotes pupils' spiritual development very effectively. It provides a rich and stimulating environment and pupils are encouraged to make an individual response to works of art and to music. The teachers make every

effort to build up pupils' self-confidence and belief in themselves. This is seen in the way they set targets for their learning and get pupils to think about how they want to improve both in their work and their personal development, and in the way they praise and reward achievement, good behaviour and thoughtfulness. In science pupils are taught the importance of caring for the environment. The quality of teaching about world faiths is good and pupils learn to understand the importance of faith to believers. Pupils have good opportunities, in assemblies, to reflect on what the themes might mean for them in their daily lives.

46 The school's very good provision for moral development is firmly rooted in its strong, positive, reward-based approach to securing good discipline and high standards of behaviour and the example set by staff. The behaviour policy is applied consistently by all staff. The school's framework for behaviour promotes sound values. Pupils grow in their understanding of what behaviour is acceptable, they know what is expected of them and they understand the system of rewards. Pupils have some good opportunities to consider moral issues and the recently introduced programme for personal, social and health education has the potential to extend this element of the provision further.

47 The provision for social development is good. Pupils have a good range of opportunities to contribute to school life and good opportunities to co-operate in lessons. The school's ethos supports the development of pupils' self-esteem and their ability to communicate confidently. For example, they have good opportunities to share their ideas and present their work to their classmates. The good programme of educational visits and visitors broaden pupils' horizons and brings them into contact with a range of people from the local community and beyond. Pupils undertake duties willingly but have limited opportunities to use their initiative and to take some responsibility in their learning.

48 The school provides well for pupils' cultural development. There are particular strengths in the school's involvement in the local community, pupils' contribution to local events, and the sense of tradition that is fostered well, for instance in the continuing use of the old school bell. The curriculum in English, music, and art and design makes a good contribution to pupils' cultural development. Pupils listen to a good range of music, they study works of art from several cultures and different historical periods and they benefit from visits by a poet, an author, a story-teller and a puppeteer. Multi-cultural education is sound. Pupils learn about life in other countries in geography and they find out about the effects of racial prejudice from a Sowetan visitor.

49 Provision for pupils' personal development is inherent in the school's work but it is not always systematically planned. Equally, though teachers keep sufficient track of pupils' progress in this aspect of their learning, there are no systematic assessment arrangements.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

50 The strengths in this aspect of the school's work make a good contribution to pupils' achievement. They underpin the provision for pupils' personal development and the school's ethos and therefore contribute to learning by promoting positive attitudes and high standards of behaviour.

51 The main strengths lie in:

- the very good pastoral care;
- the very effective promotion of good behaviour and positive relationships;
- the generally good attention to health and safety matters; and
- the checks on pupils' learning and their attainment in English and mathematics.

52 There are shortcomings in:

- the checks on pupils' learning and attainment in the other subjects; and
- the use of assessment findings in the whole-school planning of work.

Pastoral care, child protection, health and safety, and welfare

53 The school takes good care of its pupils. Pastoral care is very good; it is closely linked to the provision for pupils' personal development and reflected in the very good standards of pupils' attitudes and behaviour. The attention given to health and safety and child protection matters is generally good. The school has two fully qualified first aiders. All the staff have received basic first aid training and training in child protection and they know what to do if they have any concerns about a pupil's welfare. A governor with relevant experience monitors the regular health and safety checks on the building and the outdoor areas. The head teacher has recently completed risk assessment training and recognizes that there is more to do to update the school's health and safety policy and to complete risk assessments for lessons. For instance, the school has yet to ensure that safe practices are an integral part of the planning for physical education lessons.

54 The teachers keep a satisfactory check on pupils' personal development and note significant gains or problems. However, most of this monitoring is done informally and based on teachers' knowledge of their pupils. When pupils have had behavioural difficulties they have received good support that has enabled them to learn to control themselves better and therefore to benefit from what the school offers.

55 The school's positive, reward based approach to discipline is very effective in securing high standards of behaviour and the example of staff, along with the provision for social development lead to very good relationships.

56 The procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance are good. Parents report any absences promptly because they appreciate that this is in the interests of their children's safety. The few unexplained absences are followed up rapidly. However, pupils' very good attendance stems from their enjoyment of school so there is no need for any reward system.

57 The school takes steps to promote racial equality through religious education and the provision for pupils' cultural development. However, the quality of this aspect of its work has been diminished by the curtailment of visits to the Interfaith Centre and a mosque. These visits had very good potential to promote tolerance and to overcome the ignorance that can breed racial prejudice.

The assessment and monitoring of pupils' academic performance

58 The arrangements for assessing pupils' attainment and the use of the information obtained are satisfactory. Staff check up on what children know and what they can do when they start in the reception class. However, these checks, and those carried out during the reception year, are not as clearly aligned as they might be with the "stepping stones" towards the nationally recognised targets set for children's attainment by the end of reception. In English and mathematics pupils' attainment is tested regularly and the results of these tests and of the SATs are analysed accurately and appropriate targets are set for pupils' attainment in the SATs. These procedures mean that the teachers have a good idea of where common strengths and weaknesses lie in these subjects. They make efforts to tackle the weaker areas and there is some 'in-house' training to support this. However, there is scope to improve two aspects of the process. Firstly, where common weaknesses are identified modifications are generally not made to the whole-school plans of work to assure that they will be

systematically tackled as pupils move up the school. Secondly, senior staff are not yet tracking the rates of progress of different groups of pupils as systematically as they could. There is therefore potential for any variations in progress between groups, such as boys and girls or higher and lower attainers and links between pupils' rates of progress and differences in the effectiveness of teaching to be missed. The school has recently begun to use a computer program to support the analysis of assessment data and senior staff recognize that this has the potential to back up more rigorous use of assessment information.

59 Pupils are set individual targets in English and mathematics and the links between assessment and target setting are reasonably strong. Nevertheless, because pupils are not sure what level they are working at and precisely what they need to do to move up to the next level they do not take as much responsibility as they could for their progress and improvement.

60 In the other subjects pupils' attainment is noted at the end of each block of work but there are few checks on their rate of progress. The work in pupils' books is not systematically analysed so the staff are not in a position to identify key variations in standards, for instance whether the higher attaining pupils are doing as well as they could and the extent to which marking promotes effective learning as well as encouraging pupils.

61 Assessment information is used properly to identify pupils who have special educational needs and these pupils' progress towards their individual learning targets is reviewed regularly and appropriate new targets are set for them.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

62 The school has a good partnership with parents and this has a positive effect on pupils' achievement.

63 Parents think very highly of the school. The school issued 250 inspection questionnaires, one to both of each pupil's parents. Most parents returned one questionnaire for each of their children and there was a good response rate. The parents who returned the questionnaires and those who attended the pre-inspection meeting with the Registered Inspector expressed satisfaction with most aspects of the school. They appreciate the school's concern for their children's all round development and the way all children, whatever their ability, are valued as individuals. They are pleased that their children enjoy school. They think their children make good progress in response to good teaching and a stimulating curriculum. Parents find staff easy to talk to and are happy that any queries or concerns are resolved quickly. Inspection findings confirm most of the parents' positive views.

64 A small number of parents expressed concern about homework, information about their children's progress, and extra-curricular activities. There is no evidence to support these criticisms. The provision of extra-curricular activities is good, the reports on pupils' progress are good, and suitable homework is set regularly.

65 Parents receive good information about school life, the curriculum and their children's progress.

- The prospectus is of a very good quality. It includes copies of relevant school policies and is supplemented by a useful overview of what the pupils will be studying the next term.
- Parents are kept fully informed about school life. The head teacher sends a large number of letters to parents but the information is not summarized in a newsletter.

- The annual reports to parents on their children's progress are of a good quality. They tell parents how their children are getting on in all subjects. Their effectiveness is slightly marred because, although they state strengths and weaknesses, they do not set clear targets for the next steps in pupils' learning; for the higher attaining pupils there is very little indication of what they might do to improve further. Additionally, the reports do not provide scope for parents or pupils to add their comments. Nevertheless, parents have sufficient opportunities to discuss their children's progress and what they need to do next with the teachers.
- The school holds open evening to inform parents about the curriculum and teaching methods. To date, these have covered mathematics and design and technology. They are much appreciated and very well attended; they help parents understand what their children do at school. For instance, the technology evening enabled parents to see what their children were capable of achieving and the skills they were developing by watching them make a nightlight using techniques such as soldering, glueing and wiring.
- The parents of pupils with special educational needs are properly informed and consulted and they receive copies of their children's individual education plans so they can support their learning at home.

66 The school has good arrangements to consult parents. For example, their views have been sought as part of the review of the sex education policy and a questionnaire has been used to assess the effectiveness of the open evenings. Most parents have agreed to work with the school to help their child achieve their best.

67 There is scope to involve parents more in school life. For instance few parents help in lessons and parents do not have an opportunity to celebrate pupils' achievement with school, such as during the weekly achievement assembly.

68 Taken overall, parents' contribution to pupils' learning is good. Most parents help with homework. They read with their children regularly but the effectiveness of the home-school reading partnership is restricted because there is not a strong dialogue between school and home and pupils do not take their school 'reading books' home. Parents give very good support to the fund raising activities that staff organize. The monies raised have made a good contribution to improving the resources for teaching and learning, for instance by funding the purchase of a good range of library books.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

69 There are several strengths in this aspect of the school. For example, the head teacher provides very good pastoral leadership. She and the staff, governors and pupils share a commitment to raising standards and the governing body supports the school. However, there are also several shortcomings, mainly in delegation and in the checks on the school's work, which mean that, despite the strengths, the leadership and management of the school, taken overall, are satisfactory.

70 The leadership and management provided by the head teacher and key staff are satisfactory overall. The head teacher gives a clear lead but the delegation of responsibility to other senior staff and subject leaders is currently unsatisfactory.

- The head teacher provides a good educational direction for the school. She has now recognized just how much the pupils are capable of achieving and is committed to ensuring they do as well as they can and, thereby raising standards. She has a clear vision for the school and an enthusiasm for future development. She is the driving force behind the school's positive ethos that is seen in the very good pastoral care, the quality of provision for pupils'

personal development, and the richness of provision in much of the curriculum. Her commitment to the highest standards of behaviour is reflected in the way that pupils support and encourage one another and work with enthusiasm and pride. She has successfully maintained these strengths through a time of staff changes. Parents appreciate the head teacher's contribution and the way the school's values permeate its day-to-day life and work.

- In each key stage a senior teacher is named as the key stage leader. The role of these senior teachers is underdeveloped and their responsibilities are not sufficiently clearly defined.
- Consequently, although they see teachers' plans of work and support their colleagues, they are not as influential as they could be in bringing about change and having an impact on standards.
- The new members of staff have brought good teaching skills and enthusiasm and have broadened the base of staff subject knowledge, for instance in information and communication technology and art and design. Nevertheless, the staff changes have had an adverse effect on the leadership and management of subjects. The head teacher carries too much responsibility for leading and managing work in the different subjects (for several in a 'caretaking' role), and this takes up management time. This situation has arisen because of the inexperience of the staff and the fact that two of the class teachers are in their first year of teaching and therefore unable to take additional responsibilities. Standards in religious education and art and design, subjects that the head teacher has led for sometime, are above average and in English she has ensured the successful introduction of recent national initiatives so standards have kept up with the national improvement. However, she is not in a position to move things forward in the other subjects as well. The present subject leader for science and information and communication technology is very new to the school. Nevertheless, she has quickly recognized the shortcomings in these subjects and laid plans to deal with them.
- In the four years since the last inspection there has been sufficient improvement overall in the areas identified as key issues for action. However, there is still work to do to deal fully with the issues most closely related to pupils' achievement, notably in science in Key Stage 1 and in information and communication technology.

71 The school keeps a satisfactory check on how effective it is. There are satisfactory arrangements for keeping track of pupils' progress. The quality of teaching is monitored, mainly as in many schools, in English and mathematics. In other subjects the monitoring arrangements are less rigorous. At present, the head teacher has no responsibility for teaching a class. This has enabled her to get a clearer picture of the quality of teaching all through the school. Furthermore, it has given her the opportunity take a closer look at where there is room for improvement and to start to lay plans to tackle these matters. For the most part, the right priorities have been identified. Work remains to be done to translate these ideas into clear and achievable action plans.

72 Staff are aware of the needs of different groups of pupils and meet many of them well. For instance, pupils' particular gifts and talents are fostered. Pupils with special educational needs receive the help they need to make progress. The management of provision for pupils with special educational needs is sound but the responsible teacher has only recently taken on responsibility for this aspect of the school's work in Years 4, 5, and 6 and is therefore not yet sufficiently aware of provision in Key Stage 2. The provision for higher attainers in parts of the school is not as good as for the other pupils.

73 The governing body fulfils its responsibilities satisfactorily. Significant changes of governors have occurred recently. The present governors are strongly supportive of the school and its staff and several are active in the school. The head teacher keeps them informed about school life and the

pupils' achievements. However, they are more aware of the things the school does well than of what could be improved and they are not involved in laying plans for school improvement at an early stage. The new chair of the governing body is keen to develop the 'critical friend' aspect of the governors' role and to involve the governing body more in checking on the school's performance. At present, governors are not key players in setting the pace or direction for school development and improvement. The school is strongly rooted in its local community and the governors contribute much to this sense of local identity.

The adequacy of staffing, accommodation and resources

Staffing

74 The decision to have a senior teacher in each key stage rather than a deputy head teacher has resulted in a financial situation that allows the school to be generously staffed with teachers and support staff as well as having a head teacher who does not carry responsibility for teaching a class. This means that classes are small and pupils with special educational needs benefit from extra help in class lessons. This helps them to make good progress towards the targets for their learning and to be fully included in lessons.

75 The arrangements for the support and induction of new staff are very good. The school has taken on several relatively inexperienced teachers and newly qualified teachers have been appointed in each of the last two years. They have brought fresh ideas and energy. The newly qualified teachers have been supported very well by the head teacher and welcomed unreservedly by their colleagues, who recognize and value what they have to offer. Nevertheless, their induction has taken up management time.

76 The staff undertake a good range of additional training. This strikes a sensible balance between the school's needs and each teacher's professional development needs. The benefits of further training are clearly seen in the effective teaching in literacy and numeracy 'hours' and teachers' growing confidence to teach music.

77 The inexperience of the teachers has a detrimental effect on some aspects of the school's management. Four of the six teachers who have responsibility for class teaching have three or less years experience. Two of them are newly qualified and another has started at the school this year. This has led to discontinuity in the leadership and management of work in some subjects.

Accommodation

78 The accommodation is satisfactory and it allows an appropriate curriculum to be taught effectively. The outdoor facilities are good. There is pond area and an area planted with shrubs that attract birds. These features are used well to enrich the science curriculum. Seating is provided and this offers the opportunity for quietness, calm and reflection aside from the general bustle of the playground. The additional hall area is a bonus in the indoor accommodation. At times the semi-open plan nature of the building undermines the effectiveness of teaching. In the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, classes are occasionally disturbed by noise from the adjoining room that makes it unnecessarily hard for pupils to hear their teacher and to concentrate on their work.

Resources

79 The school has sufficient resources to teach the required curriculum. The resources for mathematics are good. This is particularly beneficial in enabling all pupils to participate fully in the all

important mental mathematics sessions. There are a good number of computers. The library is well stocked with a good range of books of good quality. The resources for teaching and learning music are unsatisfactory because there are not enough tuned percussion instruments. This means that, in Key Stage 2, too few pupils have the chance to make music at an appropriate level in class lessons.

The school's use of its resources

80 The school uses its financial resources well, targeting funds to its educational priorities. For example, the development of the 'computer suite' is supporting pupils' learning in Information and communication technology and training has improved the skills of teachers and support staff in promoting the development of pupils' literacy skills. Support staff make a positive contribution to the learning of pupils with special educational needs but they are not always deployed to make the best use of their time.

81 Day-to-day administration and budgetary control are efficient and governors monitor spending properly. All recommendations of the most recent auditor's report have been fully implemented.

82 The school applies the principles of best value satisfactorily but does not always systematically monitor to outcomes of spending decisions to determine their impact on pupils' achievement.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

83 In order to raise standards and to improve the quality of education, the head teacher, governors and staff should:

(1) Raise standards in Key Stage 2 in information and communication technology, and design and technology and in Key Stage 1 in science by:

In information and communication technology,

- tackling the weaknesses that have recently been identified;
- providing more opportunities for pupils to learn to use data handling programs and for the control elements of the subject;
- assuring appropriate use of information and communication technology in other subjects by building it into the whole-school plans of work; and
- checking that all the planned work is covered.
(Paragraphs 10, 183, 185 and 188)

In design and technology,

- providing more opportunities for pupils to plan how to develop their own ideas, to evaluate the products they make, and to make appropriate use of information and communication technology; and
- checking that all the planned work is covered.
(Paragraphs 10, 159, 160 and 161)

In science,

- improving the teaching of the skills of scientific enquiry; and
- providing more suitably demanding work for the higher attaining pupils.
(Paragraphs 9, 137 and 140 – 142)

(2) Improve the curriculum in the reception class to ensure it takes full account of national guidance for the Foundation Stage by:

- matching the arrangements for teaching communication, language and literacy and mathematical development more closely to the needs of the age group;
- providing more opportunities for children to learn through play;
- providing more opportunities for children to select, plan and initiate learning activities; and
- providing more opportunities for children to learn out of doors.
(Paragraphs 23, 31, 34, 36, 86, 95, 98 and 102)

(3) Improve the leadership and management of the school by:

- strengthening the management structure and the systems for delegation of responsibility by:
 - a) developing the management role of the key stage leaders;
 - b) allocating responsibility for leading and managing subjects and other aspects of the school's work more equitably;

- c) ensuring that subject leaders have sufficient opportunities to find out about standards and quality in their subjects all through the school and to lay and implement plans to deal with any shortcomings.
(Paragraphs 70 and 77)
 - ensuring that the governors take a greater part in setting the agenda for school improvement.
(Paragraph 73)
- (4) Improve the rate of progress of the older pupils and the higher attainers in mixed age classes by:**
- raising expectations for them; and
 - ensuring that they undertake sufficiently challenging work in all subjects.
(Paragraphs 9, 12, 23, 27, 34 and 37)

In addition to these key issues for action, the following points should be considered for inclusion in the action plan.

- Building on the recent developments in assessment and ensuring that:
 - a) there are systematic checks on pupils' progress all through the school in all subjects;
 - b) assessment findings lead to appropriate changes in the whole-school curricular plans; and
 - c) assessment in the reception class is more closely linked to the stepping stones towards the early learning goals.
 (Paragraphs 52, 58, 60, 71, 148, 158, 159 and 201)
- Capitalising on pupils' very good personal development by providing more opportunities for them to take responsibility for their learning and in school life.
(Paragraphs 16, 19, 23 and 47)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	32
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	34

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	4	15	11	0	0	0
Percentage	6	12	47	34	0	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than three percentage points.

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)	125
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	10

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	32

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	10
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	3

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.2
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	7	4	11

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	6	6	7
	Girls	4	4	4
	Total	10	10	11
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	91% (94%)	91% (88%)	100% (94%)
	National	84% (83%)	86% (84%)	91% (90%)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	6	7	7
	Girls	4	4	4
	Total	10	11	11
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	91% (88%)	100% (94%)	100% (94%)
	National	85% (84%)	89% (88%)	89% (88%)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	8	7	15

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	7	6	6
	Girls	4	5	6
	Total	11	11	12
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	73% (50%)	73% (67%)	80% (89%)
	National	75% (75%)	71% (72%)	87% (85%)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	7	6	6
	Girls	4	5	5
	Total	11	11	11
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	73% (50%)	73% (67%)	73% (72%)
	National	72% (70%)	74% (72%)	82% (79%)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	102
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)	6.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19.5
Average class size	25

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	50

Financial information

Financial year	2000-2001
	£
Total income	273,413
Total expenditure	260,313
Expenditure per pupil	2,284
Balance brought forward from previous year	15,793
Balance carried forward to next year	28,893

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	0
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	0
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	250
Number of questionnaires returned	81

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	65	32	3	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	57	40	1	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	56	43	0	0	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	49	40	10	0	1
The teaching is good.	64	33	0	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	59	30	10	0	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	80	16	4	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	68	31	1	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	64	33	1	0	1
The school is well led and managed.	61	37	1	0	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	59	39	0	1	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	51	37	9	4	0

Other issues raised by parents

The parents who attended the meeting with the Registered Inspector before the inspection raised the following point.

- They value the pre-school group run on school premises and think it eases the transition to the reception class.
- They find the curriculum demonstration evenings helpful.
- They think the rich curriculum makes school interesting for their children.

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

84 The Foundation Stage covers education from three years of age to the end of the reception year. At Cowling children start at the beginning of the reception year, when they are four or five years old and they spend a year in reception before moving into a Year 1 and 2 class. At the time of the inspection there were 23 reception children who were taught in a class with four Year 1 pupils. When they start school the children can do about the same as most children their age so their level of attainment is broadly average, though the overall picture of attainment on entry varies from year to year. However, for most children, personal social and emotional development is above average when they start school.

85 There are national guidelines about what work should be covered in the Foundation Stage, appropriate teaching methods for these young children, and targets for children to achieve by the end of the reception year (the early learning goals). The children cover all the areas of learning that they should (those reported below). They make satisfactory progress in learning and their achievement is satisfactory. They are working at the level expected for their age, so they are set to attain the targets.

86 The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall in all areas of learning. Relationships between staff and children are positive and children behave well in a pleasant and supportive atmosphere. There is some good direct teaching, based on practical activities. However, teaching methods are not always appropriate for the age group. For example, activities are not organized to promote opportunities for children to initiate their own learning activities, to make choices, and to learn through play, as recommended nationally. Furthermore, these young children have a 'literacy hour' and a 'numeracy hour', that are not appropriate at this stage in their schooling. They are expected to sit still for too long, at times with relatively little guidance from staff.

87 The picture of provision and standards is similar to that at the time of the last inspection.

Personal, social and emotional development

88 The children's personal, social and emotional development is above average for their age. They make satisfactory progress from their above average starting point. Consequently, most of them are set to exceed the early learning goals in this area of learning by the end of the year.

89 The children have positive attitudes to learning. For instance, in one lesson they made simple percussion instruments, 'shakers,' by filling plastic bottles with objects, such as lentils. They enjoyed experimenting with their shakers and were interested in comparing the different sounds they made. They behave well and conscientiously, and do what they are told. They have positive relationships with their teacher and the other children. Most of the children share, take turns, and follow the rules in a co-operative spirit.

90 Staff encourage the children in their efforts. They show that children's achievements and their views are valued, for example by asking 'what do you think?'. Equipment is stored efficiently so the children can get things out and put them away reasonably independently; for instance, aprons for messy activities are hung at child height.

91 Children settle into school easily. Most of them are already familiar with the staff and the layout of the building as a result of attending the pre-school group held on school premises.

Communication, language and literacy

92 Most of the children are working at the level expected for at their age and their achievement in this area of learning is satisfactory.

93 Speaking and listening skills are satisfactory. Most of the children use grammatically correct sentences. They answer questions about their work reasonably confidently and they talk to each other about what they are doing, for instance, pointing out pictures in books. For the majority of the children, their ability to use language to help them think things through is a little below average. The staff and helpers generally make good use of opportunities to extend the children's vocabulary and to get them talking about their activities. For example, when the children made the 'shakers' staff talked to them about what they used to make the sounds and encouraged them to describe the sounds. One child suggested an instrument sounded like 'rain falling on the roof'. Staff read suitable stories to the children but sometimes miss opportunities to help them remember the sequence of events and to articulate their ideas by discussing the stories.

94 The children's early reading and writing skills are satisfactory for their age. They enjoy looking at books and treat them properly, for example, turning the pages carefully. They know that readers read the print not the pictures. Most of them know the sounds made by several letters but they recognize few commonly occurring words on sight. They are not sure about the difference between words and letters. For instance, when asked if they knew any of the words in the books they were looking at, they pointed out individual letters and gave their 'sounds'. Around half the children recognize rhymes, such as 'pig' and 'dig'. Most of the children make letters that are, or at least resemble, letters and they write a few words. They copy the teacher's writing forming most letters correctly.

95 The children cover suitable work but some aspects of the organisation are not appropriate for their age. For instance, the class has a 'literacy hour'. This means that these young children are expected to sit still and quietly for too long and they inevitably become restless. At times, although the activities are suitable, too low a level of adult intervention means children get less than they might from them. For example, they are required to sit and look at books independently for more than ten minutes. There is a 'reading corner' in the classroom but it is not inviting because it lacks attractive displays of suitable, appealing books. An area is provided for pupils to use for writing but much more could be done to provide the children with reasons for writing, for instance by incorporating opportunities for writing into play activities set up by staff.

Mathematical development

96 The majority of children are working at the level expected for their age in all aspects of this area of learning. This represents satisfactory achievement.

97 Most of the children 'know their numbers' up to 10. They match pictures of groups of objects to the correct numerals. When the teacher shows a card with a numeral on, they hold up the correct number of fingers. They are beginning to understand the process of addition. They know that if they raise another finger they have got one more. However, they have to take these two steps. Only a few of the children understand the concept of addition sufficiently well look at a given numeral and put up the right number of fingers for that number and one more straight away. A few of the children are confused about the difference between more and less. When comparing the weights of different objects, most of the children understand that the item on the lower side of the balance scales is the heavier.

98 As in communication, language and literacy, though children undertake work at the right level the way it is presented to them is not always appropriate for their age.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

99 The plans for work show that the children cover a suitable range of activities to help them make sense of the world around them. For example, they visit a supermarket, they investigate the pond, and they learn about the past by visiting Skipton castle.

100 Standards in the aspects of this area of learning that were seen during the inspection are in line with those expected for the children's age. Children operate simple computer programs successfully, using the 'mouse' to make things happen on the screen. They build purposefully with construction kits such as building bricks. They named the ingredients they had used to make small cakes, looking at the packets to help them remember. They knew the 'buns' would change while they were in the hot oven but were not too sure how they would be different when they were cooked. The children are developing an understanding of differences between cultures and traditions.

Physical development

101 The children's ability to move in a variety of ways and use simple apparatus, and their manual dexterity are broadly average for their age. They use tools like glue spreaders and scissors and writing implements competently. They move confidently on gymnastic apparatus and balance reasonably well.

102 The children have sufficient opportunities to develop manual dexterity and they have physical education lessons. However, the range of physical activities out of doors is limited and there is no suitable enclosed area for outdoor activities with these young children that could enrich the quality of provision for this area of learning.

103 In physical education lessons the teacher pays good attention to ensuring children warm up properly and she uses her voice effectively to control and organise the children in a large space. When introducing activities on the apparatus there were good reminders about safety points and how to jump and land properly with 'squashy knees'. However close attention to health and safety matters was not sustained once the children started climbing and jumping and some potential hazards were not anticipated and avoided. Children whose work was good were praised and selected to demonstrate to the class but some opportunities to give children pointers about how to improve their work were missed.

Creative development

104 The children have sufficient opportunities to participate in artistic activities. They mix paint and use a range of media to produce pictures. They select materials from a range provided with some thought in order to get the results they want. In music the teacher provides a good example of tuneful singing and most of the children join in parts of familiar songs but few keep singing all through a song. They have a satisfactory sense of the pulse in music. For example, they stamped their feet in time to the beat of a drum. The children made adequate progress in the music lesson seen but quite a lot of the work was too hard for many of them so they did not learn as well as they could have.

ENGLISH

105 Overall standards are broadly average in both key stages. The National Literacy Strategy has been implemented effectively so, since the last inspection, standards have kept up with the national rate of improvement. Pupils are now making progress in their learning at a good rate overall.

106 The main strengths in English are:

- above average standards of speaking and listening in both key stages; and
- above average standards of reading in Key Stage 1.

107 There are weaknesses in writing, where standards are not so high as in reading, and in the standard of spelling in upper Key Stage 2.

Standards

108 Standards in speaking and listening are above average in both key stages. Staff and other adults work hard to improve the pupils' speaking and listening skills. Throughout the school they give a high priority to encouraging pupils to talk about their work in small groups and to the whole class. For example younger children enjoy 'show and tell' sessions where they talk about a chosen subject or favourite object they have brought to school to show their classmates. Children confidently question each other and give appropriate responses. As a result of the good provision, pupils learn to speak articulately and confidently and, by they have reached the top of the school, they debate well. For instance, in a history lesson about life in Victorian times, the Year 6 pupils debated the issue of a new railway and put points of view from canal boat owners, horse traders and the railway company. Throughout the school pupils listen well in lessons.

109 Pupils achieve well in reading overall. In Key Stage 1 priority is given to the teaching of phonics but pupils also learn to use other strategies, to help them read unfamiliar words. Most of the Year 2 pupils use a range of strategies reasonably confidently. They 'sound out' words, look at the pictures and consider the context. The higher attaining pupils heed punctuation well and therefore read with a good degree of fluency and expression. The Year 2 pupils understand what they read and most of them grasp the main points in simple stories. Some of them have another try and correct their mistakes when they realize that what they have read does not make sense. The standard of reading in Year 6 meets what is expected for the pupils' age. The vast majority of these pupils are reading at the level expected for their age and some have reached an above average standard. Most of these pupils are developing their understanding of what they read well and using the skills of inference and deduction to 'read between the lines'. Even the lower attaining pupils refer back to the text when talking about the books they are reading. The pupils are developing personal reading preferences, for instance naming their favourite authors. In Key Stage 2, the lower attainers make the best progress in reading and, as a result, there are very few weak readers at the top of the school. Pupils throughout the school have positive attitudes to reading and the lower attainers remain motivated. Pupils read at home and at school but not the same books and the records of their reading progress are not taken home regularly. This means that parents do not have the opportunities they could to know about where the teachers see their children's strengths and weaknesses are and to support their progress in reading in a partnership with the staff.

110 Standards in writing and spelling are more variable. Priority is being given to raising standards in these areas and strategies such as pupils having their writing targets in the front of their books are proving effective but are not yet used in all classes. Pupils in Year 2 use 'story language' in their writing, such as 'once upon a time' and generally use capital letters and full stops to mark sentences. They plan their stories using a 'planner' to support them. This helps them to set the scene and identify characters for their stories. They are beginning to use simple connectives, like 'and' and 'but' to link their ideas. The majority of the Year 2 pupils spell simple words correctly and use their phonic knowledge to have a go at harder ones. In Key Stage 2 pupils learn to use different types of writing for different purposes and to use a wider range of vocabulary. The higher attainers in Year 6 use language adventurously and effectively, they use punctuation correctly, and they check their

spelling. However, the majority of Year 6 pupils' spelling and punctuation are erratic and generally slightly below what would be expected for their age. Furthermore, they sometimes mix up tenses in their writing. These shortcomings hold back pupils' overall attainment in writing. Nevertheless, they are now making good progress in these aspects of the subject. Most of the Year 6 pupils' handwriting is at the level expected for their age; they write in a legible, joined writing style. The lower attainers do not yet use capital letters and full stops correctly.

The quality of teaching and learning

111 The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and good overall in the Key Stage 2 classes. Therefore, overall, teaching is good.

112 Teachers have good subject knowledge and implement the National Literacy Strategy properly. They plan their lessons well and make sure the pupils know, at the start of each lesson, what they are to learn and they check up on what pupils have learned at the end of the lesson. This motivates pupils. For example, in a Year 1 and 2 lesson pupils were keen to suggest words beginning with 'th' and try to spell them. In Year 6 the tasks set for different groups of pupils were all closely related to the 'learning objective' of the main teaching session as well as being pitched at the right level for each group.

113 For the most part teachers match work well to pupils' different levels of attainment so that all make progress. They use the support staff well when the pupils undertake work in groups, where they make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning, but not in whole-class sessions, when they are often under-employed.

114 The quality of day-to-day assessment of pupils' learning varies. The most effective teaching is securely based on teachers' very good understanding of what pupils have already learned. For instance, in a Year 6 lesson, one group did additional work on incorporating direct speech into their writing because assessment of the previous week's work showed they had not fully mastered it. Some of the teachers use marking well to assess pupils' learning and to challenge them to do still better. Where marking is best pupils' work is marked against the targets for writing in the front of their exercise books. This helps the pupils to learn from their mistakes and therefore supports good progress. However, marking sometimes does little to indicate to pupils what they need to do to improve their work.

115 Teachers provide a good range of opportunities for pupils to develop and consolidate their literacy skills in other subjects. For example, they write accounts and reports in history and science. Work in speaking and listening provides good opportunities for pupils to discuss moral and social matters and this has a positive effect on their personal development.

116 Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in their learning because they are supported well. Their individual education plans have clear targets that are reviewed regularly

117 The subject is led and managed satisfactorily by the head teacher. Good use has been made of support from the local education authority and a detailed analysis of Key Stage 2 SATs results has been carried out. This has identified areas to focus upon, currently writing and spelling, and the subject leader has led staff discussions in order to identify suitable teaching strategies to raise standards. Staff training needs have been identified and appropriate plans are in place to develop the subject. Additional resources, both staffing and extra reading materials are helping to improve standards.

MATHEMATICS

118 Standards are broadly average in both key stages. The majority of pupils are now learning well and gaining ground at a good rate overall. This is mainly the result of good teaching in Key Stage 2. The developments in mathematics over the last few years have enabled the school to keep up with the national rate of improvement, since the last inspection.

119 The main strengths in mathematics are:

- the good quality of teaching in Key Stage 2;
- the standards pupils achieve in the number aspect of mathematics in most classes;
- the standards achieved in Years 5 and 6 in pupils' ability to use and apply their mathematical knowledge; and
- good subject leadership and management.

120 There are weaknesses in:

- the standards achieved in handling data, compared with other aspects of mathematics;
- the rate of progress of the older pupils and the higher attainers in mixed age classes; and
- the use of information and communication technology (ICT) in mathematics and in the planning for the use of mathematics in other subjects.

Standards in Key Stage 1

121 The majority of pupils in this key stage are attaining the standards expected for their age and this represents satisfactory achievement. However, the higher attaining pupils in Year 2 are not making progress at the rate they could. Their exercise books show that they do much the same work as the average pupils but rarely make mistakes.

122 Most of the Year 2 pupils have sound knowledge and understanding of the number system and satisfactory facility at calculating. They use strategies, such as doubling, to calculate efficiently. They understand the importance of the position of a digit in a number in determining its value and they use this knowledge to add two-digit numbers. However, they are less confident at adding 10 or 20 to a given number in their heads; even the higher attaining pupils find this quite hard and some resort to using their fingers. The pupils have begun to learn about multiplication but several are unclear about the difference between this process and addition. The Year 2 pupils' knowledge and understanding of measures is satisfactory and they measure accurately in centimetres.

123 Standards in Year 2 at present are not as high as the 2001 Key Stage 1 SATs would suggest. This is down to differences between the year groups, not the quality of teaching.

Standards in Key Stage 2

124 The vast majority of pupils in Year 6 are working at least at an average standard for their age in most aspects of the subject (using and applying mathematics; number and algebra; shape, space and measures). In these aspects of mathematics they are set to achieve the level expected (National Curriculum Level 4) comfortably, by the end the year and a few are set to attain a higher level. For all pupils, standards in handling data are not so high and only the higher attainers are set to reach the expected level by the end of the year.

125 The average and higher attaining pupils in Year 6 have a sound understanding of numbers and of how the number system works. They understand square numbers and the higher attainers

define a square number accurately as ‘a number multiplied by itself’. The pupils also understand the relationship between a square number and a square root. Their work on fractions and decimals is at the right level for their age. They convert decimals to fractions and identify equivalent fractions. They understand the terms ‘numerator’ and ‘denominator’. For the most part, the lower attaining pupils are working at a similar level to the others but are less confident at it. The higher attainers take the work further and have more number facts at their fingertips. For example, they rapidly gave the square root of 81, whilst the average pupils worked it out but needed time to think it through.

126 In shape, space and measures, the average and lower attaining pupils are working at the level expected for their age. They know the properties of many three-dimensional shapes, for instance they define a quadrilateral correctly, and they accurately calculate the perimeter of compound shapes. The higher attainers are working at a higher level than expected for their age. They use an algebraic formula to work out perimeter and they calculate the area of shapes.

127 In data handling, most of the Year 6 pupils interpret simple graphs correctly, for example seeing the relationship between the weight of a pig and whether or not it was given a high fibre diet. However, the graphs they make are too simple for pupils of their age.

128 The Year 5 pupils’ attainment is above average for their age. They have made good progress in their first term in this class. Consequently, with continued teaching of good quality in Years 5 and 6, there is every likelihood of standards rising next year.

129 In Years 5 and 6 teachers pay good attention to developing pupils’ ability to use and apply what they learn. As a result, the Year 5 pupils’ attainment in most elements of this aspect of mathematics is more than a year ahead of the standard expected at their age.

The quality of teaching and learning

130 The quality of teaching and learning are satisfactory in the Key Stage 1 class and good overall in the three Key Stage 2 classes. Therefore, overall teaching is good.

131 In both key stages teachers manage the pupils’ behaviour at least well. As a result, the pupils are well behaved and teachers are able to concentrate on the work in hand. In Key Stage 2 pupils are generally managed very well and they concentrate very hard and make great efforts to achieve.

132 For the most part, teachers do not make enough use of Information and communication technology to develop and support pupils’ mathematical learning. There is little evidence of Information and communication technology in pupils’ books or on display. Nevertheless, in Year 6 the teacher got pupils to use calculators to check their answers to difficult calculations and to work with large numbers.

133 In Key Stage 1 the effectiveness of the teaching is diminished because there is not enough difference in the work set for pupils in Year 1 and Year 2. Consequently, although the Year 1 pupils progress at quite a good rate, the Year 2 pupils do not learn as well as they could, because the work they undertake is not hard enough to challenge them. This weakness is compounded because the higher attaining pupils in Year 2 generally undertake much the same level of work as the average pupils. During the inspection the work planned for the class was on money. It was suitable for most of the Year 1 pupils but considerably below the level at which the Year 2 pupils were capable of working. The plan was to move these older pupils onto more demanding work only later in the week.

134 The same thing is evident in the work in the Year 3 and 4 class, where the younger pupils make better progress in learning than the older ones. Here the class teaching is pitched to meet the National Numeracy Strategy objectives for Year 3 and the older pupils are set more demanding work in the group work phase of the lesson. This approach does not meet the guidance for mixed age classes and the impact can be seen in the gap between the Year 4 pupils in this class and those in a class with Year 5 pupils. Those in the class with older pupils benefit from more challenging work in class sessions and, as a result, they are working close to the level of the average Year 5 pupils.

135 The most effective teaching is seen in the top two classes in Key Stage 2. It is characterised by the following strengths.

- The teachers have good knowledge and understanding of the subject. This means they are successful at helping pupils understand how the number system works and they use simple, but effective resources to deepen pupils' understanding. For example, in the Year 4 and 5 class pupils made very good progress in understanding complex addition and subtraction. They learned to use what they already knew (how to add and subtract 10 and 100 and addition and subtraction facts up to 20) to help them do more difficult 'sums'. The teachers help pupils understand mathematical vocabulary because they always use the correct words precisely and in context and they expect pupils to use the vocabulary they are taught.
- The teachers are very clear about what the pupils are to learn in each lesson and their expectations of what pupils can achieve are high. They explain the 'learning objectives' and the tasks to be completed to pupils at the beginning of the lesson and use 'plenary sessions' with the whole class at the end of lessons to check how well pupils have grasped new work and to push their learning on still further. In the Year 6 class the teacher explained the week's work on Monday and said 'don't worry if you're not sure yet; we'll all understand this by the end of these two days'. Comments like this give pupils the confidence to try and to seek help if they need it and ensure they are committed to achievement. Many pupils say mathematics is their favourite subject, indeed one boy said 'it's good even when it's hard'!
- The teachers match work closely to pupils' different levels of attainment so that all get on well. The pitch of work is securely based on very good day-to-day checks on pupils' progress. For example, the lower attaining pupils in one class were quickly moved on to harder work than the teacher had originally planned for them because they had grasped the new work so well in the first two days. Furthermore, pupils who are unusually good at mathematics are 'fast-tracked' by having their lessons with pupils a year or two older. Teachers are not complacent about the standards these pupils achieve. They still expect them to try hard and do as well as they can.
- In all three Key Stage 2 classes teachers mark pupils work well. Their comments are closely related to each lesson's learning objectives. They let pupils know exactly how well they are doing and give them useful pointers to help them improve. Just occasionally the younger pupils are given undeserved praise.
- The support staff are well briefed so they know what the pupils are to learn. Consequently, they make a strong contribution to pupils' progress. They make sure pupils understand the work and they help pupils with special educational needs and the lower attainers to join in class lessons purposefully and keep up with the core work.

136 The leadership and management of the subject are good. The subject leader supports staff well and has a sound view of what is going on throughout the school. She has ensured that the National Numeracy Strategy is implemented so that pupils have a daily 'numeracy hour' following the recommended three-part format and she has made sure there are plenty of resources to support the new teaching methods. However, despite regular scrutiny of pupils' books and observations of lessons, some shortcomings have not been recognized. The subject leader has identified priorities for future development that are generally appropriate. Pupils' test results are now being analysed more thoroughly so that general weaknesses can be identified and action taken to overcome them. This improved use of assessment at whole-school level has the potential to provide a sharp focus for further

development, to ascertain where in the school and in which aspects of the subject teaching is most and least effective, and to aid the tracking of each pupil's progress as they move through the school.

SCIENCE

137 Pupils do not achieve high enough standards in Key Stage 1 but at the top of the school their attainment, taken overall, is average for their age. The standards seen in Key Stage 2 on inspection are higher than those indicated by the 2001 SATs results. Pupils are now progressing well in Key Stage 2 but not well enough in Key Stage 1. Around a third of the Year 6 pupils are working at a good level for their age whereas very few of the Year 2 pupils are at an above average standard. These standards represent unsatisfactory achievement overall in Key Stage 1 and good achievement in Key Stage 2.

138 Sufficient improvement has been made since the last inspection though weaknesses remain to be dealt with in Key Stage 1.

139 The main strengths in science are:

- an improved greater focus, in Key Stage 2, on developing the skills pupils need to undertake scientific investigations (a key issue at the previous inspection);
- in Key Stage 2, pupils being given some responsibility for planning and developing their own experiments (also an issue at the previous inspection);
- the high standards of work being achieved in the Year 4 and 5 class; and
- the good quality of planning and teaching in the lessons observed.

140 There are weaknesses in:

- the teachers' expectations of the higher attaining pupils in Key Stage 1;
- extending pupils' scientific enquiry skills in Key Stage 1; and
- the checks on pupils' learning.

Standards in Key Stage 1

141 Most of the Year 2 pupils are working at the level expected for their age and, for the majority this represents satisfactory achievement. However, the work set for the higher attaining pupils is not hard enough for them so they are not doing as well as they should; they are not reaching an above average standard. The newly appointed subject leader has recognized this weakness and begun to take steps to tackle it.

142 Most of the Year 2 pupils have a sound knowledge and understanding of the work they have studied this term, mostly on life processes and living things. For example, they have a satisfactory awareness of the five senses, based on studies of 'Ourselves'. This includes computer-generated graphs comparing hair colours within the class. They are beginning to identify aspects of a healthy diet. However, whenever they undertake scientific experiments, pupils have few opportunities to take an appropriate amount of responsibility for planning their own inquiries and reaching their own conclusions. Consequently, teachers do not know exactly what the pupils understand. The average attainers are progressing at a satisfactory rate but for the higher attainers progress is too slow. The work set for them is almost invariably the same as that undertaken by the average pupils. These higher attainers are denied opportunities to show initiative and to use their knowledge and they are not sufficiently encouraged to think and communicate in a scientific way.

143 Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in view of their learning difficulties. This is because the work challenges them and they benefit from extra adult support and are fully included in class lessons.

Standards in Key Stage 2

144 Standards in Year 6 are average and pupils at all levels of attainment are suitably extended. Around two-thirds of the pupils in Year 6 are working at the level expected for their age in those aspects of the subject observed (scientific enquiry, materials and their properties, and physical processes). In these aspects of the subject they are set to achieve the expected level (National Curriculum Level 4) by the end of the year. Almost a third of the pupils have a chance of attaining a higher level. Most of the Year 6 pupils have satisfactory skills in scientific enquiry and they are gaining confidence in working independently. They devise investigations and have a good understanding of what constitutes a fair scientific test. For example, in their work on the thermal properties of different materials, they were aware of which factors are variable and which were constant. In their experimental work, they make informed predictions and check their accuracy in the light of their experimental findings. These pupils have a sound understanding of the earth in space. They know about the relative orbits of the moon around the earth and the earth around the sun.

145 Standards are rising in this key stage because good foundations are now being laid in the Year 4 and 5 class. The higher attaining Year 4 pupils in this class are achieving particularly well in relation to what they have previously learned. They benefit from working alongside older pupils. They have good scientific enquiry skills. They analyse evidence well and draw appropriate conclusions. For example, one girl concluded, 'Believe it or not, magnetism goes better through a hardback than a paperback (book)'. The younger Year 4 pupils and the Year 3s are now getting a sound start in experimental and investigative work. They are beginning to understand how to set up a fair test, because they are set challenges, such as an investigation into the properties of magnets.

The quality of teaching and learning

146 The quality of the teaching and learning in Key Stage 1, taken overall, is satisfactory. The teaching builds upon previous science work and good links are developed with pupils' learning in literacy. The use of mathematics and information and communication technology in science is satisfactory.

147 In Key Stage 2, the quality of the teaching and learning is good. Two of the teachers are new to the school and the other is teaching Year 6 for the first time. All three are extending learning opportunities in the subject well. The good teaching stimulates pupils of all abilities to think carefully and to use correct scientific language precisely. Teachers plan lessons well and strike a good balance between instruction, questioning, and practical activities. They use the new whole-school plan of work effectively as a framework. They deploy the support staff well and their extra help makes a good contribution to pupils' achievement. There is an air of purpose and a good level of concentration in discussions and group work. In a Year 6 lesson about the earth in space, the teacher had high but realistic expectations of pupils at all attainment levels and challenged them all. She set tasks at three different levels and thus enabled all the pupils to make good gains in their learning. The pupils enjoy being challenged and they willingly share their findings with their classmates in whole-class 'plenary' sessions. This has a positive effect on their self-esteem and their speaking skills. Teachers' day-to-day assessment of pupils learning is good. For example, they use the 'plenary' sessions well to gauge pupils' levels of understanding through careful questioning. This helps them to plan for the next lesson by targeting extra help or further tuition where it is needed.

148 Leadership in the subject is satisfactory at present. The subject leader is very new to the school but she has already identified what needs to be improved and produced a sound plan to tackle these matters and develop the subject further. However, at present no one carries responsibility for keeping a check on the work pupils are doing throughout the school and their rate of progress. This

means that the arrangements for assessment and the monitoring and evaluation of work in the subject are unsatisfactory. Consequently, the differences in the quality of teaching and learning in the two key stages have not been sufficiently recognized. There are differences in the quality of the teaching and learning between the two key stages. However, with little monitoring being undertaken, these have not been sufficiently identified and resolved. There is no portfolio of pupils' graded work. Teachers therefore have little to help them make accurate comparisons to assess exactly which level their pupils have reached (and what is needed to help them reach the next level). Consequently, older pupils are not given this information so they cannot set themselves personal targets for improvement.

ART AND DESIGN

149 It was possible to see only two lessons, one in each key stage. However, a lot pupils' work was on display around the school and photographs of previous work were provided. This evidence, combined with that obtained from an examination of teachers' planning and from discussions with staff, forms the basis for judgements.

150 Pupils achieve well and make good progress in their learning. Standards are above average in Key Stage 1 and well above average in Key Stage 2. All pupils have equal access to the opportunities offered. Consequently, they make equally good progress in learning in relation to their starting points. The school has done well to maintain high standards since the last inspection.

151 There are several strengths that account for pupils' good progress and the high standard of most of their work.

- The quality of teaching is good.
- Teachers focus very effectively on key artistic elements, such as line, colour, tone, and texture.
- The curriculum is rich.
- The subject is well led and managed.

152 The Year 2 pupils have good observational skills. In the lesson seen in this key stage the pupils were producing collage pictures to represent parts of the Christmas story and they had photographs of themselves acting out various scenes to guide their work. They took great care to match the colour and texture of the materials they used to the photographs. This strength was also evident in their pictures based on the story of George and the Dragon. They used colour well and selected materials thoughtfully to achieve particular effects. Their paintings are sensitive. For example, they have produced paintings of good quality in the style of 'A Winter Scene' by Heidrik Avercamp. Their work captures the essential quality of the original, for instance in the muted colours used.

153 The standard of most of the work seen in Key Stage 2 is securely above average and the work of the older pupils is of a well above average standard. Pupils make particularly good progress in this key stage in the use of colour and line. For example, pupils have produced very high quality paintings of autumn trees against a colour wash background. They have mixed a good range of shades of each colour very carefully and used them sensitively to capture a mood very effectively. The Year 6 pupils' very good paintings of 'Wheatfields' in the style of Van Gogh show very bold use of line and colour and the pupils have used a range of techniques well to achieve a sense of movement.

154 There are two key strengths in the teaching.

- All through the school, teachers maintain the integrity of the subject, even when they link art and design with other subjects. For example, the Year 2 collages of the Christmas story were closely linked to work in English. Nevertheless, the emphasis was firmly on close observation, faithful representation, and selecting materials for effect. As a result of this strong focus on art and design skills, the pupils worked thoughtfully, with a good sense of purpose and they made great efforts to exploit the potential of the available materials. For example, several decided to use silky fabric for the Wise Men's clothes and others found a good selection of shades of blue to match Mary's outfit.
- Teachers have good knowledge of the subject so they expect a lot of the pupils. They plan demanding work and present it in ways that enable all pupils to achieve high standards and develop the confidence to produce bold work and use a good range of media. Pencil work in Year 3, 4 and 5 shows how successful teachers are at getting pupils to learn about the potential of media through productive experiment. In a lesson in the Year 3 and 4 class pupils experimented very purposefully with pencils of varying degrees of softness. They enjoyed successfully producing a range of tones and they made good progress in understanding the concept of tone. The pencil work produced by Year 6 pupils reveals good control of line and a good ability to achieve effects of shading. Again pupils have learned through purposeful exploration of the medium.

155 Pupils take pride in their work and try hard to achieve well. These very good attitudes are supported by the way teachers value the pupils' work. They take trouble to show it at its best by mounting and displaying it tastefully.

156 The leadership and management of the subject are good. The subject leader has a good understanding of the key elements of the curriculum and has successfully preserved the strengths in the subject and the breadth and richness of the curriculum through a time of staff change. Pupils have the opportunity to learn about crafts. For example, they have restored an old loom to working order and Year 6 pupils work with a local weaver to produce woven cloth on the loom. The subject leader has a good awareness of standards and sound plans to develop the subject further. She has ensured that pupils undertake a wide range of art and design work and that teachers make good use of the school grounds and the immediate locality as a stimulus and inspiration for pupils' work. Art and design makes a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual and cultural development. Pupils are encouraged to consider their response to works of art and to use art and design as a means of self-expression and many interesting works of art are displayed alongside pupils' work, making the school an aesthetically rich environment. Pupils study works of art from a range of historical periods and different cultures, including Aboriginal and native American art.

158 There are three aspects of the subject that could be developed further in order to improve the provision still further.

- At present, although pupils study an appropriately wide range of work by famous artists, there is no organized system to allocate these to year groups to ensure that every pupil covers an equally wide range.
- There are no systematic arrangements for checking up on pupils' progress as they move through the school.
- The use of sketch books is a very recent development that could usefully be extended.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

159 It was not possible to see any design and technology lessons during the inspection. Judgements are based on discussions with pupils and staff, and an examination of work on display and in photographs. This evidence shows that standards are satisfactory in Key Stage 1 but not high enough at the top of the school. No one carries permanent responsibility for leading and managing work in the subject and, as a result, weaknesses have not been identified and tackled and no one is in a position to check if pupils are doing the right work. Standards are not as high as those reported at the last inspection.

160 Pupils enjoy making products in design and technology. They talk enthusiastically about those that they have made and they are proud of their work. The Year 2 pupils described their moving models, based upon nursery rhymes, and the Year 6 pupils explained in detail how they made toys incorporating a cam. In both key stages there are various opportunities for small groups to develop their skills in food technology. However, key parts of the work in this subject are often too closely prescribed by the teachers. This means that pupils have too few opportunities to develop their own ideas and to learn by overcoming the problems that they encounter in the designing and making process. This slows their rate of learning. As a result, in Key Stage 2, pupils' standards in designing and evaluating are lower than expected for their age and this brings down their overall level of attainment in the subject, despite their adequate skills at making products. In Key Stage 1 pupils of all abilities produce work of a satisfactory quality. They learn to join materials together in a wide range of ways. They use planning sheets well to gain an idea of what their finished product might look like. The Year 6 pupils produce plans from different elevations. They list the materials and tools they will need and the sequence in which their model will be made. However, they do not identify those elements in the construction that are likely to be problematic and they rarely evaluate their products during the making process; this is normally done only on completion. Consequently, only rarely do pupils adapt their plans to improve on their original design. Furthermore pupils have limited skills at planning work and designing using computer programs because they do not have enough opportunities to do so.

161 The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory in Key Stage 1, where pupils develop appropriate skills through undertaking a suitable range of model making and food producing tasks. In Key Stage 2 the teaching of practical skills for making products is satisfactory. However, pupils are given too few opportunities to apply their intellectual skills to designing products to serve a given purpose and to evaluating their work and identifying ways in which it could be improved. Although pupils achieve success through activities that are closely directed by the teachers, this is often at the expense of limiting the pupils' initiative and their creativity in problem solving.

162 The school has recently adopted a nationally recommended whole-school plan of work. This covers all the required aspects of the subject and, if it is properly implemented there is the potential for standards to rise in the future. However, the present Year 6 pupils have had insufficient opportunities to include electrical or mechanical components in their design and make projects in Key Stage 2.

GEOGRAPHY

163 It was possible to see only two lessons, one in each key stage. Judgements are based on these lessons, an examination of the work in pupils' books and on display around the school, photographs, scrutiny of teachers' planning and discussions with pupils and staff.

164 Standards in both key stages are broadly in line with the national expectations for the pupils' age but the Year 2 pupils are only just reaching the expected standard. These standards represent satisfactory achievement. Standards are not as high as those reported at the last inspection.

165 There are strengths in:

- the school's good use of the local area; and
- the enrichment of the curriculum with educational visits, including residential visits for the oldest pupils.

166 There is scope for improvement in:

- pupils' ability to use geographical skills; and
- the use of Information and communication technology to support learning.

167 The Year 2 pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of the local environment and its facilities. They express their views on its features, such as the types of housing. Some of these pupils know their own address and describe their route to school reasonably accurately. Most of the Year 2 pupils have a satisfactory awareness of localities beyond their own and they know that the globe is a map of the world showing other countries. They learn about maps and foreign countries by following the travels of 'Barnaby Bear', a soft toy, who is taken on holiday by pupils. They know that he has been to Spain, Majorca and Tenerife and have seen where these places are on the globe. However, they do not know that the fictional Hebridean island they are studying, the Isle of Struay, is in Scotland. The higher attaining pupils locate the North and South Poles on a globe and know that they are covered in ice. Most of the Year 2 pupils have a rudimentary understanding of the effect of climate on lifestyle. For instance, they know that Barnaby Bear will not need to pack a hat, scarf and gloves for a journey to a hot country. The higher attaining pupils have a basic understanding of climate. For instance one located the equator and explained that it is 'hotter when you are close to it'.

168 The Year 6 pupils have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of place. Most of them name some capital cities and continents. They are aware of the impact of man on the environment. They discuss how people cause damage to the environment, and what actions could be taken to improve the environment both locally and further afield. They have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of geographical vocabulary and use it correctly to explain the work they have done on the environment and climate.

169 Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Teachers use the nationally recommended guidelines and this helps to ensure that pupils build up their knowledge progressively.

170 In their lesson the Year 4 and 5 pupils analysed data collected the previous week during a daily survey of rubbish accumulated in the classroom. They sorted it according to whether or not it could be recycled and weighed it. The teacher guided them well as they analysed the data and recorded it on graphs. This provided a good opportunity for pupils to apply their numeracy skills. Those pupils requiring extra help were well supported by the classroom assistant. All pupils contributed purposefully to the 'plenary' discussion which examined how much of Cowling's rubbish could be recycled in light of evidence from the pupils' investigation. This highly relevant investigation was successful in raising pupils' awareness of the environmental problems created by rubbish and of how they could recycle materials.

171 Pupils in Year 1 and 2 discussed what Barnaby Bear would need to pack for a visit to a hot country. The teacher captured the pupils' interest by creating suspense as they looked to see what was in the suitcase. This was effective in helping the pupils to consolidate their knowledge of climate. However, the Year 2 pupils had difficulty in sustaining interest in their work because it was pitched to Year 1 pupils' requirements and did not offer them sufficient challenge. Pupils respond well and show interest in the subject. The high expectations of behaviour are evident, and pupils ask sensible

questions and generally listen politely to others. Those pupils who require extra help receive good support from the classroom assistants.

172 Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The head teacher is currently 'caretaking' the subject but plans are in hand for a teacher to take it on next term, along with history. There are sound plans in place for the development of the subject in the future.

HISTORY

173 It was possible to see only one lesson. Judgements are also based on an examination of pupils' work in books and on display around the school, photographs, scrutiny of teachers' planning, and discussions with pupils and staff.

174 Standards in both key stages are in line with the national expectations for the pupils' age. By the top of the school, pupils are confident in their historical knowledge and understanding. These standards represent satisfactory achievement in Key Stage 1 and good achievement in Key Stage 2. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection.

175 There are strengths in:

- the school's good use of its own history and the local area;
- the enrichment of the curriculum with a good range of historical artefacts and educational visits;
- the teachers' joint planning; and
- the good teaching in upper Key Stage 2.

176 There is scope for improvement in:

- the use of information and communication technology to support learning.

177 The Year 2 pupils know that history is about events and people from the past. They have satisfactory knowledge of famous people from the past. For instance, they talked about Florence Nightingale and explained some differences between her work and the work of a nurse today. They make links between their learning in history and other subjects. For example, realising that the artist they had been learning about was 'from history'. They know about World War 2. They have learned about children being evacuated and they empathise with how it must have felt. Their understanding of the differences between the past and the present is enhanced by the effective use of interesting historical artefacts, such as the old camera displayed in the school's entrance. Pupils describe how it was used and they know that people who were having their photograph taken had to stay very still!

178 The Year 6 pupils have sound factual knowledge and understanding of the Victorian period that they are currently studying. They talk knowledgeably about the air pollution caused by industry in the cities and about conditions in the coal mines. They know about the social divisions and the differences in the lifestyles of rich and poor, for example, in the food they ate and the clothes they wore and they know about the working lives of poor children in the mines and as chimney sweeps. These pupils particularly enjoyed a visit to a local museum where they learned about working conditions in the mills and what it was like in a Victorian classroom. This has been effective in deepening their understanding of life in Victorian times.

179 Too little work was seen to form a valid view on the overall quality of teaching and learning. Nevertheless, the standards that pupils attain suggest that teaching is generally of a satisfactory quality and, as a result, pupils make at least satisfactory gains in their learning in both key stages.

180 In the lesson observed with Year 4 and 5 pupils, the quality of teaching and learning was good. The pupils made good progress in learning to use secondary sources of historical evidence, in this case photographs, because the teacher used questions well to get them to think and the evidence and to go beyond describing the photographs to drawing conclusions from them. For instance, they noticed that the people depicted in the photographs were 'poor and not very hygienic'. The teacher's expectations were set high and she kept up a brisk pace that successfully held the pupils' attention and kept them all fully involved in the work. The whole-class 'plenary' session at the end of the lesson moved learning on well as the teacher challenged pupils' assumptions about the Victorian period and helped them to appreciate the need to test these against the available evidence. All the pupils benefited from this lesson and those with special educational needs made particularly good progress because they were supported well and fully included.

181 Teachers plan together and use artefacts effectively to help pupils understand what life was like in past times. Teachers plan work to follow the nationally recommended guidelines. This helps to ensure that pupils' knowledge is built up steadily. Older pupils are encouraged to use their literacy skills, for instance reporting on visits, and debating issues of the time.

182 Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory, though they are currently on a caretaking basis. Standards have not slipped and plans are in hand for a teacher with a specialism in history to take over from next term. Staff have identified appropriate areas for future development, such as improving the planning for progression in pupils' development of the skills they need to use their historical knowledge and understanding effectively, developing links with other subjects, and further training for staff.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

183 Standards are satisfactory in Key Stage 1 but at the top of the school they are not high enough. The Year 6 pupils are working below the level expected for their age in several aspects of the subject. However, things have very recently begun to improve and pupils throughout the school are now making gains in their learning at a good rate. They are benefiting from improved teaching and more regular use of computers.

184 There have been improvements in the provision for information and communication technology (ICT) since the last inspection.

- There is now a far greater emphasis on teaching basic computing skills.
- The 'computer suite' has created the potential for pupils to benefit from using better programs on more sophisticated computers.
- The teachers benefited from additional training and they have better subject knowledge. They are therefore more confident to develop work in the subject. The quality of teaching is now good.
- The whole-school plan of work now encompasses all the required aspects of the subject.
- There is more use of Information and communication technology in some other subjects.

185 However, some of these improvements are very recent. Pupils in Key Stage 2, particularly those in the upper years of the key stage, carry a legacy from unsatisfactory provision in the past when they did not develop the key skills of the subject sufficiently progressively. The weaknesses

identified in the last inspection report (data handling and the use of control) remain and in some subjects and aspects of the school's work little use is made of ICT, for example in mathematics, geography and history. Opportunities are missed to use Information and communication technology to support the learning of pupils with special needs and for individual research. Furthermore, some aspects of the work, though taught, are not used frequently enough for pupils to build effectively on what they learn.

186 A teacher new to the school this term has taken on responsibility for leading and managing work in ICT. She has already made a difference and has identified the right priorities to tackle in order to move the subject forward and raise standards.

187 The Year 2 pupils attain satisfactory standards in graphics, word processing and control. They successfully operate a remote-controlled toy. They create pictures and text, varying the size, lettering (font) and colour to achieve the effects they want. They have satisfactory basic Information and communication technology skills, for example they know their way round the keyboard and control the 'mouse'. In the Key Stage 1 lesson, these pupils made good progress in learning about how to use word processing facilities to present documents in an attractive and eye-catching way. The teacher used samples of posters and advertisements well to get pupils to think about presentation and the effective use of colour and she taught new techniques carefully. As a result, the pupils were keen to tackle their work, making a poster for a class play; they worked well in pairs and achieved pleasing results. Pupils in Key Stage 1 use computers in several subjects and therefore understand how central they will be in their education.

188 In Year 6, for most pupils standards are satisfactory in word processing and graphics. Nevertheless, some pupils lack sufficient familiarity with word processing programs and are slow at finding their way around the keyboard. The Year 6 pupils use the Internet successfully for research, for instance, about Judaism. In other aspects of the subject standards for the majority of pupils are below what is expected for their age. These pupils have particularly limited experience in two aspects of the subject. Firstly, using databases to organize and classify information. Secondly, using Information and communication technology for control. For example, giving a set of instructions in sequence to draw a particular shape on screen. Pupils are now learning well in Key Stage 2 because the teaching is good. For example, in the Year 4 and 5 class the younger pupils made good progress in learning how to create 'newspaper articles' by combining text and graphics. The teacher had good subject knowledge and this helped her to pitch the work at a challenging level for all the pupils and make it interesting; the articles were based on topics of immediate interest such as 'Car Crash in Cowling'. The lesson was well organised and linked well with English. The older pupils had good opportunities to learn from the problems they had encountered in a previous task by discussing the limitations of the program they had used.

189 The best progress is made by pupils who benefit from extra support at home and who have computers at home. The school has recognized this and tries to ensure that the others have an equally good chance to make progress. A weekly computer club is run specifically to broaden the experience of pupils who do not have access to a computer at home. Pupils enjoy attending this club and speak enthusiastically of the activities they do there.

190 Since the last inspection new teachers have come to the school with computer skills, the support staff have received training so they are able to work effectively with groups of pupils in the computer suite, and the school has services of a visiting technician. All these factors contribute to pupils' improved learning. The resources for teaching and learning in Information and communication technology are much improved and there are now facilities for pupils to use e-mail, use a scanner, manipulate pictures from the digital camera, and compose tunes. However, the resources are not yet

fully exploited. For instance, pupils with special educational needs do not use computers for individual practice of basic literacy and numeracy skills and the higher attaining pupils have few opportunities to take work to a high level.

MUSIC

191 It was possible to see only two lessons, one in each key stage. Pupils in Year 2 attain broadly average standards. The lesson in Key Stage 2 yielded too little evidence to support an overall judgement on standards by the end of this key stage and no other evidence, such as singing in assemblies, was available.

192 There are strengths in:

- the quality of specialist teaching; and
- the provision of extra-curricular activities and the standards attained by the choir and orchestra.

193 There is room for improvement in:

- the whole-school planning of work; and
- the unsatisfactory resources for teaching and learning.

194 The limited evidence available indicates that standards and quality in music have generally been maintained and extra-curricular provision has improved since the last inspection.

The standards attained

195 The Year 2 pupils are working at the level expected for their age. The majority have a secure awareness of beat. They successfully repeat short rhythmic patterns on untuned percussion instruments and they follow a simple picture 'score' when they perform music. They enjoy making music and experimenting with instruments to discover the range of sounds they will make. However, they are not as familiar with musical instruments as most pupils their age. The higher attaining pupils successfully maintain a pulse while others are playing a different beat and they have greater control over the 'dynamics' of their performance, whether the sounds they produce are loud or soft.

196 In a lesson in the Year 3 and 4 class pupils listened attentively to a recording of 'Greensleeves' and described the impressions they gained from the music. For example, one pupil suggested it sounded like 'sitting by a stream seeing flowers and grass'. Most of these pupils played simple musical patterns with a partner, keeping together reasonably. However, although the lesson was taught satisfactorily, it provided few opportunities for pupils to perform at as high a level as is expected for their age.

197 The school provides a good range of extra-curricular musical activities, including choir, orchestra, recorder classes, and instrumental tuition. The standard of unison singing achieved by the choir is good. These pupils sing tunefully, with very good diction and very good breath control. They follow their conductor well. Pupils who have instrumental tuition and play in the orchestra achieve good standards for their age. They are beginning to read written music, 'staff notation' and on all instruments, despite some mistakes, the tune prevails, as when they played the 'Snowman' music, 'Walking in the Air'. Good tuition successfully pushes up the standard of their playing and their awareness of the beat. These pupils show a good level of commitment to their music making by giving up some of their free time to attend practice sessions.

The quality of teaching and learning

198 The teaching observed was good in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory in Key Stage 2. The standards seen suggest that most of the teaching is at least satisfactory. However, too little teaching of class lessons was seen to form a valid overall judgement on the quality of teaching.

199 The following commentary is based on the lessons seen and the quality of provision in extra-curricular activities.

- Pupils in Key Stage 1 benefit from teaching of good quality from a music specialist who spends a couple of hours a week at Cowling. His lessons are pitched at a demanding level that helps to push pupils' learning on well. In this key stage the teacher focuses well on key musical elements such as tone and uses demonstrations well. This helps pupils to improve the standard of their work during each lesson. There is a good focus on summing up the strengths and weaknesses in pupils' work so that they know how well they are doing and know what they will be doing in future lessons to improve.
- In the Key Stage 2 lessons seen the teacher quickly got the pupils' attention and involved them in the lesson. They sang familiar songs and pupils were selected at random to contribute to these so they had to stay alert. The teacher's knowledge of the subject meant that pupils increased their understanding of musical terms, such as 'tempo', because the teacher used subject vocabulary precisely and accurately and re-capped its meaning. The effectiveness of this lesson was undermined by two features one of which was beyond the teacher's control. Firstly, not enough was done to help pupils develop their sense of pulse and beat. This meant that when they played instruments in pairs they had some difficulty keeping the beat. Secondly, the shortage of tuned percussion instruments meant that only around a third of the pupils had a chance to play. Consequently, in this part of the lesson, the pupils did not make the progress they should have in the time.

200 Music makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual and cultural development. Pupils listen to a satisfactory range of music and they are encouraged to reflect on what they hear and the feeling music evokes. As yet pieces have not been allocated to classes to ensure they all cover the same basic range. Pupils rarely sing in assemblies. This means a regular opportunity is missed for pupils to practise and develop their singing and for the uplifting spiritual experience of singing hymns and religious songs together. The choir leader is sensitive to the needs of pupils who want to join but do not sing well enough. She arranges voice training to enable them to reach the required standard.

201 The subject is satisfactorily led and managed. The subject leader has only carried responsibility for music for the last year and the subject has been 'on the back burner'. Consequently, she has had few opportunities to find out about standards and quality across the school or to tighten up the planning of work, which at present is not sufficiently clear about what work is to be covered by pupils in each year group. Nevertheless music is due to be a focus next year. The subject leader is well prepared to take advantage of the opportunities this will provide. She knows exactly what she wants to do and her plans to develop the subject are sound. If implemented effectively they should lead to a clearer view of standards all through the school, better planning of work to ensure good progression in pupils' learning as they move up the school, and more systematic assessment of the standards pupils attain and their rates of progress.

202 The range of untuned percussion instruments has recently been augmented and is now entirely satisfactory. However, there are not enough tuned percussion instruments. This means that,

in class lessons, not all pupils have a chance to play. This inevitably has an adverse effect on the rate of their learning.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

203 Pupils achieve satisfactory standards overall. In the lessons seen, which were in dance, gymnastics and games, Key Stage 1 pupils' work was above average and the Key Stage 2 pupils worked at the levels expected for their age. Pupils made good progress. Standards in swimming are entirely satisfactory. Pupils have swimming lessons when they are in Year 4 and continue until they can successfully swim 25 metres. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection.

204 There are strengths in:

- the teachers' planning;
- good teaching overall; and
- pupils' co-operative skills.

205 There is room for improvement in:

- more opportunities for mixed gender pairing; and
- accommodation.

The quality of teaching and learning:

206 The quality of teaching is good overall. The teaching seen in Key Stage 2 was particularly effective and the children made good progress in their learning. For example, Year 3 and 4 pupils developed and improved their dribbling and ball control skills at a good rate. The teacher used a combination of demonstration and coaching points to help pupils improve their control and aim. Year 6 pupils worked hard in their gymnastics lesson, working co-operatively to create their group dance sequence. They responded well to the teacher's guidance and instruction, trying hard to develop control, precision, and fluency in their movements. They made good progress in their learning and their confidence grew and they learned from each other. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and high expectations of pupils' behaviour and what they can achieve. They plan lessons thoroughly. They have clear learning objectives that are linked to appropriately challenging activities and they share these objectives effectively with their pupils. The Year 6 pupils practice skills successfully and, as a result, they improve and refine them to a satisfactory standard. They follow instructions, watch others carefully in demonstration, and use it well to improve their own performance.

207 Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and show enjoyment and enthusiasm for the subject. Many pupils take advantage of the extra curricular opportunities that enrich the physical education curriculum. Pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in physical educational activities and they also make good progress.

208 The subject is well managed and the subject leader has carried out an audit to identify strengths and weaknesses in the subject. Equipment has recently been purchased in order to improve provision and support learning. Satisfactory measures are taken to ensure continuity and progression of pupils' learning, and the arrangements for assessing pupils' progress are adequate.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

209 During the inspection it was only possible to see one lesson, in Year 6. Much work was seen in pupils' books (from every class) and displays provided additional information. Discussions with staff and pupils about this evidence enabled judgements to be made. Standards in Year 2 and Year 6 are higher than those seen in most schools.

210 Religious education plays a vital role in the life of the school by enabling pupils:

- to understand and to practise those key aims that characterize the school's ethos;
- to gain an awareness of the roles of the Christian churches in their local community; and
- to experience, at first hand, the spiritual values, beliefs and customs of other faiths.

211 In both key stages, work is often based on the pupils' own experiences. This gives added relevance to the learning and helps pupils of all abilities to place their own experiences within a framework of spiritual and moral values and of wider social rules. Work in religious education has a positive effect on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For instance, they discuss issues of importance to them and they develop co-operation and to learn to appreciate, value and support one another.

212 In Years 1 and 2 (Key Stage 1), the work in pupils' books is of a high standard and is well presented. All pupils achieve well, especially those with special educational needs who are given good support. For example, one such pupil, writing about the meeting between Zacchaeus and Jesus, grasped the basic moral message, "Jesus said you must love everybody". In Key Stage 2, good standards are maintained. Discussions help pupils to consider deeper meanings of life through hearing about the beliefs, feelings and values of others. Occasionally pupils undertake research, for instance, the Year 6 pupils investigated harvests around the world in preparation for the Harvest Festival.

213 The quality of teaching and learning is good in both key stages. Teachers use questions well to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of the festivals, holy books and sacred elements of world faiths. High interest levels arise from visits to local Christian churches. However, pupils have insufficient opportunities to benefit from visiting the places of worship of other faiths. Visitors tell pupils of their beliefs. For example, an excellent lesson was seen in Year 6, when the head teacher and a Jewish lady teacher presented a very high quality learning experience for the pupils on the Jewish festival of Hanukkah. Such work helps the pupils to gain a sympathetic and tolerant view of others that has a direct impact in promoting the very good attitudes and behaviour levels exhibited in the school. In class 'Circle Time', they play cooperative games and discuss issues of importance to them. This also helps pupils to appreciate, value and support one another.