

INSPECTION REPORT

**NETHERTON INFANT AND NURSERY
SCHOOL**

Huddersfield

LEA area: Kirklees

Unique reference number: 107612

Head teacher: Mrs E Morris

Reporting inspector: Mr J J Peacock
25344

Dates of inspection: 10th – 12th June 2002

Inspection number: 243730

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Netherton Moor Road Netherton Huddersfield
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Ms H Ridout
Date of previous inspection:	November 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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25344	Mr J J Peacock	Registered inspector	Mathematics	What sort of school is it?
			Geography	The school's results and pupils' achievements
			Physical education	How well are pupils taught?
			Special educational needs	What should the school do to improve further?
			Equal opportunities	
			English as an additional language.	
13786	Mrs S Walsh	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
				How well does the school care for its pupils?
				How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
30745	Mrs P Thorpe	Team inspector	Science	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
			History	
			Music	
			Religious education	
			Areas of learning for children in the foundation stage	
2041	Mrs V Reid	Team inspector	English	How well is the school led and managed?
			Art and design	
			Information and communication technology	
			Design and technology	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This community Infant School caters for pupils from three to seven years of age and is about the same size as other schools nationally. There are 200 pupils on roll, 78 boys and 74 girls in six single-age classes. In addition, there is a nursery class with places for 48 children to attend on a part-time basis. Numbers at this popular school have increased since the previous inspection. Pupils come from a wide variety of backgrounds with about one-fifth travelling from outside the normal catchment area. They are admitted to the reception classes in September and January. The attainment of most when they enter the nursery is broadly typical for three year olds.

About nine per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is below the national average. The school has 13 pupils with special educational needs, which is well below average and three have a statement of special educational needs. There are 12 pupils from a minority ethnic background. Two of these pupils speak English as an additional language.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very effective school, which pupils enjoy attending. They respond exceptionally well to all staff and are eager to learn. The many strengths identified in the previous inspection have been either maintained or improved upon. The excellent leadership of the experienced and extremely conscientious head teacher, together with a hardworking staff, who work very well as a team, is largely responsible for this. Governors are closely involved with the school and take their responsibilities very seriously. All act with the best interests of the school uppermost in their minds. They have ensured that very good procedures exist for the periodic monitoring and evaluation of all aspects of the school. Any areas of weakness are quickly identified and staff act promptly to bring about improvements. As a result, the quality of teaching and learning is very good, with a very strong emphasis on raising standards. Pupils are achieving well above average standards in five subjects. When all these factors are taken into account, the school is providing very good value for money.

What the school does well

- Well above average standards are being achieved in English, mathematics, religious education, information and communication technology and art and design.
- The quality of teaching is consistently very good. As a result, the quality of learning is very good.
- The overall quality of the curriculum is very good, with effective links being made between subjects.
- The school is very well led and managed.
- The provision for pupils' personal development is very good, resulting in very good attitudes and behaviour.
- The school enjoys a very good partnership with parents.

What could be improved

- The inspection team found no significant areas of weakness. However, there were some less important weaknesses in the provision for the small number of very high attaining pupils and those with English as an additional language. In addition, no extra-curricular activities are available for pupils.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has effectively tackled the key issues raised in the previous inspection in November 1997. All aspects concerning reading have been corrected and teachers now maintain very good records. However, the lack of space for the library still exists but worthy efforts have been made to make it more attractive. Pupils make good use of it. The quality and range of books in the library is very good. Assessment procedures are very good, with a clear policy in place to guide teachers. This ensures a uniformity of methods in recording pupils' progress in all subjects. Teachers use the information from assessments to carefully plan future work for pupils, taking account of their individual ability levels. The role of subject co-ordinators has been successfully developed and they routinely monitor teachers' planning and the quality of teaching. All teachers clearly identify the specific learning objectives for all of their lessons in their planning and often share these with pupils at the start of lessons. In addition, the National Numeracy and Literacy Strategies have been implemented very well, helping to raise standards. As a direct result, of the good level of improvement, the quality of teaching is consistently of a high standard, pupils' attitudes and behaviour have improved and standards are well above average in five out of the 11 subjects inspected.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 2 based on National Curriculum test results.

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1999	2000	2001	2001	
reading	A	C	B	A	very high A* well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
writing	A*	C	A	A	
mathematics	A	B	B	B	

The dip in standards in 2000 was caused by a higher than usual proportion of lower attaining pupils in the year group. Compared to similar schools, pupils' performance in 2001 is well above average in reading and writing and above average in mathematics. The overall trend in results from 1997 shows that the standards achieved are consistently above to well above average in all three areas. Very high standards, being in the top five per cent nationally, were achieved in writing in 1999. Pupils are achieving well in relation to their prior attainment. Early indications show that standards have at least been maintained in the 2002 national tests.

Inspection evidence shows that standards by the age of seven in English, mathematics, information and communication technology and art and design are well above average. Standards in religious education are well above the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. In all other subjects, standards are above average, with the exception of music where they are in line with those expected. Pupils do particularly well in their speaking and listening skills, which are excellent for their age. In music, pupils sing well.

Children in the foundation stage, which covers their time in the nursery and reception classes, make good progress to achieve the early learning goals in all areas of their curriculum well before they transfer into Year 1. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. The very few pupils who speak English as an additional language make satisfactory progress.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils arrive happy and smiling. They really enjoy their lessons and try hard to please their teachers.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils behave in a mature and sensible manner at all times. In assemblies their behaviour is exemplary. There have been no exclusions.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils show respect, kindness and consideration in their dealings with one another. All readily accept responsibility.
Attendance	Well above average. Unauthorised absence is rare. Pupils arrive punctually, allowing lessons to start on time. Attendance would be even higher if fewer pupils went on holiday in school time.

Pupils' very positive attitudes are largely responsible for the well above average standards being achieved in almost half of the subjects inspected.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2
Quality of teaching	Very good	Very good

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

In the 1997 inspection, teaching was judged to be at least satisfactory with good or very good teaching seen in just over half of all lessons. Six per cent of teaching was found to be unsatisfactory. The level of improvement since then has been very good. In this inspection, the quality of teaching is now very good. This is a credit to the excellent leadership provided by the head teacher and commitment of all teachers and classroom support assistants.

It was apparent from lesson observations and a scrutiny of pupils' completed work that the quality of teaching and learning is very good throughout the school. The quality of pupils' work and the amount they produced in each subject reflect the very good quality of teaching. As a direct consequence, pupils achieve well above average standards in five of the 11 subjects inspected, which includes English and mathematics, and above average standards in the rest with the exception of music, where standards are in line with national expectations. Pupils with special educational needs also make good progress to achieve the targets set for them.

One of the strongest features of teaching is the way teachers make links between all the different subjects. In their planning, they draw heavily on pupils' learning and skills from other subjects. Literacy and numeracy skills are particularly well developed in most lessons. Other strong features of teaching, showing previous criticisms have been corrected were; teachers sharing the clear learning objectives for each lesson with pupils and their very good class discipline. Where teaching was very good or excellent, teachers' energy, enthusiasm and very good subject knowledge along with their very well planned and challenging activities successfully motivated pupils. Pupils gained much from these lessons and the quality of learning was high with pupils sustaining their level of concentration very well. The very good teaching in the foundation stage enables children to attain the early learning goals in all areas well before the end of their reception year.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. Statutory requirements are met. Very good links are made between subjects. The use of computers and links with the community effectively enhance the curriculum. No provision for extra-curricular activities is made.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Individual learning targets are clearly defined and pupils' progress towards them regularly assessed.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Satisfactory, overall. However, teachers need to develop a more effective strategy to help pupils to learn English more quickly so that they can take a full part in all lessons.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. Pupils' spiritual development is promoted well in assemblies and in many lessons. Staff act as very good role models for pupils, teaching them to respect the feelings of others. Pupils are encouraged to help and support their friends in the classroom and to recognise the achievement of others. Opportunities for pupils to gain a wider understanding of all the major world religions are good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. Pupils are treated in a warm, friendly manner by staff. There is a strong sense of community where caring for one another is pivotal.

Parents are extremely supportive. The very good partnership, which exists between home and the school has a positive effect on pupils' learning.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the head teacher and other key staff	Very good, overall. The head teacher's leadership is excellent. Her vision demonstrates a high level of professional expertise. Staff work very well as a team and show a strong sense of pride in the school. It is held in high regard locally as a result.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very well. All governors are deeply interested in the school and very well informed. They carry out their duties conscientiously, with the best interests of pupils in mind. It is a very effective governing body.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. The monitoring and evaluation of all aspects of the school are carried out extensively. Areas of weakness are quickly found and put right.
The strategic use of resources	Excellent. The finances are managed extremely well and best value is actively sought in all expenditure. Modern technology is effectively used.

There is a well-qualified and highly committed staff, supported effectively by classroom support assistants and parent volunteers. The accommodation is adequate and resources for learning are good, 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">• Pupils like school and they make good progress.• Behaviour is good. School helps pupils to become more mature.• Teaching is good and pupils are expected to work hard. Homework is valued.• The school works closely with parents. They are well informed about pupils' progress and feel comfortable about approaching school.• The school is well led and managed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The range of activities outside normal lessons.

Inspectors agree with parents' positive responses. It is obvious from the meeting with parents and their written comments that they appreciate the efforts of all staff to provide their children the right attitude to learning and a worthwhile education. Inspectors agree with parent's criticism over extra-curricular activities. It is unusual these days to find no provision in a school. The school intends to seek the views of all parents in the near future on extra-curricular activities and to re-examine its policy, if necessary.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1 The previous inspection in November 1997 reported that standards for seven-year-olds in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science were above average. Since 1997, pupils' overall performance has largely been maintained at above to well above average in all three subjects. However, in 2000, there was a dip in standards, with pupils attaining in line with the national average in the national tests for seven-year-olds in reading and writing but maintaining above average standards in mathematics. A detailed analysis by the school, and one that inspectors are in full agreement over, is that this was due to the higher than usual proportion of pupils with lower ability or special educational needs in the year group. Standards, in the national tests in 2001, show that the school's results are back to at least above average. This is a happy, caring school where teachers know their pupils well and work extremely hard to help each one, whatever their ability, to achieve their full potential. Furthermore, pupils' attitudes are very good, as are their relationships with one another and their teachers. The climate for learning was reported as good in 1997 and this has improved to very good under the continued excellent leadership of the head teacher. As a result, pupils do well at this school.

2 Children enter the nursery with a wide range of attainment but, overall, it is broadly typical for three year olds. Consistently good or very good teaching enables all children to quickly settle into school routines and approach their learning positively. The teacher is supported very well by the conscientious nursery assistants, parent volunteers and, on occasions, students. Children transfer to the reception classes, having made good progress in all areas of learning in the foundation stage curriculum. The very good quality of teaching continues in the two reception classes. Teachers are hampered to some extent because children in reception do not have the same freedom of access to an outdoor play area as those in the nursery. This limits the range of curriculum opportunities for them as well as limiting the opportunities to develop their physical development. However, the school now has the funds to develop a new outdoor area. During the foundation stage, which covers children's time in the nursery and reception classes, all children make good progress. Most are well placed to attain the Early Learning Goals in their personal and social development and all other areas of learning well before they are ready to transfer to Year 1, when they begin the National Curriculum.

3 Inspection findings show that the attainment for seven-year-olds in English and mathematics is well above the national average and in science, it is above average. This represents an overall improvement in standards from the previous inspection in November 1997. In English, the standard of pupils' speaking and listening skills is excellent for their age. The introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and an improvement in aspects of teaching such as class discipline and the assessment of progress are largely responsible for the improving standards in English and mathematics.

4 In the 2001 national tests for seven-year-olds, pupils' results compared to all schools nationally were above the national average in writing and well above in reading and in mathematics. When the school's performance is compared to schools with pupils from similar backgrounds in 2001, pupils' performance was well above average in reading and writing and above in mathematics. On inspection, the overall attainment in science for seven-year-olds was judged to be above the national average.

5 In English, current work in Year 2 shows that pupils' speaking and listening skills are at a much higher standard than those expected nationally. Pupils are provided with regular opportunities to express themselves in class discussions and school assemblies. All listen attentively. The good strategies in place to promote reading show that the weaknesses highlighted in the previous inspection have been corrected. Reading is taught effectively, enabling pupils to develop good strategies for

reading unfamiliar words. The close liaison between home and school, with parents regularly hearing their children read, is most certainly helping to improve standards and they are now well above those expected nationally. Pupils are provided with plenty of opportunities to write in most subjects, helping to consolidate their knowledge of letter sounds, spelling and sentence structures. In the literacy sessions, pupils are provided with a very good range of different forms of writing such as re-telling stories and composing letters or poems. Most form their letters correctly when doing their handwriting exercises and carry over the neatness of their writing into their exercise books.

6 In mathematics at the end of Year 2, attainment is well above the national average with pupils achieving well in relation to their prior attainment. This is mostly due to the effective implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy, which has had a marked effect on standards in mental mathematics in particular. Pupils work out sums involving addition and subtraction, multiplication and division of numbers up to 10 quickly. They count forwards and backwards in twos, threes, fives, and tens accurately and have a good grasp of the qualities of regular two-dimensional shapes such as squares, triangles, and circles.

7 Much work of a practical nature is undertaken in science. In Year 2, for example, pupils know about sound waves and the correct procedures to follow when doing experiments.

8 Pupils attain standards, which are well above those normally expected for seven-year-olds in information and communication technology (ICT). The effective use of computers by teachers who display expertise in the subject accounts for the marked improvement in standards in ICT. In art and design, standards are also well above average. This is largely due to the influence of the subject co-ordinator, the very good subject knowledge of teachers and the very good range of resources available for pupils to use. In all other subjects; design and technology, geography, history and physical education, standards are above those expected, reflecting the quality of teaching. The exception is music, where standards are in line with those normally seen. However, pupils' singing is one aspect of the subject which is better than average. They sing sweetly and melodiously with clear diction and appropriate expression. Standards in religious education are well above those expected in the locally agreed syllabus. Teachers make effective links with other subjects such as art and design and history and effectively teach pupils about all the major religions of the world as well as Christianity in depth.

9 The satisfactory achievement of pupils after starting Year 1, and the standards they attain by the age of seven, are a reflection of the improvements in teaching and pupils' attitudes towards school. All parents who returned the questionnaire believe that the school expects children to work hard and achieve their best. The inspection team recognise the strong impact that the head teacher, supported by key staff such as the deputy head teacher and subject co-ordinators, is having on pupils' willingness to work and determination to do well.

10 The provision for special educational needs is satisfactory and registered pupils make good progress against the targets set for them. Their individual education plans have clear achievable targets. However, these specific targets are not always taken into account when teachers plan their lessons. The special educational needs assistants provide effective support, helping most pupils to meet their targets. In all classes, those with recognised behavioural difficulties are fully integrated in lessons. Teachers' high expectations of behaviour and very good levels of class control and discipline ensure that they make good progress.

11 The school identifies the most able or talented pupils and teachers usually try to provide them with suitably challenging work. This was seen in a Year 2 mathematics lesson when higher attainers had to devise their own 'magic square' where numbers all added up to the same total horizontally, vertically or diagonally. The school tries to ensure that all pupils, whatever their ability, are fully included in all aspects of school life with teachers ensuring equality of opportunity for all. This includes any pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds. As a result, pupils feel valued and this in turn encourages them to do their best in lessons. This is just one of the reasons why the school is helping pupils to achieve so well in so many subjects.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

12 Pupils have very good attitudes to learning. This represents an improvement on the positive attitudes reported previously. They arrive each morning happy and smiling, ready to see their teachers and friends. The start of the day is informal but very efficient. Pupils are soon in the classroom and lessons start promptly. Pupils are very eager to be involved in school life but there are very few opportunities for learning outside the classroom. For example, no extra-curricular activities are available to promote pupils' sporting or social skills.

13 Children in the nursery have very good attitudes towards school. Most, for example, are able to sustain interest in a story. Those that grow restless are encouraged to listen by the classroom assistant. Children in the reception classes also have very good attitudes to their schoolwork. They listen well to instructions and show consideration to others. Very good attitudes are sustained in Years 1 and 2. These pupils really want to do well and please their teachers. Pupils are able to persevere and respond well to the high level of challenge set by their teachers. Pupils often really enjoy their lessons. For example, in a Year 1 physical education lesson, pupils listened very carefully to the teacher's instructions as she described wave action and the motion of seaweed in preparation for a dance activity. Pupils were able to use their imagination very well and were able to convey feelings of sadness in their movements. Pupils enjoyed the activity so much that they were disappointed when the music stopped.

14 Behaviour is very good. Pupils behave very well in the classroom and behaviour is never a barrier to learning. This shows things have improved since the previous inspection when some lessons were judged to be unsatisfactory because of poor behaviour. In the playground, behaviour is also very good. Pupils co-operate well with both boys and girls playing traditional games such as skipping and cat's cradle. In common with most schools, there are some boys who like to run around and let off steam while other small groups of boys and girls sit and chat quietly. Behaviour during assemblies is exemplary. Pupils listen very well to contributions from their friends and are very respectful when pupils read out the prayers they have written. There have been no exclusions. Bullying is rare and parents report that their children are very happy at school.

15 Pupils have respect for the feelings values and beliefs of others and listen well to the opinions of others. They are able to empathise with the feelings of their friends. For example, in a personal and social education lesson, where pupils discussed their worries about moving on to the junior school, pupils were able to understand why some of their classmates had concerns. Emphasis is always on care and consideration. Pupils were very careful when looking at minibeasts and exploring their habitats. When one little girl was asked, "what happens if someone has an accident?" she said that their friends pick them up and look after them until someone can find a teacher. This reflects the caring attitudes that were observed and that pupils understand how their actions impact on others.

16 Pupils respond well to the opportunities they have for responsibility such as collecting registers or answering telephones. These pupils are extremely mature and well able to take on additional interesting responsibilities. Relationships are usually very good between teachers and pupils and in some classes relationships are excellent. Pupils' comments and their contributions are always valued and this helps them to gain in self-confidence.

17 Attendance rates are well above the national average and unauthorised absence is rare. This shows that attendance has improved from the previous inspection, when it was above average. Parents realise the importance of sending their children to school and pupils miss very little time through illness. However, some parents insist on taking their children on holiday in term time. Sometimes these holidays are long and on occasions a few children miss school several times a year because of holidays. Absences like this quite naturally have an adverse effect on pupils' learning and their rate of progress. Pupils, including those who travel from out of the area, invariably arrive at school on time, allowing lessons to start punctually.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

18 The overall quality of teaching is very good. Previously it was judged to be at least satisfactory with good or very good teaching seen in just over half of all lessons. Six per cent of teaching was found to be unsatisfactory. The previous inspection highlighted weaknesses in aspects of teaching such as the lack of challenge for pupils, unclear learning objectives, teachers not using computers enough and the poor control of boys in physical education lessons. In addition, there was no formal, consistent procedure in place for the assessment of pupils' attainment and progress and the amount and frequency of homework was criticised. The level of improvement since then has been very good. In this inspection, teaching was good, very good or excellent in all of the 41 lessons seen except one, which was satisfactory. This is a remarkable record and a credit to the excellent leadership provided by the head teacher and commitment of all teachers.

19 It was apparent from lesson observations and a scrutiny of pupils' completed work that the quality of teaching is very good throughout the school. Over six out of ten lessons seen were judged to be either very good or excellent. The quality of pupils' work and the amount they produced in each subject reflect the very good quality of teaching. As a direct consequence, pupils achieve well above average standards in five of the eleven subjects inspected and above average standards in the rest with the exception of music, where standards were in line with national expectations.

20 One of the strongest features of teaching is the way teachers make links between all the different subjects. In their planning, they draw heavily on pupils' learning and skills from other subjects. In a history lesson, for example, pupils discussed a recent visit to Beamish museum and used skills gained in English to record differences between the Victorian period and now. In geography, mathematics skills are used to draw graphs on modes of transport most commonly used when coming to school. Other strong features of teaching, showing previous criticisms have been corrected were: teachers sharing the clear learning objectives for each lesson with pupils; their very good relationships with pupils and work which was well matched to pupils' needs. Where teaching was very good or excellent, teachers' energy, enthusiasm and very good subject knowledge along with their very well planned and challenging activities successfully motivated pupils. Pupils gained much from these lessons and the quality of learning was high. Five excellent examples of teaching were seen in a reception class and in Years 1 and 2. Due to their teachers' expertise, pupils made significant gains in their knowledge by the end of these lessons. In a Year 1 dance session, for example, pupils and an adult helper became totally absorbed in the music and all were disappointed when the lesson had to end. The excellent subject knowledge of the teacher was readily apparent and pupils responded very well to her high expectations. All aspects of teaching, such as teachers' knowledge, their teaching of basic skills, their methods and planning are very good. Class discipline is a strong feature and was very good in most lessons.

21 The quality of teaching in the literacy hours is very good, showing that the school has implemented the National Literacy Strategy very well. The teaching of mathematics in numeracy sessions is also very good, throughout. Most teachers teach mental mathematics well, closely following the guidance in the National Numeracy Strategy. In literacy and numeracy sessions, good use is made of computers. This is an improvement since the previous inspection and makes lessons more interesting for pupils. Teachers effectively use the skills that pupils have learned in these sessions when teaching all other subjects. In a Year 1 art and design lesson, for example, pupils used a computer program to create pictures of fish following the story of 'The Rainbow Fish'. Mathematical shapes were used for the scales. Pupils use their writing skills in history and geography, writing accounts about life in Victorian times or how to improve a local environment.

22 Pupils' access to and use of computers to support their learning in literacy and numeracy lessons are satisfactory. In Year 1, for example, pupils practice their spellings and write stories about 'Farmer duck'. Year 2 pupils reinforced their knowledge of angles when using a program requiring them to move a turtle on the screen. Teachers are able to plan activities for pupils to use and develop

their computer skills to support their learning by using the wide range of programs available in most of their lessons.

23 The quality of teaching in all other subjects is at least good. In science, teaching is very good. Pupils have good opportunities to carry out scientific investigations for themselves, often working with a partner or within a small group. In information and communication technology, the quality of teaching has improved markedly since the previous inspection and is now very good, reflecting the big improvement in the standards pupils achieve. Teachers confidently use the good level of resources to good effect and standards, as a result are well above those normally seen by age seven.

24 Teachers' confidence varies in music but the scheme of work gives clear guidance on teaching music, and most manage to fully cover the statutory curriculum. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory and as a result, standards are in line with those expected. It is good throughout the school in design and technology, history and geography. The judgement on teaching in geography is based on the quality of teachers' planning and pupils' completed work as history topics were the main focus for this term and no geography lessons were seen. Resources for making things need to be further improved but pupils are able to enjoy the practical nature of design and technology. Activities are well planned and challenging. Very good discipline and control of pupils are strong features of the very good quality of teaching in physical education lessons, enabling all to take part in safety and to enjoy their lessons. All teachers make good use of the good range of equipment in the school hall. However, pupils are unable to benefit from extra-curricular sporting activities as none are currently provided. The very good resources available in art and design and the very good quality of teaching are largely responsible for raising standards to well above those normally seen in this subject.

25 Teachers make good use of modern technology in their lessons. All teachers use computers confidently and effectively. Pupils in Year 1, for example, know which icon to touch in order to retrieve information about Florence Nightingale. A digital camera is often used to record pupils' activities in physical education. All teachers frequently use overhead projectors, videos and CD players to add interest and variety to their lessons.

26 The school's climate for learning was described as good in the previous inspection. A fair reflection of the quality of learning in this inspection, taking into account the overall quality of teaching and the standards being achieved in all departments of the school is very good. All teachers work hard to establish a very good working atmosphere and promote effective learning. Classroom support staff are used well to support individuals or small groups of pupils in lessons. Their contribution is instrumental in raising standards. Teachers have developed very good strategies to maintain pupils' behaviour and ensure that they maintain their level of concentration. In most classes, for example, pupils are given strict time limits to finish tasks. Pupils obviously enjoy the calm, orderly atmosphere in lessons and all behave exceptionally well, showing a very good attitude towards their learning. The copious amount of neatly presented work produced by pupils is a fair reflection of the very good attitudes pupils show towards all their work. All concentrate fully and are keen to do well for their teachers and themselves.

27 The school knows who the very able or talented pupils are and individual teachers usually make special provision for them in lessons to keep them suitably challenged. Teachers are well prepared for their lessons with a good range of resources readily available for these pupils. This helps to maintain most pupils' interest and encourages them to use their initiative and choose suitable materials when working independently. Most sustain their level of concentration and make good progress.

28 The quality of teaching for children in the foundation stage, which covers their time in the nursery and two reception classes, is very good. Children are given a good start to their learning in the nursery as the quality of teaching is consistently of a high standard. All teachers in the foundation

stage work hard to enable children to attain the early learning goals well before they leave the reception classes.

29 The overall quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is good. Established classroom assistants make a significant contribution to the learning of the pupils they support, whether in small groups or in withdrawal groups. They use their initiative well to ensure pupils participate in the lessons. In one lesson, for example the classroom assistant worked alongside one pupil while the teacher was introducing the work for a literacy session, making sure that the pupil understood the questions and could answer them. Teachers know the specific individual targets for pupils as they help to prepare their individual education plans. However, on occasions, planning, other than for lessons where pupils are withdrawn, is not closely linked to pupils' individual education plans or statements of educational need, slowing pupils' progress towards their individual targets. Pupils with behavioural difficulties are usually well managed, to prevent other pupils' learning being disrupted and to help them gain self-control as quickly as possible.

30 Parents, in their responses to the questionnaire sent out prior to the inspection, are happy with the amount of homework their children are expected to do, showing criticism over this area in the previous inspection has been corrected. Inspection evidence shows that the amount and quality of homework are good. The school's policy statement gives clear guidance to teachers and parents on homework. Teachers are generally making good use of homework as part of their commitment to raise standards. As a result, homework effectively supports pupils' learning.

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

31 The quality and range of learning opportunities are very good throughout the school, showing that there has been further improvement since the previous report. This has a strong impact on the standards pupils' achieve and their positive attitudes to school. The school has developed a well-structured curriculum embracing all statutory requirements. The wide range of good learning opportunities meets the interests and aptitudes of all the children including those with special educational needs. However, the needs of the most able pupils with a special talent and the recently admitted pupils with English as an additional language are not always identified separately in teachers' planning.

32 All subjects have policies and schemes of work in place. Very good use is made of nationally recognised schemes of work for all subjects and all age groups. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. From the early learning goals in the foundation stage, the curriculum is cohesive. Skills are methodically built on year-on-year. All subjects of the National Curriculum are included. Furthermore, there is a very good balance between each subject. All pupils have equal access to the curriculum.

33 The school's provision for literacy and numeracy is very good. Teachers are very effective in making sure that pupils acquire basic skills in an efficient and progressive way. Planning at all levels is of very good quality and thorough, breaking down new learning into small steps. Effective links are made between all subjects and pupils' new learning in one subject will very often reinforce and practise what they have recently learnt in another. Literacy, numeracy and ICT skills are used well to support and extend learning in other subjects.

34 The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good, overall. Those pupils requiring additional support have a detailed individual education plan. Relevant, measurable and achievable targets have been set and teachers and learning support assistants know them well for each pupil. The very good quality of teaching seen in lessons ensures that these pupils are well supported in class and usually given work, which is appropriate to their ability. The school has identified the need to register pupils of very high ability or those with a special talent so that their particular needs can be met with appropriately planned work. Higher achievers are sufficiently well challenged so this

proposed provision is aimed at the very few gifted or talented pupils in school. The school also needs to prepare and implement a policy for the very few pupils who enter with English as an additional language to ensure that their rate of progress is accelerated and their special needs are met.

35 At present, the school does not provide any extra-curricular activities. Visits to places such as Clarke Hall and the Haworth Steam Railway are carefully linked to work in the classroom and serve to enrich and extend pupils' learning. They also contribute well to pupils' social development.

36 Links with the community are very good. A number of parents and other local people help within school and often give short talks to classes on things such as road safety or being aware of strangers. Parents and friends raise funds to enable the school to buy extra items to enhance the curriculum for all pupils. Senior citizens are invited to concerts given by the children. The school has good relationships with the local college and schools.

37 Provision for pupils' personal development is good. The very strong sense of community and caring is pivotal. This helps pupils in becoming responsible members of society. Teachers use praise well to encourage pupils to reach their personal targets. The school is an inclusive community of staff, pupils, parents and governors. An effective policy for sex education supports teaching and learning. The school does not have a specific drugs awareness policy, or an active programme to make pupils fully aware of the danger of drugs. However, teachers cover this aspect well in their science lessons.

38 The overall provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. This represents an improvement since the previous inspection, when provision was judged to be good. It helps to account for pupils positive attitudes and very good behaviour. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. Religious education lessons and assemblies help pupils to understand their own faith and the beliefs of others. The school lays particular emphasis on conservation and the care of living things. Some lessons do give pupils special experiences. For example, pupils in Year 2 were very excited working in the wildlife garden and special finds were greeted with wonder and amazement. Pupils in year 1 gasped in awe when the visiting vicar wore his beautifully embroidered chasuble and showed them the cross and chalice. Displays of observational drawings and other art work show an awareness of the beauty of nature. Pupils write and produce collections of prayers for use in their daily worship. However, in some assemblies seen, pupils were given no opportunity for quiet, personal reflection.

39 There is very good provision for pupils' moral development. This is closely linked with the school's caring ethos. Teachers and other staff insist on high standards of behaviour and consideration for others. Pupils are polite, respectful and helpful. Class rules, developed in discussion with pupils, are displayed in each classroom. Staff act as very good role models for pupils. The school has an active behaviour policy that all staff follow. A reward system linked to a reward assembly encourages pupils' good behaviour. There is no school council or 'buddy' system in place to enable pupils to express their views or exercise their responsibility to others and this is surprising considering how mature and sensible many of the pupils are in school.

40 Provision for pupils' social development is very good. Pupils are treated consistently in a warm and friendly manner by all staff and this has a positive effect on their relationships with others. Pupils are encouraged to take on small jobs in the classroom and older pupils have responsibilities around the school. Pupils are encouraged to help and support their friends in the classroom and to recognise the achievement of others. During the pleasant, relaxed lunch period and outdoor playtimes, pupils have ample opportunities to talk to each other and co-operate in their play. Pupils support both local and overseas charities and learn about being good citizens.

41 The school's provision for pupils' cultural development is good. Pupils study their local culture through visits to places in the area. In their art and design lessons pupils develop an awareness of art that crosses cultural boundaries when they study the work of famous artists. In religious

education lessons, pupils compare the similarities and differences between all the major world faiths. Pupils benefit when parents volunteer to show that different faiths have different styles of dress, traditions and food. Pupils know that each faith has its festivals and celebrations.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

42 The school provides a good quality care for its pupils. This shows that standards of care have been maintained since the previous inspection. Teachers and classroom assistants provide a very supportive environment where pupils can blossom into confident articulate individuals. Relationships between pupils and staff are very good and sometimes excellent. Teachers know their pupils very well. The monitoring of personal development is informal but teachers write very detailed comments on pupils' reports.

43 The school has been very involved in promoting healthy living and provides some good quality information for parents about common childhood illnesses. However the school has still not developed its own specific drugs awareness policy. It has adopted the local education authority's health and safety policy, which includes some guidance on drugs awareness for pupils. Governors are regularly involved in risk assessment surveys. Most minor issues identified during the inspection, such as the danger posed by a discarded fridge waiting to be taken away were quickly resolved.

44 Whilst individual care is good, the school still lacks documentation that would provide structure and consistency. For example, the school has not developed a Child Protection Policy, which would inform all members of staff of issues regarding child protection. Nor has the school yet developed a policy regarding the education of children who are in the care of the local authority.

45 There is a very good programme to support pupils' transition from infant school to the neighbouring junior school. Pupils' worries are addressed in personal and social education lessons and there are a good number of visits, which help pupils experience junior school life.

46 The school has very good procedures to promote good behaviour and discipline. These are based on providing interesting lessons, good teaching, having very good relationships with pupils and a consistent approach to behaviour management. The school fulfils its aims to provide a calm purposeful atmosphere for learning. The monitoring of attendance is good. The school is well aware of pupils' attendance patterns and knows that some children miss too much school because of holidays. It does supply parents with a leaflet about the effect of holidays in term time produced by the local education authority but there is the potential to put further strategies in place to discourage this.

47 Procedures for the assessment of pupils' academic progress are very good throughout the school. Children in the nursery are assessed shortly after they enter. Identified individual needs are targeted and children are supported very well in their learning. Progress is recorded throughout the year. Teachers regularly assess pupils as they work in class on specific aspects of their learning. The whole school staff is taking additional training in this assessment skill in the near future. Statutory assessments take place when children enter the reception class. The information obtained is used very well to adapt the teaching programme for individual children and groups of children. The school complies with statutory requirements for assessing seven-year-old pupils and comprehensive procedures are in place for the assessment and recording of pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science.

48 Pupils' attainment and progress is carefully assessed and monitored in every subject taught. Much information is collected and analysed by the teachers and head teacher. Final analyses are shared with staff and governors. This helps the school to identify strengths and weaknesses in its provision and to set targets both for individuals and year groups. Pupils with special educational needs are assessed regularly, targets set and monitored carefully. There are appropriate statutory reviews of pupils who have statements of special educational needs.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

49 Parents are very pleased with the standard of education offered by the school. This represents an improvement on the previous inspection, when relationships with parents were reported as good. Parents report that their children like school and the school is helping their children to become well behaved, mature and responsible. They recognise that the school is well managed and that teaching is very good. They appreciate that they are kept well informed about the good progress that their children make. Parents find the school easy to approach if they have a problem and feel that the school works well with them. They know that their children are well cared for. The inspection team agrees with parents' very positive views. Their strong support for the school is a major factor in helping the school to be very effective.

50 Parents are very involved in the work of the school. The high level of commitment that parents give to the school and their children's education is a very significant factor in the high academic standards and high levels of emotional maturity that the children achieve. In addition to homework, children often volunteer to do work at home and are very well supported by their parents. Examples include, the many pictures, writing and photographs brought in from home that illustrate the current assembly topic of 'learning journeys' and the very high number of homemade thank you cards and invitation acceptance cards sent to the school. Homework is often set and is relevant to the children's needs. For example parents and children have a choice regarding how they record which books they have read together. Some children obviously spend a lot of time writing a summary of each book.

51 Parents also support the school through the very active Parent-Teacher Association. In addition to raising very large amounts of money through social events, the association is closely involved in improving the school grounds, for example, painting the markings on the school playground and maintaining the environmental garden. Parents, grandparents and members of the local community provide good quality assistance in lessons and with running the school library. The school values this help. During the inspection, a parent brought in a glorious collection of fish and other sea creatures for the nursery children to admire.

52 Parents receive very good information from the school. There is a sensible home-school agreement and, in response to parental concerns, a second agreement relating to lunchtimes has been developed. The school has also responded to parents' concerns about lunchtime by ensuring that there is close monitoring of lunchtime supervision including a daily meeting between the head teacher and lunchtime supervisors. The good quality prospectus meets legal requirements but information on the admission of disabled pupils needs to be more detailed. Similarly, information on staff development in the Governors Report to Parents could be more explicit. Parents receive very good quality information about day-to-day routines in the nursery and additional information about how to help their children learn. Parents of older pupils also receive a very full range of information about the requirements of reception and there is a 'Parents Guide to Key Stage 1'. There are regular open days and formal parents' evenings twice a year.

53 Reports on children's progress are of a very good quality. The reports on progress in English, for example, are always very clear about what children know understand and can do but some Year 1 mathematics reports focus on pupils' attitudes rather than their mathematical skills. The reports on pupils' personal development are very perceptive and demonstrate how well the teachers know the pupils.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

54 The leadership and management of the head teacher and other key staff are very good. Their hard work, together with highly effective and very committed governors, ensure that the school, with much justification, is held in very high regard by parents and the wider community. The excellent leadership and determined vision of the head teacher ensure that standards and the quality of

education continue to improve. Teachers, classroom assistants, non-teaching staff, voluntary helpers, pupils and parents share a firm commitment to the school. Very good relationships and a strong sense of pride are evident in all that the school does, both inside the gates and in the wider community. As a result, pupils feel secure and happy here and are eager to come to school. They are enthusiastic and attentive in lessons.

55 The governing body meets regularly and, together with its committees, supports the school exceptionally well both in its strategic management and day-to-day activities. Governors are extremely well informed about the strengths of the school and of what needs to be done to improve yet further. Much of this understanding comes from the insights gained by each governor having a link to a teacher and their area of responsibility, enabling them to work together towards improvement. The governing body fulfils its responsibilities very well and generally ensures that statutory requirements are met. Together with the senior management team, the governors provide a firm steer to raising standards by monitoring the school's performance in the National Curriculum tests and seeking to analyse underlying trends or weaknesses, using this to guide improvements.

56 The monitoring and evaluation of quality and standards are carried out extensively, and have improved since the previous inspection. Senior members of staff have a good programme of monitoring the quality of teaching. Each teacher may be observed teaching two or three times during the school year and the ensuing discussion on teaching methods and organisation is encouraging and helps to hone their skills. Such monitoring does not, however, always incorporate a sharp enough analysis to pinpoint the means of improving specific skills yet further in order to raise pupils' attainment still higher. On the other hand, the regularity of monitoring the quality of teaching provides a helpful contribution to the good strategies that the school adopts in managing the performance of teachers and setting them appropriate targets. Such targets usefully include whole school initiatives, such as, more challenging work for high attaining pupils in mathematics, as well as the teacher's personal targets for improvement.

57 Planning for school improvement is very good and productive. It is better than at the time of the previous inspection by relating specific improvements to the context of the school and is based on effective self-evaluation. Priorities are embedded in the aims of the school, its achievements and income. Each objective is costed and the responsibilities are clearly defined. Criteria for success are appropriate and measurable. As part of this process, the role of curriculum coordinators (a key issue for action in the previous inspection) has improved; responsibilities are clearly defined and expectations of them are firmly established.

58 The management of the school's finances is excellent. Governors and the head teacher effectively and efficiently manage and monitor the budget. They are very well informed on matters of income and expenditure. Independent financial advice ensures that the budget is planned systematically and spending is carefully aligned to the school's priorities for improvement. The school secretary uses ICT very efficiently to track day-to-day expenditure and to provide governors with up-to-date financial information. Careful consideration is given to how to achieve best value for money. For example, parents are consulted on the school's priorities, comparisons are made with similar schools, competitive prices are sought and the school challenges itself to improve year-on-year. Specific grants are used well for their intended purposes. This school serves its community very well. When the very good quality of education, very effective leadership and management and the high standards pupils achieve are taken into account, along with the average level of expenditure per pupil, the school is providing very good value for money.

59 There is an appropriate number of well qualified, highly committed and very effective teachers. The school has chosen to employ a good number of support staff, as it believes that young children benefit from as much adult support as possible. This has proved to be a very effective policy and very good teaching combined with the good number of very effective support staff has contributed significantly to the high levels of attainment.

60 Accommodation has not changed much since the previous inspection. It is adequate to deliver the curriculum but the several shortcomings remain. There is little storage space and resources are stored in a surplus temporary classroom to the rear of the school. This is in a very poor condition. The library is still cramped and there is no space to withdraw pupils for individual or group work.

61 Resources are good, overall. There are very good quality resources to support literacy, mathematics and art and design. Although there is no space for an ICT suite, there is a good number of computers available for pupils to use in their lessons and a very good range of programs. Resources in most other areas are good. However, resources for design and technology are only just adequate as more are needed to support pupils' making skills.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

62 The experience of the extremely conscientious head teacher, together with the commitment shown by every member of staff to do the best they can for the pupils in their care, means that all aspects of the school are regularly and thoroughly monitored and evaluated. Any identified weaknesses are addressed as a matter of importance with governors and staff working together as an effective team to bring about necessary improvement. As a result, the inspection team found no significant areas of weakness. Therefore, there are no key issues for the school.

The following less important weaknesses, not included as key issues for action, should be considered by the school.

- Identify and make provision for the small number of gifted and talented pupils so that any special talents that they have can be recognised and developed.

(Paragraphs 11, 27, 31, 34, 56)

- Prepare and implement a policy to support those pupils who find it difficult to speak or understand English.

(Paragraphs 31, 34, 71, 102, 144)

- Further enhance pupils' learning and their social skills by developing more opportunities for them to take responsibility and be involved in an interesting range of activities outside normal lesson time.

(Paragraphs 12, 24, 35)

It should be noted that item 1 already features in the school's development planning and item 2 has only become necessary with the arrival recently of a very small number of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds who are finding English difficult.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	41
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	28

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	4	21	14	1	0	0	0
Percentage	10	51	34	3	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	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	24	152
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	16

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	2	11

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	2

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	2
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	6

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.4
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	30	31	61

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	26	27	30
	Girls	29	30	29
	Total	55	57	59
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	90% (88%)	93% (84%)	97% (95%)
	National	84% (83%)	86% (84%)	91% (90%)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	27	29	30
	Girls	28	29	30
	Total	55	58	60
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	90% (89%)	95% (95%)	98% (89%)
	National	85% (84%)	89% (88%)	89% (88%)

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	1
Indian	1
Pakistani	2
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	1
White	140
Any other minority ethnic group	7

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 – Y2

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25
Average class size	25

Education support staff: YR – Y2

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	75

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24
Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	33
Number of pupils per FTE adult	8

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	1
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.

Financial information

Financial year	2000/01
	£
Total income	365,747
Total expenditure	360,670
Expenditure per pupil	1,982
Balance brought forward from previous year	1,478
Balance carried forward to next year	6,555

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	200
Number of questionnaires returned	58

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	79	21	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	60	38	0	2	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	59	40	0	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	46	43	4	0	7
The teaching is good.	62	36	0	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	52	40	7	0	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	79	21	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	70	30	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	53	43	2	0	2
The school is well led and managed.	67	33	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	62	35	0	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	26	35	19	2	19

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM.

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

63 The good quality of provision for children in the nursery and reception classes has been maintained since the previous inspection. Children are admitted in September and January each year and spend two or three terms in nursery before transferring to the reception class at the beginning of the year that they are five years old. There is a wide range of attainment on entry to nursery but, overall, it is broadly typical for three-year-olds.

64 Links with parents are good. Before their children enter the nursery, parents are invited to an initial meeting with staff and arrangements are then made for staff to visit the children at home to introduce themselves and ensure that the children see a friendly face when they enter the nursery. To begin with, children come to the nursery for a short time each day before staying for a full half day. They move to the reception classes at the beginning of the year in which they are five. Again the transfer to the reception classes is a gradual one. Early in the reception year parents are invited to a meeting to discuss the range of learning that will involve their child and to answer any queries they may have.

65 Children make rapid progress throughout the foundation stage because of the very good teaching and the work of supporting adults. Most children achieve the nationally expected early learning goals in all areas of learning and are already working on the National Curriculum well before they leave the reception classes. The well-qualified and experienced staff are fully involved in planning and reviewing activities and have a good understanding of how children learn. Lessons are planned carefully to enable the children to follow the 'stepping stones' towards the early learning goals and beyond. Children's attainment is regularly assessed and their progress recorded. Informal observations are made on a regular basis. Plans have been made for the whole school staff to undertake training in this method of assessment.

66 The co-ordinator shows a positive commitment to learning for all children. The support staff are deployed well and take a full and effective role in teaching the children. Learning resources are good throughout the foundation stage. However, children in the reception classes do not have direct access to a safe outdoor play area. This inevitably means some restrictions to the learning opportunities available for them and slows their rate of progress in their physical development. This lack of provision was highlighted in the previous inspection of the school. Money has now been made available and plans are in hand for an outdoor area to be completed before the end of the year.

Personal, social and emotional development

67 Children settle well into the routine of school life and join in activities with enthusiasm. In both nursery and reception, time is given to ensuring that the children know the routines such as sitting quietly at the appropriate times, clearing away their equipment and moving sensibly from one place to another. They have an increasing awareness of right and wrong and are learning to care about the world around them when they visit the school's pond and wildlife garden.

68 The warm, positive atmosphere in both the nursery and reception classes encourages the children to be independent and generally results in them being eager to learn. The children learn to share equipment and play and work together well. For example, when using the outdoor play area, the children in the nursery take turns to use the wheeled toys and they help each other on the computers. The children, both in the nursery and reception were able to identify the importance of sharing when they listened altogether to the story of 'The Rainbow Fish'.

69 By the time they begin their reception year, most children understand the importance of one person speaking at a time. They develop initiative and independence in selecting resources and

making choices in their work. Good planning and adult support ensure that children adapt well to the increasing depth and brisk pace of work in the reception years. Children make good progress in their personal and social development because of the very good teaching based on a secure knowledge of the needs of young children. The staff work well as a team and they provide effective role models for the children. They show respect, patience and courtesy to all the children with whom they work. All achieve the early learning goals in this area well before the end of their reception year.

Communication, language and literacy

70 Children make good progress throughout the foundation stage and by the end of their reception year, most will exceed the standards expected of them in this area of learning.

71 Speaking and listening skills are very good. Children in the nursery are able to concentrate and listen for considerable periods of time. They respond readily to adult questions and are keen to volunteer information during discussions. Nursery children, for example, listened with fascination, to a puppet show telling the traditional story of 'Little Red Riding Hood'. They were able to join in some of the repetitive phrases such as 'All the better to smell you with' expressively by trying to sound like the wolf! Children in both the nursery and reception classes chat confidently to each other during shared activities. They are beginning to develop specific language to support their learning in other areas. For example, children in reception when handling shells use words such as rough, smooth and texture. The very few pupils who have recently joined the school who speak English as an additional language do not always receive the support they need to develop their English speaking skills.

72 Nursery children are interested in books and handle them with care. They know that cover illustrations give clues to what is inside a book and they follow the story by looking at the pictures. Most children recognise their own names and attempt to write them. Reception children have a clear understanding of reading from left to right and retell a short story confidently. The majority of them identify initial letters well. The more able children are able to link sounds together. Children in reception read their books with some confidence. They understand and use the words author and illustrator. All children become familiar with using a library when they borrow books to take home to share with their families.

73 Staff in the nursery provide mark making areas where the children practise their mark making and attempt to write. Writing opportunities occur in child initiated imaginative play. For example, a child, with the support of an adult entered prospective campers to the 'Netherton Camp Site' on to a booking form, made a stamp and popped it into the post. In reception, children are becoming familiar with story structure and plan and record a simple story. The more able children are able to write several short sentences. They frequently make good use of computers to extend their learning. All children demonstrate good control of the mouse, for example, when clicking on answers or building up pictures of animals by bringing the various parts together.

74 The quality of teaching of language and literacy is very good and teachers put strong emphasis on improving spoken language and literacy skills. Staff are skilful in questioning children and giving appropriate encouragement as they work. Teachers plan lessons thoroughly so that children continually build on previous learning. Nursery nurses and support staff play a valuable role in the teaching process.

Mathematical development

75 Children make good progress and exceed the expected levels by the end of their reception year. Teachers use every opportunity to reinforce children's understanding of number. For example, when a child in nursery produced a purse from home with coins the teacher and child counted them together. Nursery children join in number games and rhymes and soon count and recognise numbers to 10. Their knowledge and understanding of the world is enhanced when they sing numbers to 3 in

several different languages chosen by the children. Stories, such as ‘The Hungry Caterpillar’ support their growing mathematical awareness. As they play with sand, water and dough they begin to use words such as full, empty, heavy and light.

76 Lessons in reception draw from aspects of the National Curriculum and have challenge. The children were enthusiastic about rearranging a line of soft toys during a lesson on ordinal numbers. Towards the end of the reception year most children are able to add and subtract small numbers and record their work. They are able to solve simple problems such as replacing missing numbers from a sequence. There is appropriate emphasis on using the correct mathematical vocabulary when describing the similarities and differences between shapes. Suitable computer programs enhance the mathematical learning of the children. The teaching of mathematics is very good. Teachers plan appropriately and tasks are matched to meet the needs of all the children.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

77 Children make good progress throughout the foundation stage and quickly achieve the early learning goals in this area well before the end of their reception year.

78 A variety of experiences are provided for the children, often linked to other areas of learning. All the children enjoyed the story of ‘Lucy and Tom at the seaside’. Children in nursery then ‘went fishing’ for a range of underwater creatures in the water tray. Many of the children could name the creatures they caught. In reception, children used their senses to describe the appearance, texture and smell of a wide variety of seashells. They imagine they are at the seaside as they play in a tent and wear sunglasses and a hat. Many children work confidently with the computer and have sound basic skills. They co-operate and work well together.

79 The quality of teaching is very good. Teachers use the school wildlife garden to plan a good range of activities linked to the natural world and by the end of the reception year children understand the life cycle of a frog. Children begin to understand the passage of time as they celebrate their own birthdays and see changes in their own growth. Walking round the local area introduces the children to early geography skills. Staff make use of visits, for example, a trip to the steam train in Howarth and visitors to widen children’s experiences and knowledge.

Physical development

80 Children make good progress in their physical development and achieve the early learning goals well before the end of the reception year. In the nursery children have sufficient space indoors and out to explore and use a good range of equipment. The wheeled toys give children opportunities to use their imagination as well as improving their physical skills. Children in reception do not have direct access to a safe outdoor area and this inevitably means that opportunities for physical and other areas of learning are restricted. However, staff compensate by using the school hall or occasionally sharing the nursery resources. As they play with construction kits, building blocks and malleable materials such as dough and clay, children increase their level of manipulative control. In the nursery, teachers provide children regularly with mark making and cutting and sticking activities to enable them to practise the vital skills needed for writing. Most children control paintbrushes, pencils and scissors very well by the end of the reception class.

81 Children in the reception classes were able to use the space in the hall well during a lesson. They took their weight on different body parts, travelling safely with consideration for others and were able to transfer these skills when using apparatus. All the children were aware of the effects of exercise on their bodies and could describe how they felt.

82 The quality of teaching is very good. Teachers plan so that children build on skills already learnt. Activities are well organised with appropriate emphasis on developing an awareness of others, co-operating and working safely.

Creative development

83 Children make good progress because of the very good teaching and the opportunities provided and most children achieve above the expected levels by the end of the reception year.

84 Progress in their musical development is good. Teachers make good use of creative and imaginative experiences in their lessons. For instance, children shared simple songs and action rhymes to enrich their learning about the seaside. Both the nursery and reception classes benefit from a weekly singing session accompanied by a pianist as well as regular daily singing within their classroom. They enjoy singing their favourite songs and rhymes, keeping in time with the music and joining in the actions. Children in the reception classes, for example are able to tap out a simple rhythm with their hands or when using the percussion instruments, keeping in time with the tune. Skills in drama begin to develop as they take part in role-play. For instance, children become 'campers' at the seaside.

85 Throughout these early years children are introduced to a wide range of techniques including printing, colour mixing, cutting, pasting, collage and modelling with dough and with reclaimed materials. Children in the reception classes design and make a clay tile using seashells to press out the pattern. As the children concentrate on chosen activities and work and share with others, they also develop very good social skills. Children make considerable progress in their observational and drawing skills. When they enter nursery their drawings of 'myself' range from vague shapes to a body with some limbs and features. At the end of the reception year the most able children produce well proportioned detailed drawings. The least able children draw themselves with a joined body and some detail.

86 The quality of teaching is very good. The teacher and the nursery nurses organise stimulating activities, which stir children's imagination and encourage them to express their feelings and ideas in a variety of ways. Every possible opportunity is taken to extend speaking and listening skills.

ENGLISH

87 By the age of seven, standards in English are well above the national average. In reading and writing they are each well above average and in speaking and listening they are very high. The school has improved the above average standards found at the previous inspection. Pupils are very effective communicators and speak and write with increasing accuracy and relevance. This is because of the high level of consistency in the quality of planning and teaching in all classes. Teachers have high expectations of pupils and they respond by having high expectations of themselves. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve very well and boys do as well as girls. High attaining pupils, however, sometimes lack work that is suitably challenging. The school has worked successfully to improve pupils' progress and standards in reading and writing since the previous inspection and has clear plans to extend the provision for high attaining pupils.

88 Throughout the school, pupils' speaking and listening skills are very high. Pupils listen very closely to all staff and other pupils in, for example, assemblies, whole class and small group sessions. This ability to listen attentively enhances learning and contributes to the very good standards of behaviour. Pupils express ideas confidently and have an excellent command of spoken English. They show great maturity when they speak very clearly and fluently in front of a large group in assemblies and the whole class.

89 The excellent standards in speaking and listening are not only found in English, but also enhance standards in other subjects. Pupils in Year 2 during a history lesson, for instance, recalled a visit to Beamish museum; their descriptions were evocative, including the smell of the lamp oil. In talking about their work in art and design, where they had designed a model that showed life under the sea, a pupil excitedly described, in great detail, catching a lobster whilst on holiday in Canada. Pupils

have a very good grasp of both general and technical vocabulary that helps their achievement. For instance, in religious education, they understand the word ‘millennium’ and know its significance; in science they use the word ‘prediction’ accurately. In literacy, they recall words such as ‘shimmer’ and ‘glittering’ and use them appropriately to describe the ‘Rainbow Fish’. Because of their very high levels in this aspect of English, older pupils are capable of further challenge to use and extend their skills, especially in, for example, developing their personal and social skills or by helping younger pupils.

90 In achieving the well above average standards in reading, a variety of reading schemes are used to make sure pupils’ tastes are met. Pupils practise their reading regularly by reading with teachers, support staff and voluntary helpers. Books are taken home regularly to read with parents, brothers and sisters. Guided group reading, along with shared texts during the literacy hour, give pupils well-planned daily opportunities to extend their confidence. Such opportunities are often linked to writing in both English lessons and those of other subjects. This consistent and regular reading is an improvement since the previous inspection.

91 Pupils show a deep appreciation and care for books. They have clear ideas on what they like to read and, in Year 2 of which authors please them – Roald Dahl is a current favourite. They explain well their preferences between the stories. Even the few pupils who do not enjoy reading as much as others, and struggle to become fluent, have confidence and a love of books. They persevere and attack new words using a good range of skills, such as, thinking about the context, using phonics and taking clues from illustrations. All pupils talk confidently about the plot and make plausible predictions about what might happen at the end of a story.

92 Pupils enjoy a very good range of books and find stories, poetry and non-fiction just as interesting. In Year 2 they know and understand the difference between fiction and non-fiction. They describe in correct detail the features of non-fiction books, such as, glossaries and indexes, and importantly that these books give information. As a result, pupils make very good progress in the use of dictionaries, indexes, content pages and glossaries and can use each of these appropriately. One child in Year 2 explained that a glossary was at the back of the book, in alphabetical order and only about words in that book.

93 The school has improved the use of library facilities since the previous inspection. Great efforts have been made to provide an attractive, comfortable area with interesting displays linked to further reading. There is an adequate amount of fiction and non-fiction books. The system to identify how to find information is understood by most pupils in Year 2. Pupils can borrow books and return them on a weekly basis with support from staff and voluntary helpers. Libraries in classrooms, including very good access to ICT resources, supplement the school library very well, giving pupils opportunities to practise shared reading of both fiction and non-fiction texts.

94 Standards in writing are well above average. Very good teaching has enabled pupils to achieve well-presented, fluent writing across a comprehensive range of styles and to become independent and confident writers. In class work, pupils spell words well and can quickly self-correct when prompted. Most pupils in Year 2 and some in Year 1 write using a cursive script. Throughout the school handwriting is well presented and letters well formed. Pupils do not always use, nor are they encouraged to use, joined writing more consistently in Year 2.

95 Pupils in Year 1 develop their skills in writing poetry well. For example, their poems about the ‘Rainbow Fish’ showed an excellent use of descriptive words and exploration of emotion about the rainbow fish’s loneliness, such as, “rainbow fish with sparkling, shimmering, glittering scales”... “gliding through the deep dark ocean”... “dazzling in the deep ocean”. In Year 2, pupils use correct punctuation well to form sentences and add emphasis to their writing. They competently use capital letters, full stops, commas, speech and exclamation marks. Pupils write lists of, for example, agreed class rules. They understand and use headings, bullet points, sentences and labels when writing a text

page for a non-fiction book about 'underneath'. ICT is used well in all classes to reinforce spelling and grammatical sentence structure, to draft and edit work and to revisit stories heard together.

96 The high standards attained by pupils are the result of the very good quality of teaching. Teachers have consistently high expectations of what pupils can do. Their very good planning makes learning purposeful and clear to pupils. Very good questioning checks learning and prompts the very best response from pupils of all abilities. There is also some excellent teaching in which the teachers' grasp of the subject matter is extensive and is enthusiastically communicated to the pupils at a brisk pace. The end of literacy lessons invariably has a very clear recap of what was to be learned and checks what has been gained by the pupils. Because teachers know their pupils well, and relationships and management are very good, teachers' high expectations are fully repaid – pupils work willingly and very productively.

97 Assessment of pupils' progress is very effective. Regular reading assessments say clearly what pupils can do well and where they need to improve. As a result books are well matched to individual pupils' stage of development and ensure sufficient demands are made of pupils of all abilities. In Year 2, pupils said "reading helps you learn new words... makes you more intelligent...its interesting and fun". A pupil in Year 1 said "I love it to bits". The marking of written work praises effort and helps pupils to know where they could improve. This is further reinforced by regular reviews of the targets in the front of pupils' books.

98 Subject co-ordination is very good, showing a deep understanding and knowledge of the subject and a commitment to improve on the already high standards (for example in writing). Performance in tests and tasks is carefully analysed and used to inform plans for improvement. The co-ordinator, with the head teacher, effectively monitors lessons, teaching plans and pupils' work. This is an improvement since the previous inspection.

MATHEMATICS

99 Standards in mathematics are well above the nationally expected standard in Year 2. In the previous inspection, standards were above the national average. The good level of improvement reflects the very good quality of teaching and amount of helpful advice and support provided by curriculum specialists working for the local education authority. The subject management has also been improved and careful monitoring and the evaluation of standards have quickly identified any weaknesses. These have been tackled collectively by a staff who show a very strong determination to raise standards. The school is likely to reach its challenging target set for 2003. Attainment in the national tests in 2001 was above average when compared with all schools and above average when compared to the results of similar schools.

100 In Year 2, pupils have a broad all-round background in number skills, shape and space and data handling, having started the programmes of study of the National Curriculum well before leaving the foundation stage. They have suitable problem-solving skills that match the level they are working at in other areas of mathematics. Mental arithmetic skills are very good. Pupils with high and average attainment are quick to answer basic addition, subtraction, multiplication and division questions. Pupils with special educational needs and other lower attaining pupils occasionally make errors in calculations, even when given plenty of time to think about their questions. Some have not yet mastered a range of strategies to help them to solve simple mental problems. However, they remember skills they have learned in the short term well, for example how to look for patterns when finding multiples of three or four on a grid of numbers to 100. Pupils have a good grasp of work in shape and space. For example they know how to find the line of symmetry in regular shapes and recognise and name two and three-dimensional shapes. Pupils use simple graphs to interpret data, such as their mode of transport to school, traffic surveys or car colours on Ahmed's street. Presentation and mathematical communication skills, including the drawing of diagrams, are very good with most work being neatly presented. There is some evidence of numeracy skills being used to support other subjects. For example, in science pupils tabulated results when measuring the effect

of force on a toy car rolling down a slope or measure accurately the line for their home-made telephones.

101 The quality of teaching and learning is very good. The National Numeracy Strategy is being followed and used as a basis for planning lessons. Pupils are taught in ability groups for mathematics and teachers plan tasks, which closely match pupils' needs. They identify general learning targets for lessons that are shared with pupils. As a result, pupils of all abilities make good progress. This is due to the clear guidance provided by the scheme of work and the efficient use of assessment in lessons. Very good opportunities are provided for pupils with average and low attainment to work independently and reinforce their skills, often using computer programs. Those with the highest attainment are always sufficiently challenged. This answers a criticism from the previous inspection. In Year 2, for example, higher attainers had to create their own number grid using multiples of four and find any patterns. Marking is thorough helping pupils to understand how to improve their work. Homework is used well to help pupils learn.

102 When pupils with special educational needs are taught in small groups, supported by a classroom assistant and tasks are designed to meet their needs, they make very good progress in their learning. However, specific learning targets for some of these pupils are not always identified in lessons and this adversely affects their rate of progress. Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds enjoy equality of opportunity in all lessons. Most speak English fluently and many attain high standards. Recently, a very small number have been admitted with English as an additional language. The high quality of teaching and care ensures that they are fully included in lessons. However, no additional provision is available to help them to learn English more quickly so that they can understand what is expected of them, not only in mathematics but in all subjects.

103 Most teachers have high expectations of behaviour, and pupils understand classroom routines. They listen well and their attitudes in lessons are very good. These factors all contribute to pupils' learning. Where teaching is most effective, the key vocabulary identified in the lesson plans is carefully developed and reinforced during the lesson. The teachers' explanations are clear and precise so that all pupils understand exactly what to do. Pupils' answers to questions are valued, so they are not afraid to answer questions. Strategies for solving problems are carefully developed, using pupils' own ideas. Pupils are encouraged to give explanations rather than one-word answers, so developing speaking and listening skills. For example, in a good mental skills development activity in Year 1 adding numbers nine and 11 by using their knowledge of adding 10, pupils explained their method of finding the answer.

104 The school rightly identified standards in mathematics as a key area for development in 2001, following a dip in pupils' performance in the national tests for seven-year-olds. Financial resources were used effectively to buy in expertise and to allow teachers to undertake training. As a result, standards are improving. The overall management of the subject is very good. The quality of teaching is routinely checked and teachers are well supported. There is a very good range of practical resources to support learning.

SCIENCE

105 At the time of the previous inspection, standards in science were above the national average by the end of Year 2. These overall standards have been maintained.

106 Pupils in year 1 investigate the properties of different materials. They begin to understand that some materials change when heated or cooled. They use different materials when exploring how vibrations from sound sources travel to the ear. When experimenting with model cars on ramps during their investigations on forces, pupils discover that pushes and pulls are forces that can cause familiar objects to move, speed up, slow down or change direction.

107 By the age of seven, pupils describe and understand the differences and similarities between themselves and other living things. They discuss where different creatures live and why they choose that particular place. Pupils frequently make good use of the school's excellent pond and wildlife area to observe minibeasts. Year 2 pupils, for example, were genuinely excited at the prospect of finding a slug or a water snail before their visit. Pupils showed particular care and consideration when handling their 'finds'. They were aware of safety issues when pond dipping.

108 Pupils make good progress in developing their knowledge, skills and understanding and become increasingly confident with the investigative process. From the initial question or task, pupils are familiar with predicting the answer or the outcome of an experiment. They also have a good understanding of the process of fair testing in order to reach an accurate conclusion. Pupils in Year 1, for example, when testing the efficiency of their homemade 'telephones', made sure that the pieces of thread were the same length and that they were standing the same distance apart. Although most pupils make good progress, teachers do not always make adequate provision for pupils with English as an additional language to develop their vocabulary and understanding. This slows down their rate of progress and often means that they do not fully grasp new learning.

109 To further develop their thinking as scientists, pupils need more opportunities and time to handle materials freely and to respond to the challenge of devising their own tests and methods of recording their work. Pupils are constantly practising and developing their literacy skills during their science work. They take part in class and group discussions with enthusiasm and use correct scientific vocabulary with increasing confidence. Pupils record their work neatly and in some detail with appropriate drawings and diagrams.

110 The quality of teaching is very good. Teachers are confident and have good subject knowledge. Lessons are well planned overall and provide pupils with opportunities to achieve. Most carefully include additional activities which suitably challenge more able pupils. By frequently revisiting previous learning pupils are taught that they can find out something new by applying what they know already. Support staff and parental helpers are deployed well to support and extend groups of pupils, especially those with special educational needs. Teachers and pupils develop a good working relationship and pupils have very positive attitudes to their work. Regular monitoring and assessment of what pupils know and understand provides teachers with information to extend and enhance their learning.

111 Science is well led and managed by the subject co-ordinator. Regular analysis of assessment results is given a high priority and science has recently been a major focus for development throughout the school. The co-ordinator monitors teachers' planning and is scheduled to monitor the quality of teaching in the near future. The quality and use of learning resources is good and they are easily accessible to staff. The school grounds and wildlife garden are used very effectively.

ART AND DESIGN

112 Since the previous inspection, there has been a good improvement in standards. Lessons seen and the quality of the considerable amount of work displayed in the school show that pupils' attainment is well above what is expected nationally of seven-year-olds. Pupils make good progress in art and design as they move through the school.

113 Pupils' work shows a growing understanding of colour, line, tone, shape, pattern, form and space. Work in three-dimensions by pupils in Year 2, for example, in designing and making wire and foil sculptures shows a very good understanding of abstract form. Equally, clay work and the design of underwater environments using dough are well taught in Year 1. Pupils speak clearly about their ideas and work intelligently and creatively towards their intentions. They know about the work of a range of artists and craft workers from different times and cultures, such as, Georges Seurat and Giacomo Balla, and use this knowledge to improve their techniques in, for example, the use of oil,

pastels and paint. Their completed work often shows a very thoughtful, imaginative and personal response.

114 Art and design contributes very well to pupils' learning in other subjects. For example, in history pupils produce good quality observational drawing of past and present toys, and in science they use shiny materials and colour mixing to show work on reflections, light and shade. It is also a regular feature of religious education, helping pupils to explore the decorative aspects of, for instance, Buddhism.

115 The quality of teaching and learning is very good. This represents a good improvement since the previous inspection. Aspects of planning and assessment are much better than they were. A strength of the teaching lies in teachers' subject knowledge, and their interest and enthusiasm, leading to clear planning and high expectations of what pupils can do. This enables pupils to make good very progress as they build on previous skills, knowledge and understanding and ensures that work is consistently demanding. The quality of teachers' planning also ensures a good in-depth coverage of the subject, which is taught most effectively. A further strength of the planning lies in the careful linking of work across subjects. Because of this, pupils find tasks meaningful and they work hard to complete them. Lessons are very well organised and planned, allowing pupils to learn to use a range of techniques accurately and carefully. Teachers and pupils work with a good range of high quality media and materials. This includes well-chosen ICT programs that enable pupils to increase their understanding of colour, shape and pattern. For example, to create pictures of 'The Rainbow Fish' and design a page of non-fiction text about 'underneath', linked to earlier work in literacy. As a result of the good planning, well-organised lessons, high quality resources and teachers' high expectations, pupils enjoy their work in art and design. They concentrate, work hard and have equally high expectations of their own work.

116 Art is valued in the school. Displays of pupils' work are consistently of a high quality and make a positive contribution to their expectations and developing understanding of design. Pupils spend time looking carefully at the work of other artists – including those of other pupils. Co-ordination of the subject is good. The use of national guidance to steer planning, including regular assessment, has improved this aspect of the subject since the previous inspection.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

117 No observations of lessons in design and technology were possible during the inspection. A review of pupils' previous work, teachers' planning for the subject and discussions with the co-ordinator and with pupils aged seven, show that standards in the subject are above what is expected of pupils of this age. The standards achieved at the time of the previous inspection have been maintained despite a reduction in the time available for the subject because of the emphasis on literacy and numeracy.

118 Pupils' work shows they have a good understanding of the required range of skills. For example, they know how to join different materials in a variety of ways using methods such as glue, adhesive tape, staples, slotting and sewing. They achieve movement by, for instance, designing and making 'pop up' cards. They use malleable materials, such as clay and dough, imaginatively and understand how to shape such material by squeezing, pulling, pressing and indenting, and make marks using different tools. Scissors are used carefully and successfully and they also manage to apply glue in the right amount to ensure sticking the intended piece, without including unintended additions. In designing and making wire and foil sculptures, pupils understand they are working in three-dimensions and bend and form the basic shape well, whether it is abstract or realistic. All cover their sculptures carefully with coloured foil, attempting to replicate the style of the studied artist.

119 In talking about what they know, understand and can do in the subject, pupils in Year 2 readily recall previous work. They are very articulate and show much enthusiasm for the subject and demonstrate a willingness to extend their skills at home. While talking about current home projects,

two pupils decided they could combine the ‘workshop’ project of one of them with the ‘boat with moving sails’ project of the other to become a boatyard, if they added a blue towel crumpled, to act as water with waves. Similarly they described with equal enthusiasm the details of the stick, glove and finger puppets they had designed and made. The most difficult method of joining was considered to be sewing. Two boys from Year 2 reported that “the hard bit was the threading the needle, after that you just go up and down evenly. But then the hard bit is measuring it so you keep it even. But, did you know we use REAL needles not like in reception, when we used plastic ones!” They showed pride in their achievements and a desire to learn more.

120 The evidence available suggests that the quality of teaching is good. All teachers use the limited time allocated to the subject to teach it well, through clear planning, efficient use of resources and systematic development of skills. Assessment is good enough to ensure pupils make very good progress over the full range of activities, building on previous knowledge and skills. Very good links are made with other subjects such as art and design, science (using materials), mathematics (shapes and measures) and English (sequential ‘to do’ lists, and annotated drawings of designs).

121 The subject is well led and managed. The co-ordinator has enhanced the national guidance with particular reference to carefully structured, sequential teaching of the skills required to make things. She is clear about the strengths and weaknesses in the school’s development of the subject and, following further review, will adapt the current planning to incorporate some of the previously successful school practice. Resources are satisfactory, overall. They are well organised and well matched to the planned teaching and learning needs. The improvements proposed for the subject are well thought out and appropriate. These include a better range of materials and tools to help improve pupils’ making skills.

GEOGRAPHY

122 Standards are above those normally expected by the time pupils are seven. This shows that they have been maintained since the previous inspection, when geography was taught along with history in a two year topic cycle. The school has adopted and enhanced the latest curriculum guidance for geography, adding links to be made with other subjects, the use of available computer programs and including good opportunities to study the local area. During the inspection period, no geography lessons were seen as all classes were focusing on history topics this term. A careful scrutiny of teachers’ planning and pupils’ completed work confirms the above average standards.

123 By the age of seven, pupils accurately draw a map of their route from home to school, adding prominent features they pass along the way. All distinguish between natural and man-made features and show a good understanding of symbols used on Ordnance Survey maps. This helps them to define land use on either side of their route. When studying the geography of the imaginary Isle of Struay, all describe in detail the different buildings as well as modes of transport and the likely occupation of the inhabitants. In informal discussions with pupils, all show a secure knowledge of their local area, naming nearby towns, rivers and landmarks.

124 It is evident from the quality and range of pupils’ work that teaching and learning are good. Through their planning, teachers display a good knowledge of the subject and their detailed planning ensures that all the necessary basic skills are taught effectively. The strongest feature of teaching in geography, as in all other subjects throughout the school, is the links made with other subjects. Skills from English lessons, for example, are used when pupils have to write a postcard home from their visit to the Isle of Struay and number skills are employed as they conduct traffic surveys and make graphs of their results. Computers are also used extensively to teach mapping skills or create pictures of streets or towns. Teachers’ expectations of all pupils are high and as a result, pupils produce neatly presented work in their books. Good use is made of resources such as the Internet, videos, aerial photographs and the school’s own attractive environmental area to add further interest to lessons.

125 Due to the good quality of teaching, all pupils work productively, taking care to produce neat work. They particularly enjoy colouring in maps or pictures they have drawn of local geographical features. Pupils with special educational needs are well-supported in lessons and as a result, are able to make good progress. However, in most lessons, they are set the same tasks to do as other pupils. This means that they have to rely on a high level of teacher support to complete them. More able pupils are suitably challenged and go on to produce some very neat work, to a high standard.

126 The subject is very well managed by an experienced co-ordinator. Teachers' planning and the quality of teaching are routinely monitored and carefully evaluated. Procedures for assessing pupils' progress are good and the information is used well to plan future work, which effectively builds on pupils' knowledge. A full review of the school's provision for the subject is scheduled for the autumn term this year, when all aspects will be rigorously evaluated, to identify areas to further improve. All teachers show a very strong commitment to raise standards and the quality of learning, not only in geography but in all subjects. The capacity to succeed is clearly evident. Resources for geography are good. They would be even better if more computer programs were provided.

HISTORY

127 Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress throughout the school and by the time they are seven, attain standards above those expected for their age. This is similar to the findings of the previous inspection.

128 Pupils in Year 1 gain an understanding of the passage of time as they study how they themselves have changed and grown older. They look at their own family tree and follow their life from birth. As they look further in to the past, they compare old and new toys and learn about changes in the way children play. During the inspection, pupils in Year 2 were preparing for a forthcoming visit to the 17th century manor house 'Clarke Hall'. They are going to compare housing, food, clothing, health and entertainment then, with our present way of life now. Pupils think about what they know and give reasons for the change. For example, a group of pupils concluded that everyday appliances such as washing machines and dishwashers would not have been used in 'Clarke Hall' as electricity had not yet been invented. Literacy skills are developed well in history as pupils record in detail their knowledge and understanding and use correct historical language. The school's emphasis on discussion and investigation contribute well to pupils' interest in the subject.

129 The quality of teaching is good. Teachers have a good subject knowledge, plan carefully and use questioning effectively to develop factual knowledge and deepen pupils' understanding. Pupils are encouraged to undertake their own research, sometimes using the Internet. For example, they choose and research information using books and computers about a famous person from the past. This has a positive impact on what pupils know and understand. Pupils' attitudes are positive and they are eager to know more about the past. They listen carefully, respond enthusiastically to the teachers' questions and work at a good pace. Most of their work is neatly presented in their books, reflecting their interest in history.

130 Subject leadership is good. The teaching of history has been a major focus for evaluation this year. It has been decided to add further to the good level of resources, which exist for the subject in order to raise standards by stimulating pupils' interest even more in lessons. Teachers use both nationally agreed guidelines and the school's own scheme of work to ensure that all aspects of the subject are covered well. A detailed assessment of pupils' progress is made at the end of each section of work.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

131 Standards are well above those expected by the age of seven. Most pupils in Year 2 confidently use computers to support their work in most subjects. This is a marked improvement since the previous inspection when standards were judged to be average.

132 As a result of very good, detailed teaching, pupils gain an impressive range of ICT skills. For example, they load and open programs unaided by finding and clicking onto the appropriate icon, use a keyboard and mouse confidently, select and drag text, shapes or patterns, and arrange and edit their work on screen. They have a very good knowledge and understanding of different applications and uses of ICT. For instance, that computers can be used to learn about many things, that they can be used to draw and to write, and that programmable toys are controlled by a sequence of instructions. They know that information is stored in different ways, such as on discs called CD ROMs. They use computers confidently to support and enhance their learning in all subjects, particularly in literacy where they load fiction and non fiction books, used in lessons, into a computer from a CD ROM to practise and extend their skills in reading and writing. Similarly, they use tape recorders and tapes to practise and extend their listening skills.

133 Pupils' knowledge and use of correct terminology is impressive. They confidently and accurately use words such as 'font', 'bold', 'file', 'save', 'print', 'shift' and 'return'. Describing word processing, pupils in Year 2 said that "it was better than writing with a pencil because it was always neat and you can get rid of mistakes by pressing 'back space' and 'delete'. It would be much better for the school secretary, because she could go to 'file' and save the letter and also just press print for as many as she wanted without having to keep copying it by hand".

134 Pupils in Year 2, for example, used word processing to generate a page of non-fiction text about 'under the sea' and 'underground' from other sources. Here, they used the mouse competently to click on, highlight and drag text. This allowed them to select a range of ways to make their heading stand out; for example to centre, bold, change size, alter font, and change colour. They then competently began to add bullet points, sentences and labels.

135 In Year 1, pupils in both classes talk confidently about the different uses of computers and know key words such as 'symbol', 'icon' and 'click on'. They confidently use the left button on the mouse to enlarge and reduce circles when drawing fish with scales. They load the program and print and bin their attempts.

136 The quality of teaching is consistently very good. All teachers show a very good knowledge of the subject and high expectations. This leads to clear planning. The lesson objectives are understood by all of the pupils. Time is used well and pupils gain maximum benefit from each lesson. Lessons are conducted at a very good pace and pupils' achievements are high. Skills are taught thoroughly in a detailed and sequential way and are practised meaningfully. For example, using an illustration of the fish in the story they read in the literacy lesson, they learned to reduce and enlarge circles and to change colours in representing the scales of the fish. Pupils always see the point in the work set for them to do; they are eager to complete it and are generally very successful because the planning is detailed and thorough. As a consequence, most pupils enjoy this subject and say 'computers are good because I always find out how to do things and find out new information'. Very knowledgeable and effective support is given to pupils by a classroom assistant.

137 The subject is led and managed very well. Training for all staff has boosted confidence, knowledge and expertise. Accommodation does not allow for a computer suite; nevertheless, the best use is made of the available space. Computers networked in clusters of three in each classroom allow teachers to plan effectively to teach skills and allow pupils to use ICT to practise these skills in a meaningful way by linking it to learning in other subjects. Assessment procedures are good. This ensures that all pupils make a high rate of progress. All subjects, except history and geography, are very well resourced with ICT materials. These subjects are to be reviewed next year and the purchase

of appropriate ICT resources is part of the intended development. The school has very recently set up its own web site. ICT is used appropriately for school administration, including financial management and use of e-mail.

MUSIC

138 Standards in music have been maintained since the previous inspection and pupils achieve similar levels to those reached by seven-year-olds, nationally. Pupils, including those with special educational needs make satisfactory progress. Some with English as an additional language are not, at first, able to participate fully in the learning of words to new songs. Pupils clearly enjoy singing and making music and participate well in lessons. The quality of the singing is good. They sing sweetly and melodiously with clear diction and appropriate expression. By the age of seven, pupils have a good repertoire of known hymns and songs using actions to enhance the meaning of words. They are able to create rhythms and textures on a range of percussion instruments to accompany their singing.

139 Pupils listen to a range of music as they enter the hall for collective worship. They identify the title and composer with increasing confidence. Pupils use their imagination to explore and create musical sounds. For example, pupils in Year 1, working on a variety of high and low sounds composed a sequence of musical effects to accompany the story 'Peace at last'. This was recorded for other pupils to hear.

140 Music contributes well to developing pupils' literacy and numeracy skills as they read and learn the words of songs and record their own musical stories. Good links are made with design and technology when they design and make their own instruments. Pupils show very good attitudes to music. They are enthusiastic, keen to contribute and behave very well.

141 The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Lessons are presented confidently with a warm relaxed style. Teachers and other adults involved work effectively together. No individual instrumental teaching currently takes place.

142 The subject is effectively led. The co-ordinator monitors teachers' planning. The scheme of work follows nationally agreed guidance and is enhanced by the school's own scheme. There is a good selection of centrally restored resources and each class has a selection of percussion instruments within the classroom.

143 Links with the community are good. Parents offer their musical expertise for the benefit of the pupils. Pupils also enjoy visits from older pupils at the local junior school who perform their own work. Visiting musicians and participation in annual musical productions enrich pupils' musical experience, raising their knowledge and self-esteem. Music adds significantly to pupils' cultural development.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

144 There has been a major improvement in all aspects of physical education since the previous inspection, when many areas of concern were reported; the most significant of these being the unsatisfactory teaching in half the lessons, weaknesses in subject management and the unacceptable behaviour of a few pupils in lessons. The quality of teaching is now very good and all pupils enjoy their lessons, listening carefully to instructions and behaving in a mature and sensible way. Standards were in line with those expected in the previous inspection and as a result of the many improvements, they are now above those normally expected for seven-year-olds. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language make good progress. They build successfully on the rapid progress they have made in achieving the early learning goals in their physical development in the foundation stage.

145 During the inspection, dance and games were the only two elements of the curriculum inspected. However, a scrutiny of teachers' planning showed that gymnastics skills are properly covered at other times. All pupils know the reason for warming up before exercise and the effects on the different parts of their body. They demonstrate fluency and confidence in their movements, showing consideration for others at all times. All behave very well and none of the disruption to lessons reported previously was seen. There is good attention to health and safety procedures as all remove jewellery before the lesson and even the youngest children in the reception classes remember how they have been taught to lift out heavy pieces of apparatus safely.

146 By the age of seven, pupils demonstrate accurate throwing and catching skills, often doing this one-handed. In a Year 2 games session outdoors, for example, pupils practised conscientiously to improve their co-ordination by batting a ball with their hand in preparation for using a tennis racket. In an excellent dance session, Year 1 pupils very expressively followed music to act out the story of 'The Rainbow Fish'. Feelings of sadness were conveyed well with all paying attention to their facial expressions.

147 The quality of teaching is very good. In the lessons seen, teachers demonstrated a very good knowledge of the subject and taught the basic skills most effectively. They paid close attention to pupils' safety and their discipline and control in lessons were very good. Strong feature are the links made with other subject areas such as English and their support for pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language. In one session, for example, a pupil who has recently arrived at the school did not understand the instruction to hop, but was quickly encouraged to follow the example of other pupils by his teacher. Enjoyable and challenging activities help to maintain pupils' interest. The quality of learning is very good, with all pupils behaving very well and trying their hardest to improve their performance. None of the interruptions caused by difficult behaviour, reported previously, were seen. Occasionally, a visiting specialist sports coach from the local high school teaches pupils. All respond enthusiastically to this teacher and as a result, make good gains in their knowledge and skills. It was noticeable, for example, how much pupils' performance in throwing, catching and batting improved from the beginning to the end of the lesson preparing them for tennis.

148 Significant improvements have taken place in the management of physical education since the previous inspection and the subject is now very well led by a knowledgeable and enthusiastic co-ordinator. The quality of teaching and teachers' planning are carefully monitored and evaluated and procedures for assessing pupils' progress are good. There is a very strong commitment from all staff to improve standards and the latest curriculum guidance has been carefully adapted to fit in with the school's already comprehensive scheme of work. Resources for physical education are good with a suitable range of climbing frames and apparatus in the spacious hall. Outdoors, pupils are able to use the small field or adequately sized playground.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

149 The standards in religious education have improved since the previous inspection and attainment is well above the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils, including those with special educational needs make very good progress.

150 Pupils throughout the school begin to acquire a broad range of skills, knowledge and understanding of how religion affects people's lives. They are familiar with a range of stories from the Bible and know about the significant events in the life of Jesus. Pupils recognise that these stories often give us messages about how to behave. For example, after hearing the story of 'The Good Samaritan' pupils in Year 1 were able to reflect on the importance of friendship and the satisfaction of helping others. Pupils in Year 2 think carefully about relationships and how they feel about people close to them.

151 By the age of seven, pupils develop their knowledge and understanding of Christianity and become more aware of other faiths and ways of worshipping. Pupils study other major world religions in some detail and have a growing understanding of the differences and similarities between them. They are aware that each faith has its own leaders, festivals, special places of worship and holy writings. During the inspection, pupils in Year 1 listened carefully to the vicar of a neighbouring church as he explained his role in familiar events such as weddings and christenings. They watched in awe as he showed some of the beautiful garments he wore at particular times in church.

152 Work is effectively linked to other subjects. For example, pupils in Year 2 were able to practise their artistic skills when they drew Rangoli patterns and displayed them to welcome visitors, as people following the Hindu faith do. Collections of prayers written by pupils are displayed in the school library.

153 The quality of teaching is very good. Evidence from pupils' work shows a wide variety of experiences well-matched to their age. Pupils show good attitudes to learning. This is apparent in the quality and presentation of their written work. They are enthusiastic and behaviour in lessons is very good. All pupils are encouraged to have a positive view of themselves. They show increased confidence and self-esteem and are caring and patient with others. Regular assessments of pupils' learning are made to ensure pupils continue to make very good progress.

154 Subject leadership is good. Teachers' planning is monitored regularly and a portfolio of pupils' work kept. A programme of formal monitoring of the quality of teaching is planned when religious education is the subject identified for development in the school development plan. The policy and schemes of work have recently been updated. Resources are adequate and there is a readily accessible and growing range of artefacts relating to different religions.