

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **PONTEFRACT ROAD PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Cudworth, Barnsley

LEA area: Barnsley

Unique reference number: 106621

Headteacher: Mrs D Flanagan

Reporting inspector: Mrs E M D Mackie  
23482

Dates of inspection: 3 – 6 March 2003

Inspection number: 246612

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 and junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 – 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Pontefract Road  
Cudworth  
Barnsley

Postcode: S72 8AY

Telephone number: 01226 710396

Fax number: 01226 714720

Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr J Peach

Date of previous inspection: January 2001

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
23482	Mrs D Mackie Registered inspector	Science Art and design	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are the pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
11358	Mrs V Lamb Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? Parents' and carers' views of the school
32685	Mr S Collins Team inspector	Information and communication technology Design and technology Physical education	
16408	Mr C Rhodes Team inspector	English Religious education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
8420	Mrs V Roberts Team inspector	Mathematics Music Educational inclusion Special educational needs	
30745	Mrs P Thorpe Team inspector	Geography History Provision for children in the foundation stage.	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

The inspection contractor was:

Yorkshire Educational Services Ltd  
16 Burn Hall  
Darlington Road  
Croxdale  
DURHAM DH1 3SR

Tel/Fax: 0191 378 4031

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33 Kingsway  
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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Pontefract Road Primary School is located in the village of Cudworth, which is part of the larger conurbation of Barnsley. Most pupils come from the immediate locality of the school, where there is both rented and privately owned property. This is an average sized primary school, having 300 pupils on roll, of whom 52 attend part-time in the nursery. When they start in the nursery, a significant proportion of children have poorly developed speech, but in all other areas of development they have reached levels of attainment typical for their age. Thirty-five per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals; this is well above the national average. There are no pupils from ethnic minority heritages, nor do any pupils speak English as an additional language. Twenty-six per cent of pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs for learning, emotional or physical difficulties; this is above the national average. Five pupils have statements of special educational need. The school is part of a group of schools that benefit, through involvement with a local secondary school, from being in an Education Action Zone.

### HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an effective and improving school with the potential for continued improvement under the outstanding leadership of the headteacher, who is supported by a strong senior management team. Standards are rising and are now in line with national expectations in English and most other subjects by the end of Year 6. There is still some way to go, however, with mathematics and science by the end of Year 6. The overall quality of teaching is good, and teachers manage the pupils very well. Relationships in the school are very good and pupils behave well and enjoy coming to school. The governors manage the school well. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

#### What the school does well

- The headteacher provides exceptional leadership for the school.
- Standards in art and design are above national expectations by the end of Years 2 and 6. In religious education, they are above the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus by the end of Year 6.
- The overall quality of teaching is good. It is very good in the nursery and the reception class.
- Relationships in the school are very good.
- The pupils behave well because of the school's good provision for their personal development.
- The school monitors its work regularly and identifies sensible priorities for improvement that are dealt with rigorously.

#### What could be improved

- Pupils' attainment is not high enough in mathematics and science by the end of Year 6.
- Pupils do not express themselves well enough orally and find it difficult to explain clearly what they know and can do.
- Attendance is unsatisfactory, and is below the national average.

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

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

The school has made good improvement since the last inspection in January 2001. The key issues identified then have been dealt with robustly and the school has the good capacity for further improvement. The school development plan is a useful document that provides a very good structure to guide the work of teachers and governors. Standards in writing and information and

communication technology (ICT) are now in line with national expectations by the end of Year 6, and the teaching and learning of ICT are now soundly managed. Throughout the curriculum, teachers ensure that specific subject vocabulary is taught effectively, but the pupils' ability to answer questions clearly is still not good enough. The quality of teaching has improved and is now good overall. Teachers provide stimulating activities and ensure that work is matched well to pupils' needs in most lessons.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	Compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	E	D	C	B
mathematics	E*	E	D	C
science	E*	E	E	E

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

Over the past five years, the overall trend in the school's test results for pupils in Year 6 has been upwards and in line with the national trend. The school's results in 2000 were low in English and in the lowest five per cent nationally in mathematics and science but are now much improved in English and mathematics because of the improved quality of the teaching and the school's concerted drive to raise standards. Standards in science are rising slowly. Targets for English and mathematics, set with the Local Education Authority, were exceeded in 2002 and the school is working hard to meet challenging targets for 2003. By the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations in English. It is below national expectations in mathematics and science. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve satisfactorily. (Achievement refers to the progress that pupils make over time in relation to their starting point.)

In the 2002 national tests and assessments at the end of Year 2, pupils' results were in line with the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. Compared with those of similar schools, results were above average in reading and writing and well above average in mathematics. Standards by the end of Year 2 are now in line with national expectations in English, mathematics and science. The trend has been upward in all three areas of learning over the past five years.

In religious education, pupils in Year 6 exceed the expectations outlined in the locally agreed syllabus; standards are in line with the expectations for pupils in Year 2. In art and design, pupils' attainment is above national expectations in Year 2 and Year 6. In design and technology, geography, history, ICT and physical education, standards are in line with national expectations throughout the school. No judgement is given for music as so little was seen or heard.

In the nursery and the reception class, children make good progress and reach the early learning goals in all areas - personal, social and emotional, communication; language and literacy; mathematical development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical development; and creative development. A significant number of children exceed the goals, particularly in communication, language and literacy.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils enjoy school and want to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of	Good. Because pupils behave well, teachers are able to get on with

classrooms	lessons uninterrupted.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils respect the feelings of other people and become increasingly responsible and mature. Relationships are very good
Attendance	Unsatisfactory. The school's procedures for improving attendance need to be reviewed.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Very good	Good	Good

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

Overall, the quality of the teaching is good, and there was very little unsatisfactory teaching during the inspection. The very good teaching in nursery and the reception class reflects the teachers' very good understanding of the needs of young children. There was some excellent and very good teaching in Years 3 to 6. Teachers work well together as a team so that there are consistent ways of teaching throughout the school. The quality of teachers' planning and preparation is good and teachers set challenging tasks for all pupils in most lessons. As a result, pupils acquire skills, knowledge and understanding at a sound rate overall. Literacy and numeracy are taught well. Most teachers ensure that pupils present their work well, but presentation at the end of Year 2 is often untidy. Relationships are very good. Teachers ensure that pupils with special educational needs are well supported with carefully organised work based on their individual education plans. Learning support assistants and nursery nurses play a significant role in the teaching programme as they work with groups of pupils.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory overall and good for the nursery and reception classes. There are few extra-curricular activities and the range is too limited.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Teachers, nursery nurses and learning support assistants follow pupils' individual education plans well.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. Provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory. It is good for their moral and social development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares well for its pupils. There are good procedures for child protection. Procedures for monitoring pupils' academic and personal development are good.

The school works hard to forge positive relationships with parents, and relationships between school and home have improved over the past few years. Parents are encouraged to participate in school through helping in class and supporting school outings. The quality of information provided for parents, particularly about their children's progress, is good.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides excellent educational direction and she is well supported by the senior management team. Overall, the leadership and management of the school is very good.



How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	They fulfil their responsibilities well. All statutory requirements are met. Governors manage the school well through a system of committees. The chair of governors has steered the school well through difficult times.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. Systematic development is maintained because the school monitors its work thoroughly and takes effective action to overcome weaknesses and achieve targets.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Finances are used effectively to raise standards and provide a welcoming and secure environment. In their spending decisions, governors consider 'best value' in terms of raising standards and providing properly for pupils' welfare.

There is an adequate number of suitably qualified and experienced teachers and support staff. Accommodation and outdoor provision are satisfactory, although the school field is some distance away. Most learning resources are adequate and they are well organised and stored. Resources are obtained at the most competitive prices and the school uses them in the best possible way to achieve its aims.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children like school.</li> <li>• Parents feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem</li> <li>• The pupils are expected to work hard and achieve their best</li> <li>• The teaching is good.</li> <li>• Pupils become increasingly mature and responsible</li> <li>• The leadership and management are good</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Activities outside lessons.</li> <li>• The amount of homework set</li> <li>• Information on how their children are getting on</li> <li>• The school to work more closely with parents</li> </ul>

Only a small percentage of parents responded to the questionnaire. The inspectors agree with their positive views of the school. Relationships between school and home are improving. The school has been through difficult times and many parents say that they now know much more about how the school operates. Inspectors agree that the school is very approachable, and there are plenty of opportunities for parents to enquire about their children's progress if they have concerns. Regular newsletters, open evenings and end-of-year reports provide good levels of information for parents. Teachers' records show that it is set and checked regularly, and a guide on the school's approach to homework has been distributed to parents within the last year. Reading diaries, however, are not used well enough in Years 1 and 2. The school organises interesting visits, visitors and a small number of clubs, but the range is too limited. Over the past few years, the teachers have rightly expended their energies on raising pupils' academic achievement, but the school is now considering extending the range of extra-curricular activities.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. There has been good improvement since the last inspection. Throughout the Foundation Stage children make good progress and most reach the expected levels of attainment by the time they leave the reception class. A good number of children progress beyond the nationally agreed levels in reading and writing. Children's speech develops well because of the emphasis on good communication and high levels of interaction with staff throughout the school day. Despite this very good support, a significant proportion of pupils. Children make this progress because of the very effective leadership of the co-ordinator for the Foundation Stage and the very good teaching.

2. The achievement over the years of the pupils now in Year 6 has been satisfactory overall and very good in English. Standards in English are now in line with national expectations. Pupils do not achieve appropriate standards in speaking, but they listen well. Many pupils are unable to formulate questions and explain their answers during discussion periods. Standards in reading are satisfactory, and most pupils are confident in exploring non-fiction books and looking for information. The rigorous teaching of spelling and regular practice in basic grammar help pupils to attain in line with national expectations in writing. They write for a satisfactory range of purposes in English lessons, and there are enough opportunities for them to develop their writing in other subjects. Standards are below national expectations in mathematics and science. Pupils have difficulty in expressing their ideas and recording their findings in these subjects, and numeracy lessons are often too long. In science, although standards are below average, pupils are progressing faster and they gain knowledge and understanding at a better rate because of the school's increasingly practical approach.

3. By the end of Year 2, standards in English are in line with national expectations in listening, reading and writing but they are below national expectations in speaking. The school emphasises the step-by-step teaching and learning of letter sounds and patterns so that pupils make satisfactory gains in reading, writing and spelling. Pupils enjoy reading and experience a wide range of texts so that they practise their skills in all areas of the curriculum. Most pupils use capital letters and full stops confidently to demarcate sentences and develop satisfactory levels of writing to express ideas or show a sense of narrative. However, pupils' work is often poorly presented. In mathematics, pupils acquire a range of strategies to answer brisk questions in mental arithmetic sessions. They develop an increasing awareness of the use of mathematics in everyday life; for example in weighing, measuring and shopping. In science, practical investigations help pupils to gain skills of scientific enquiry and a deeper understanding of life processes and living things, materials and their properties and physical processes.

4. In Year 2 and Year 6, pupils are on course to achieve standards expected for their age in ICT. In the classrooms, although teachers are gradually increasing the opportunities for pupils to use and enhance their skills in ICT, computers are still not used enough; this inhibits opportunities for pupils' faster progress in the subject. In religious education, pupils in Year 6 exceed the expectations outlined in the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils gain appropriate knowledge of a range of faiths. Standards in art and design are above national expectations in Years 2 and 6. No judgement is given for music, but in design and technology, geography, history and physical education, standards are broadly in line with national expectations in Years 2 and 6.

5. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well so that they make good progress in relation to the individual targets set for them. Pupils who are gifted or talented achieve soundly when account is taken of their higher starting points. The school identifies and supports these pupils appropriately.

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

6. The attitudes and behaviour of pupils in Years 1 to 6 have improved since the last inspection and are now good, and sometimes very good, both in and out of class. Pupils' good attitudes have a positive impact on their personal development and learning. There is a purposeful working atmosphere in the school, as pupils understand and follow the firm and fair school rules. No incidents of bullying were observed or reported during the inspection. Clear parameters for behaviour are shared with parents, and pupils who overstep the mark are brought back in line through appropriate help and fair sanctions. The relatively few exclusions were dealt with appropriately. Pupils care for the school and treat the accommodation and resources with respect.

7. Children in the nursery and the reception class develop well personally and socially. They soon settle into class routines and enjoy coming to school. They learn to work together, share equipment and form good relationships with staff and other children. Children know what is expected of them and behave well.

8. The school demonstrates a firm commitment to the inclusion and integration of all pupils. Pupils with special educational needs join in activities and enjoy lessons because of the support given to ensure that they participate fully. The few pupils who are taken out of classes for extra reading practice are attentive, well engaged and keen to do well. Because the staff give good support, promote positive attitudes and look for good behaviour, which is rewarded regularly, pupils with behavioural problems respond well. There is an emphasis on good behaviour rather than a preoccupation with wrongdoing.

9. Relationships between pupils and between pupils and staff are very good. They improve the quality of education because pupils are always eager to please and want to do well. Pupils are polite and welcoming. They understand the effects of their actions on others, show respect for other people's feelings and work well together. The school's well-planned provision for pupils' personal, social and health education ensures that difficult issues are discussed in class, aspects of social concern both in and out of school are aired and responsibilities are emphasised. Pupils act responsibly and carry out class duties willingly, and older pupils take seriously their more challenging responsibilities, such as listening to younger pupils read.

10. Pupils' attendance is below average compared with that of other primary schools nationally. Despite the school's regular efforts to get parents always to inform the school of the reasons for their children's absence, some do not, and this contributes to a rate of unauthorised absence that is above the national average. The vast majority of parents ensure that their children get to school on time, but a few children are frequently late.

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

11. Teachers have worked hard since the last inspection to find ways of engaging pupils' interest and inspiring them to want to learn. The quality of teaching and learning has risen since the last inspection as teachers have expected more from the pupils. Teachers work hard, plan and prepare work thoroughly and work together as a team to ensure that every day, the pupils go home knowing more than they did when they arrived. Much of the inspiration for the improvement in the quality of teaching comes from the headteacher, who is demanding of teachers, but who nurtures and supports them so that their confidence and professional expertise shine in the classrooms in most lessons. Overall, the teaching is now good.

12. The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is very good and gives the children a very positive start to their schooling. Staff put appropriate emphasis on language skills, particularly speech, and on early mathematical skills. The teachers and nursery nurses work well together in the planning and teaching of activities. Children are regularly encouraged to join in conversations and to respond to appropriate questions. These activities build up confidence and encourage pupils

to express their ideas. Progress is checked regularly and work is planned to meet the needs of all the children, including those with special educational needs.

13. In Years 1 and 2 the overall quality of teaching is good. It was good in more than half of the lessons seen. Examination of pupils' past work shows that teachers have planned and taught the subjects of the National Curriculum thoroughly. There has not been enough attention to the presentation of pupils' work in Year 2, however. In Years 3 to 6, the quality of the teaching varied from excellent to unsatisfactory. Overall, it was good. The amount of unsatisfactory teaching was very small. The main drawbacks to pupils' learning were the over-long explanations, slow pace and consequent lack of pupils' interest. The very good and excellent teaching was characterised by the teachers' secure subject knowledge and the way teachers maintained pupils' interest at a high level. The lessons proceeded at a brisk pace, pupils contributed effectively to the general pot of knowledge and time flew by.

14. The teaching of English is good overall. Teachers follow national guidelines for planning the daily literacy and numeracy lessons. The development of pupils' speaking and listening is a priority for the school. Because teachers manage the pupils very well in most lessons, pupils now listen much better than they did at the time of the last inspection. However, teachers are not doing as much as they could to promote better speech from the pupils. Some teachers accept short, poorly formed answers from pupils and do not always encourage them to extend their contributions so that the meaning is clear. Specific subject vocabulary is promoted well; for example, when pupils prepare a glossary of words for each topic in science. Teachers usually take care to ask girls questions – the girls' attainment has lagged behind that of the boys. This is an important factor in improving girls' attainment, especially in classes where there are many more boys than girls.

15. Some numeracy lessons are too long, but overall the teaching of mathematics is good. Teachers sometimes stretch out the first part of lessons and talk for too long so that pupils become restless and do not make as much progress as they could. However, in most lessons, teachers encourage pupils to sharpen up their knowledge in brisk periods of mental arithmetic and get pupils to explain their methods of solving problems. In a good lesson in Year 1, pupils were excited to find that the size of the number they needed decreased as they started at one and added a number to make ten. The teacher encouraged pupils to find this out for themselves. As a result, pupils made good progress, had fun and learnt a fact that will serve them well.

16. In science, the quality of teaching is variable, but it is satisfactory overall. There was very good teaching in Year 4, when pupils investigated capillary action. Pupils were keen and involved as they observed how colour reached the petals and leaves of plants that were put into pots of food colouring. The teaching was good in Year 6 as pupils explored food chains. Teachers worked as a team to guide pupils, grouped by ability, to understand that the chain always begins with a plant. Pupils did not make such good progress in all science lessons, however. Occasionally, the teaching was slow, teaching points were not thoroughly explored and reinforced and pupils were not given enough responsibility for organising their own work. In ICT, the teaching is good. Teachers have undergone the nationally recommended course of training. They are increasingly confident in teaching the skills outlined in the curriculum, but these skills are not integrated well enough into the teaching of other subjects.

17. The teaching is good in art and design and design and technology, which are often linked. Pupils learn at a good rate as they draw designs and decorate finished products. In both of these subjects, teachers are more confident because the co-ordinators have ensured that the schemes of work are clear and there are enough materials for pupils to explore and use imaginatively. In religious education, the teaching is good throughout the school, and this leads to pupils' good attainment in Year 6. The teaching is also good in physical education, where, in the best lessons, teachers' very good management of the pupils leads to well-organised and active lessons. In geography and history, the teaching is satisfactory. The school's appropriate emphasis on the teaching of English, mathematics and ICT has meant that professional development and guidance in other subjects have not been a priority over the past few years. As a result, teachers are not as up-to-date with training as they wish to be. The headteacher has plans in hand to remedy this.

18. A major factor of the best lessons is the good level of independence promoted by the teachers. In Year 4, pupils are expected to organise their work and set it out well. Pupils do not learn as well when teachers get them to complete too many copied worksheets; for example in science. This hinders opportunities for pupils to explore ways of sorting out their thoughts; for example, by creating tables, graphs and text. Because a significant proportion of pupils need support to improve their speech, it is essential that the teachers speak clearly and precisely. When they do this, it has a positive impact on pupils' answers to questions. Sometimes, when teachers take less care, opportunities are lost to enhance pupils' speech.

19. Teachers contribute well to the writing of clear and helpful individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs. Explicit targets for pupils whose behaviour is of concern are clearly identified and shared so that they are readily achieved. Where targets are set for groups of pupils, they are sometimes too broad and the progress of individuals within the groups is difficult to measure. Whilst there is good organisation for different groups, occasionally teachers do not sufficiently consider how well pupils can cope with worksheets used in class. Teachers do not always ensure that all higher-attaining pupils are challenged, though particularly gifted and talented pupils are taught well because of the school's careful provision. When pupils have significant physical and communication difficulties, teaching and special support are of high quality so that pupils make good progress.

20. Teachers make good use of careful assessments of pupils' attainment and progress in English, mathematics and science and information feeds well into the long and shorter-term planning. Lesson plans nearly always include tasks that are well matched to the differing needs of pupils in the class or group. In English and mathematics, teachers group pupils into three sets according to their ability and prepare work at three levels within these sets, so providing a close match of work to pupils' needs. Pupils are keen to succeed in reaching targets set by teachers to help them to make good progress. Teachers interact well with pupils in lessons and intervene skilfully to elicit pupils' understanding and extend their learning. The marking of pupils' work is variable; it is best when pupils are not only informed about how well they have done but also guided towards better achievement.

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

21. The curriculum is broad, balanced and relevant, and gives pupils a suitable range of interesting learning opportunities. This is an improvement since the previous inspection, when not enough emphasis was given to ICT. The Foundation Stage curriculum has been introduced very effectively into the nursery and reception class. The curriculum for Years 1 to 6 complies with statutory requirements, and reflects the aims and objectives of the school. The time allocated for most subjects is close to the national average. The school uses many of the basic principles of the National Literacy and National Numeracy Strategies successfully, but mathematics lessons in Years 3 to 6 are longer than recommended. The planned work in some lessons is spread out too much, and the pace of learning is not brisk enough. The same is true of English lessons in which the focus is on longer pieces of writing. However, the overall effective implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies is one of the main reasons that standards have risen steadily over the past three years, especially in Years 3 to 6.

22. Curricular provision is good for children in the Foundation Stage. All aspects of the nationally recognised curriculum are planned and taught effectively. Children gain appropriate skills that make a firm base for later work in the National Curriculum and religious education.

23. The subject curricula are well planned, and are firmly based on schemes of work for all areas of the National Curriculum and the local agreed syllabus for religious education. The school follows the guidance on subject planning given by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. The physical education curriculum is limited because the sports field is some distance from the school.

There is an appropriate programme for pupils' personal development. Aspects of citizenship, healthy living, sex and relationships education, and an awareness of the dangers of drug and alcohol abuse are taught in a meaningful way in stages that are appropriate to the ages of the pupils. Effective links are made between subjects, and pupils' skills in literacy and numeracy are used successfully to raise standards; for example, the design and technology curriculum draws on pupils' mathematical skills for accurate measurement.

24. The curriculum is well organised. Extra staff have been employed so that pupils in Years 5 and 6 can be divided into three groups or sets for their literacy and numeracy lessons. This works well because each set is subdivided into ability groups, and pupils are given work that is closely matched to their ability. This enables teachers to extend the literacy and numeracy skills of higher-attaining pupils, and to provide suitably challenging work for pupils with special educational needs. The work of younger higher-attaining pupils is organised so that it fits in with that of older pupils; for example, higher-attaining pupils in Year 1 and Year 4 are taught with older classes, or are given an opportunity to work as a group with one of the extra teachers - individually, in groups or in older classes to ensure that their particular needs are met. For example, the school has engaged support for pupils gifted in mathematics. The class teachers plan the work in this case so that it forms part of the overall provision, and ensure that all pupils are fully included in the main teaching for the week. Many examples were seen, in geography for example, in which the written tasks were carefully matched to pupils' different levels of ability rather than being the same for the whole class. This enables pupils of all abilities to make greater progress.

25. The school offers an appropriate range of opportunities for visits to places of educational or cultural importance. For example, pupils in Year 6, make very good use of their residential visit to Norfolk. The work of all pupils benefited from an artist in residence and from the visit of an author. The range of after-school opportunities is less than is normally seen in schools of this size, and there are no activities at lunchtimes. Many of the parents who completed the questionnaire indicated that they would like to see this aspect of the school's provision extended. The school reports that many pupils seem unwilling to make a long-term commitment to a particular activity. Current opportunities are limited to boys' and girls' football, drama in the autumn term and athletics in the summer.

26. Links with the local community are satisfactory. The parish priest is a regular and welcome visitor. The school has good links with other local primary and secondary schools. There is a particularly strong link with the secondary school to which most pupils transfer, which includes 'taster' visits in the autumn term before families make their choice of their preferred school. The school welcomes students from Sheffield University.

27. The overall provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development has improved since the last inspection and is now good.

28. The school's provision for spiritual development is satisfactory. Religious education lessons and assemblies help pupils to understand their own faith and the beliefs of others. Exploring the significance and the meaning of religious traditions provides opportunities for pupils to reflect on their own personal values and beliefs, and enables them to identify the similarities and differences between their own and the faiths of others. For example, pupils in Year 6 showed a good understanding of the customs of Lent and how they related to them, they then looked at how Lent is observed in France and Mexico. Some lessons give pupils special moments of wonder; for example, children in the reception class greeted the successful tossing of a pancake with gasps of amazement. Pupils are encouraged to recognise and celebrate effort and achievement both by themselves and others.

29. There is good provision for the moral development of pupils. This is closely linked to the school's caring ethos. When disputes occur between pupils they respond well; they are given a chance to ponder on the situation and are encouraged to see it from others' points of view. Most pupils are well behaved, understand right from wrong and show concern for others. School rules are displayed in several places and are most effective where they emphasise what pupils 'should

do' to create a well disciplined, ordered school. The school has plans to establish a school council to give pupils more opportunities to express their views and exercise their responsibilities for others. The various merit and award systems in use in the school are valued by the pupils and consistently reinforce the school's values and beliefs.

30. The school develops pupils' social awareness in a variety of ways and this provision is good. Pupils are treated in a warm and friendly manner by all staff and this has a positive effect on their relationships with others. Younger pupils take on small tasks in the classroom, while older pupils have responsibilities around the school. The policy for personal, social and health education does much to develop pupils' awareness and self-image through 'circle time' - time when relationships and personal problems can be discussed in a supportive, trusting atmosphere. Pupils work well together in lessons and have ample opportunities to talk to each other and play co-operatively at playtime and at lunch time. Visits enable pupils to practise their social skills in a different setting.

31. The school's provision for cultural development is satisfactory. Visits locally, as part of their geography work, help pupils to understand their local culture and traditions. Visits to museums show pupils how communities and other cultures have developed both locally and in other countries. In their art and design lessons pupils are introduced to the work of famous artists and benefit greatly from an artist working with them in school. As part of their work in history, older pupils explore the Roman, Ancient Egyptian and Tudor periods through music, drama and role-play, organised through the Performing Arts and Development Service. Different cultures and faiths are studied in other areas of the curriculum such as geography, history and religious education, and in the celebration of festivals such as the Hindu festival of Divali. Pupils listen to a range of stories from other cultures and the school now has a selection of multicultural books and artefacts. The school is working hard to prepare pupils for living in a multicultural society and is aware of the need to develop this area of the curriculum further.

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

32. The school cares for its pupils well. Staff and governors have developed good procedures for pupils' protection, health and safety. Staff maintain very good relationships with pupils and pupils confidently approach them for help and advice. Parents are satisfied that their children like school and that good support is provided to meet their needs. Good procedures are in place for child protection. The school follows locally agreed guidelines and staff know how to report any concerns about a child's welfare. The school has made good arrangements to meet health and safety obligations. Accidents and illness are handled with care and consideration and the school is currently ensuring, through staff training, that qualified staff are always available to respond quickly to incidents. The school is careful to train staff to support pupils with specific needs and to inform parents of anything that may need further attention.

33. Procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance and punctuality are satisfactory. The school works closely with parents and the educational welfare service to support pupils whose attendance is erratic or infrequent. The school seeks to promote good attendance by informing parents of what is expected and by following up absences, particularly those where no explanation is received from parents. However, there is no reward for pupils who achieve very high rates of attendance, or for those who improve their attendance. Registration is conducted efficiently at the beginning of each session, but routines for the completion of registers, including the recording of late arrivals, need to be standardised, and contact addresses should be included in all class registers.

34. Good procedures have been established for monitoring and promoting high standards of behaviour. Staff provide very good role models and show pupils how to get along together. Pupils know what is expected of them and are pleased when they are praised. A small number of pupils have difficulty in behaving properly but the school has appropriate procedures to manage incidents of poor behaviour. No instances of bullying were seen. There is a limited range of activities and space available for pupils during break and lunchtime, especially for older pupils who prefer quiet games. This reduces the potential for pupils' personal development. The vast majority of parents are satisfied that behaviour is well managed and that any concerns are taken seriously and quickly

resolved.

35. Pupils' personal development is generally well promoted in school through very positive relationships. Events such as 'celebration' assemblies highlight and reward pupils' significant achievements. Opportunities for pupils to help around the school and in class support their sense of achievement and self-worth. The school takes part in fund-raising events. These help pupils to develop responsible attitudes towards the needs of others. Significant aspects of pupils' personal development, such as their attitudes to their lessons, their behaviour and their interactions with others, are included in reports for parents. This is a good way of acknowledging pupils' good points and boosting their self-esteem. Parents are satisfied that the school expects their children to work hard and achieve their best.

36. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good, and the school employs an effective range of measures to ensure that all groups of pupils are socially and academically included. The well-directed support for booster groups (groups of lower-attaining pupils who are given extra lessons before taking national tests) is particularly effective and contributes well to the school's drive to raise standards. Support staff work closely with teachers and the good quality of their work helps pupils to make good progress. The school's co-ordinator for special educational needs meets regularly with the support team to discuss pupils' progress, so that work is set for pupils to learn in a step-by-step way, building securely on earlier learning. The school's register of special educational needs is monitored and updated regularly and the outcomes of regular reviews ensure that appropriate support is given and challenging targets are set for pupils. Targets for pupils with statements of special educational needs are evaluated regularly. The school has recently initiated a plan to ensure that gifted and talented pupils are identified and suitably challenged; current provision is variable, depending on the resources available. Good use is being made of school's connection with the Education Action Zone to improve provision for higher attaining, gifted and talented pupils.

37. Well-organised assessment procedures are in place for the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. In other subjects, they are of variable quality, but are being developed at a good pace to match each stage of the curricula. Analysis of assessments in the core subjects has enabled the school to target areas for development and improve progress and attainment. Teachers use their assessments of pupils' progress to help them to plan lessons well. They are using assessments increasingly to ensure that work is properly matched to pupils' needs when they are taught in groups by ability. The monitoring of and provision for pupils with special educational needs and those with physical disabilities are good. Pupils with these needs are identified early, and they are monitored carefully and effectively. Regular contact is maintained between the school's co-ordinator for special educational needs and the teachers to ensure the effectiveness of specific learning programmes. These are used effectively to guide provision and the learning of specific pupils.

38. Teachers' marking of pupils' work is regular and often detailed and they provide constructive and positive comments and ask questions that stimulate pupils' thinking. The whole staff is involved in determining the targets for the school. These targets are then translated into year and class targets, which are in turn translated into targets for individual pupils. Negotiated targets, both academic and personal, are set regularly for pupils and these are used and known by the pupils. There has been good improvement in assessment arrangements and in the use of assessments since the last inspection.

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

39. Overall, parents appreciate the work of the school and the opportunities it offers them to be actively involved. They generally support staff well. In particular, they recognise the significant improvements made in recent years. The school aims to have good relations with parents based on mutual respect. It has helped parents to become actively involved in many aspects of their children's education. Parents hold the school in high esteem and have few concerns. They are



particularly pleased that the teachers expect children to work hard, achieve their best and make good progress. Parents feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions and problems and are satisfied that their children like school. Although some parents feel that it is more regular now, a number of parents do not feel that the school sets the right amount of homework, and a significant number of parents are dissatisfied with the range of activities provided outside lessons.

40. The school provides parents with information of good quality and often seeks their views on new developments. The school's prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents provide a clear outline of the attitudes and values that the school wishes to promote. Parents are encouraged to know more about the work of the governing body, and minutes of the governors' meetings are displayed near the school entrance. Teachers talk to parents at open evenings, so that information is shared between school and home. Annual written reports give parents a suitably detailed picture of their children's personal development and academic progress, and there is an opportunity for parents to discuss these reports with the teachers. Staff have very good relationships with parents, who value the support their children receive.

41. Parents are given a good range of opportunities to keep in touch with how their children are progressing at school. Teachers set challenging targets, shared with all parents, for all pupils, and older pupils help to set their own targets. There is an 'open door' policy, so that parents can come into school at any time to ask questions. Teachers, including the headteacher, are available to speak to parents informally on a day-to-day basis, or more formally by appointment. The school sends out newsletters and frequent updates on activities and special events, and parents are satisfied that they receive notice of events in time to make arrangements to attend. Parents of pupils with special educational needs attend reviews, are involved in setting targets for their children to progress as well as possible and are well informed about the work their children do.

42. The school is committed to working closely with parents and provides a range of opportunities for them to work more closely with staff. Most parents ensure that their children attend school regularly and punctually. A small group of committed parents attend regular meetings to organise ways in which they can work together for the good of the school; all parents are invited to these meetings, but very few attend. However, many rally round and make very good contributions to fund-raising and providing practical help with events. Many parents and friends attend school concerts and sports days and take part in charity work, such as the recent 'sponsored spell'. A few parents help teachers in the classrooms. In general, parents support their children with homework, in particular by listening to them read. Teachers keep regular records of the homework set and returned, and this seems to be satisfactory, but reading diaries are used inconsistently for the younger pupils. Many parents have shown their commitment to supporting their children with revision for national tests by buying booklets that will help them to do this.

43. Several parents of older pupils attend meetings to find out about the school's programme for sex and drugs education, and all parents support this aspect of the school's work by allowing their children to take part. Support for some extra-curricular clubs was insufficient to enable them to continue; for example, a club to promote literacy skills. A minority of parents bring their children to school late or keep them away without good reason. Some parents do not let the school know the reasons for their children's absences, even when they return. When asked individually to account for absences, parents are generally willing to respond.

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

44. The headteacher demonstrates clear vision in her leadership of the school. She is unequivocal in her firm commitment to raising standards and enriching pupils' lives. Because of her firm but encouraging style, pupils and staff follow her lead, confident that they are on the right path. The senior management team works very well with the headteacher to drive developments through and keep up the momentum of improvement. Subject co-ordinators know what is expected

of them and they support the headteacher well. Some of them are recently appointed, but their responsibilities are made clear from the start. They are empowered but accountable, so that change is being managed effectively. Staff work effectively together as a well-motivated team, seeking and implementing ways of helping pupils to make better progress and achieve their potential.

45. The governing body fulfils its role well, and all statutory requirements are met. The chair of governors has steered the work of the governing body with a steady hand through difficult times when the school was judged to need special measures for it to improve. With a greater understanding of their roles and responsibilities, governors have become increasingly involved in the work of the school. They carry out their work through committees which delve into aspects of school life, looking to see where improvements can be made, and then working with staff to effect change. The school has been well supported by the Local Education Authority, and over the past two years its capacity to improve its standards and provision has strengthened. This capacity is now good, and the school is working well towards targets set with the Local Education Authority. These targets are becoming increasingly realistic because they are based on sound information from careful and accurate assessments of pupils' attainment and progress. In the past, there were fewer records on which to base predictions.

46. The school development plan is a well-founded and useful document, resulting from the honest and open evaluation of the school's needs. It is clearly focused on raising standards of teaching and learning, leading to pupils' better achievement. Rigorous analysis of pupils' performance in national tests enables the school to pinpoint where improvements need to be made to raise standards. In English, this has worked well, and in mathematics, though results were disappointing last year, there has been a gradual improvement over the last few years. The plan links proposed improvements to staff training and the school budget. Because all staff are involved in the formulation of the plan, it is well understood and followed. Throughout the year, the staff and governors evaluate the work of the school and consider the value for money spent, based on improvements in pupils' academic performance, personal development and general welfare. Subject co-ordinators are accountable to governors for the improvements they are expected to bring about, and all teachers are now included in the well-established process of performance management. Teachers new to the school are well advised and supported so that they quickly integrate into the school's ways of teaching. The headteacher and senior teachers monitor lessons in English, mathematics and science to ensure that agreed ways of working are practised and that pupils are making at least sound progress. A rolling programme is in hand for monitoring other subjects. Because professional training is closely linked to the school's needs, it is effective in raising standards. For example, well-organised training has led to improvements in pupils' performance in ICT. There is still some way to go in ensuring that computers are used regularly in all classrooms, but teachers and pupils use computers much more confidently than at the time of the last inspection.

47. Financial planning is good. The chair of the finance committee has a good understanding of the financial affairs of the school, and the governors manage the school's monetary resources well. The agreed budget reflects priorities in the school's development plan, and governors look ahead and plan strategically to ensure proper provision for the pupils. The finance committee monitors progress during the financial year, and is well informed by the headteacher. The use of any carry-forward funding is well planned and documented. Specific grants for aspects such as special educational needs and staff training are used appropriately. The headteacher and the school secretary manage the day-to-day administration of the budget efficiently and make good use of the school's computer system to support financial planning. Office routines are well organised and appropriate financial controls are in place. Recommendations in the last auditor's report have been fully dealt with. There are good systems to ensure that secretarial staff deal efficiently with day-to-day administration so that teachers are not disturbed unnecessarily in the classrooms.

48. There is an adequate number of appropriately trained and experienced teachers and support staff to meet the demands of the curriculum. Learning support assistants make a major contribution to pupils' learning, but they could be better deployed during the initial part of lessons; for

example, to assess how pupils are responding to the teacher's questions or to support the teacher in showing visual aids to stimulate the pupils' interest. The co-ordinator for special educational needs is relatively new to the post but has successfully revised the system for the identification and the recording of targets and needs. With sustained support from the headteacher, provision has improved as a result of well-focused action. The recent policy for special educational needs is very good and gives accessible information to all relevant parties in and out of the school. It presents a very positive picture of action for pupils with varying needs and is the starting point for good provision for special educational needs and for good inclusive practice.

49. There are enough resources for teaching and learning overall, but more resources are needed for outdoor games. The school has sufficient classrooms for the planned teaching and makes good use of its two halls, one of which has been turned into a well-organised library that provides valuable opportunities for pupils to extend their reading and to look for information. Displays on walls are used well to celebrate pupils' work and consolidate what pupils have learnt. The school caretaker and the cleaning staff work hard to provide a pleasant learning environment. The outside play areas accommodate play and physical education activities adequately, but the junior playground is not very attractive or inviting for pupils to enjoy their free time. There are few places to sit and most of the area is devoted to football.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

50. In order to improve the school further, the governors and staff should:

[i] Raise standards in mathematics by the end of Year 6 by:

- improving the pace of lessons so that pupils learn at a faster rate;
  - reviewing the time allocation for lessons, as some are too long;
- (Paragraphs 2, 15, 21, 85, 88)*

and in science by:

- continuing to provide practical activities which stimulate pupils to explore ideas and develop skills for solving problems;
  - providing more opportunities for pupils to organise and record their own work.
- (Paragraphs 2, 16, 18, 91)*

[ii] Promote more strongly the use of good speech in all lessons so that pupils become more assured in expressing themselves orally.  
*(Paragraphs 2, 18, 76, 85, 93, 95)*

[iii] Improve attendance by:

Working more closely with parents to emphasise the importance of good attendance and its effect on their children's progress.  
*(Paragraphs 10, 33)*

51. The governors should also consider the following for inclusion in the action plan:

[i] The improvement of the presentation of pupils' work in Year 2  
*(Paragraphs 78, 93)*

[ii] The provision of a broader range of extra-curricular activities  
*(Paragraphs 25, 39, 126)*

[iii] The improvement of playground facilities, especially for pupils in Years 3 to 6  
*(Paragraph 49)*

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	63
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	45

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	8	33	19	2	0	0
Percentage	2	13	52	30	3	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 one percentage point.

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR– Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	26	248
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		87

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	4	65

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	12
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	4

### Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	6.8
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0.4
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
	2002	20	9	29

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	17	15	19
	Girls	8	8	8
	Total	25	23	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	86 (93)	79 (95)	93 (100)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	17	19	17
	Girls	8	8	8
	Total	25	27	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	86 (95)	93 (100)	86 (100)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	26	23	49

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	19	19	20
	Girls	15	11	13
	Total	34	30	33
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	69 (67)	61 (52)	67 (63)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	21	21	22
	Girls	16	13	14
	Total	37	34	36
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	76 (58)	69 (64)	73 (60)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

**Ethnic background of pupils**

**Exclusions in the last school year**

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	248	7	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	0	0	0

*The table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only. It gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.*

**Teachers and classes**

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24.8
Average class size	27.6

**Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	12
Total aggregate hours worked per week	281.5

**Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	32.5

Number of pupils per FTE adult	13
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**Financial information**

Financial year	2001/02
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	£
Total income	656,840
Total expenditure	612,471
Expenditure per pupil	1,982
Balance brought forward from previous year	42,139
Balance carried forward to next year	42,230

FTE means full-time equivalent.

### Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

### Results of the survey of parents and carers

#### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	300
Number of questionnaires returned	37

#### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	51	46	0	3	0
My child is making good progress in school.	43	51	5	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	17	61	11	6	6
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	19	50	25	6	0
The teaching is good.	47	44	8	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	32	46	16	5	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	51	46	3	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	47	50	3	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	31	44	14	6	6
The school is well led and managed.	39	47	6	3	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	31	58	3	3	6
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	8	51	27	11	3



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

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

52. Standards and the quality of teaching have improved since the last inspection. The teaching overall is very good with particular strengths in language and mathematics. Nursery nurses play a significant role in the teaching of groups of children. Children, including those with special educational needs, achieve well during their time in the Foundation Stage.

53. The school admits children to the nursery in the term after their third birthday. Links with parents are good and some parents volunteer to help in the nursery. Before the children start, the nursery staff visit them at home so that they see a familiar face on their first day. To begin with, children attend the nursery for a short time each day and this is gradually extended to the full half day. They go on to join the reception class at the beginning of the term in which they have their fifth birthday. When children start in the nursery, their skills and knowledge vary and some children have poor speaking skills. However, most children have skills and knowledge that are typical for their age. Children achieve well in the nursery and reception class and reach the levels expected nationally in all the six required areas of learning. Higher-attaining pupils are challenged well.

54. Equal opportunities are provided, through a range of directed and free choice activities for these children to develop academically and socially. The co-ordinator provides very good leadership.

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

55. Children make good progress because of the very good teaching and by the end of the reception class have gained the early skills and attitudes expected for their age.

56. Throughout the Foundation Stage, teachers promote children's personal development well. They do this by establishing routines and encouraging children to be independent in their day-to-day activities; for example, in getting their own aprons in the nursery and in finding the equipment they need to complete a task in the reception class. Children are encouraged to make friends with one another and to be helpful to others. A good example of this was when children in the nursery became members of an 'ambulance crew' and treated the patients in pairs. By the end of the Foundation Stage, most children work and play together amicably.

57. Teachers, nursery nurses and other staff are good role models for the children. For example, children see adults handling equipment carefully and do the same. Children are taught the difference between right and wrong in a gentle way. They are reminded quietly that they need to share toys and equipment. They behave well and understand what is expected of them. As a result everyone benefits from working in a calm and settled environment.

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

58. Very good teaching ensures that children make good progress in this area of learning. They learn quickly and achieve well during their time in the Foundation Stage. As a result, most children reach the goals expected, and some are working on the National Curriculum, in reading and writing, well before they leave the reception class.

59. Although the speaking and listening of many children are below average when they enter the nursery they are soon able to listen and concentrate for considerable periods of time. A strength of the teaching in the Foundation Stage is the way that staff regularly talk to the children. They make sure that every activity involves asking questions and emphasising words and names. For example, children in the reception class discussed what topping they would like on their pancakes.

60. Staff work hard to ensure that children understand the names and sounds of letters so that they are able to write independently. In both the nursery and the reception class children 'write' in their play, take 'telephone messages' and send 'letters'. Children have many opportunities to put

their writing skills into practice and by the end of the Foundation Stage a significant number of them can write short sentences without help.

61. A good feature of the teaching is that teachers tell children stories every day. As a result children learn to enjoy books and to handle them with care. They are interested and keen to know what happens next. Children understand the words 'title', 'author' and 'illustrator'. They talk about the characters in books, and in the reception class they retell simple traditional stories, such as 'The Big Pancake', in sequence. Most children behave as if they were readers, pointing to the words and reciting the story. In the reception class, most children read simple books independently.

### **Mathematical development**

62. When children start in the nursery, many of them have average mathematical knowledge. Very good teaching ensures that they make good progress and achieve the levels expected by the time they leave the reception class.

63. Teachers place strong emphasis on practical activities to help children to understand the relationships between numbers. This prepares them well for future work in mathematics and supports their good progress. In the nursery, activities such as counting the corners on solid shapes and in the reception class, practical work such as deciding which coin they need to buy food in the shop, help children to develop their mathematical language and number recognition. Teachers make good use of computers to promote children's mathematical development. Children enjoy counting and identifying numbers using familiar programs. This helps them to recognise numbers and eventually to combine them.

64. Teachers use every available opportunity to use mathematics and mathematical language. They do this through stories, songs, games and imaginative play. Mathematical vocabulary such as 'How long?' 'How many?' or 'Can you put them in the right order?' encourages children to practise their mathematical skills. Enjoyable activities, such as singing and performing actions to number rhymes, give children an understanding of adding and taking away.

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

65. Children make good progress in this area of learning because of the good teaching. They reach the goals expected by the end of the reception year.

66. The frequent first-hand experiences provided in the nursery and reception class strengthen children's knowledge and understanding of the world. For example, children find out about insects and plants by exploring and observing. Teachers arrange visits, for example to a wildlife centre, to extend children's knowledge and provide opportunities for children to practise their social skills. Visitors to the school, such as firemen and policemen, widen children's knowledge of the community. Through regular opportunities to use the computer, children learn to handle the mouse to move images around the screen and to make choices. They begin to understand that some things do not just happen but have to be planned first. They think about the models they are going to make and begin by drawing pictures of them.

67. Teachers encourage children to talk about their families, and use stories to help children to understand the significance of special festivals such as Christmas. Teachers read stories about festivals in other countries; for example, the American celebration of Thanksgiving and the Hindu celebration of Divali.

### **Physical development**

68. In their physical development children attain the standards expected by the end of the reception year. Regular opportunities to use the hall for games and gymnastics help children to make steady progress in the development of physical skills and by the end of the reception year most children move with confidence and control.

69. The teaching is good. Staff ensure that children have plenty of opportunities to engage in

physical activities both inside and out of doors. Children in the reception class do not have direct access to a safe and secure area outside during lessons. To compensate, teachers arrange for reception children to use the nursery outdoor play area and equipment and the children also enjoy a good run around at playtime. This ensures that they have access to appropriate play equipment of good quality and that they benefit from the social aspects of physical activity. Children enjoy physical exercise tremendously and put a lot of effort into climbing, running and playing with wheeled toys.

70. Teachers make sure that children know how to use tools such as pencils, paintbrushes and scissors properly. By the end of the reception year many children have mastered these skills and are adept at cutting, moulding and gluing. A small number still have difficulties and need more practice.

### **Creative development**

71. Very good teaching in this area of learning ensures that by the time children leave the reception class they achieve the goals expected.

72. Children, both in the nursery and reception class, undertake a range of art and design activities such as painting, collage and pattern making, and engage in imaginative role-play. They enjoy experimenting with materials and different media. For example, children in the nursery enjoyed using paper and glue to make pictures of the bus from a story the teacher had read.

73. Teachers encourage children to be creative in painting, drawing and making models. Children in the nursery learn to recognise colours as they experiment with paint. Children in the reception class were engrossed in mixing red and white paint to get 'just the right shade' of pink for their pictures of pigs.

74. Teachers put a great deal of emphasis on children learning traditional rhymes and songs. Children enjoy listening to music and join in with action rhymes almost every day; for example, children in the nursery were able to put all the actions to the song 'The Wheels on the Bus'.

### **ENGLISH**

75. Current standards in Year 2 and Year 6 are broadly in line with national expectations. This reflects the steady overall rise in standards in national tests seen over the past four years, especially at the end of Year 6. In Year 2, standards are similar to those reported at the time of the previous inspection, but have improved in reading and writing in Year 6. Pupils in Year 6 have made impressive progress since they were in Year 2, and their overall standard as a year group has risen from well below average to average. Girls have done less well than boys in national tests in the past. This was not so evident during the inspection, but boys as a group tend to be more assertive in some Year 6 lessons. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because the work is carefully matched to their ability and they are well supported. Pupils with particular abilities benefit from working with older pupils or in groups where more challenging work is set for them.

76. Throughout the school, standards of speaking continue to be below those normally seen, especially in Year 6. Pupils listen attentively, but many find it very difficult to find the words they need to express their ideas in class discussions or in their writing. This affects standards in all subjects. Although pupils are more willing to take part in discussions than at the time of the previous inspection, concerns remain about the range and depth of their vocabularies. Teachers have introduced a range of new ideas to encourage oral work but are not rigorous enough in correcting pupils who use substitute words like 'stuff' when they cannot think of a more precise word. When teachers are vigilant, pupils think twice about using sloppy vocabulary; for example, when pupils in Year 5 found seven alternatives for 'OK' in the sentence, 'The town seemed OK during the day.' When teachers model good speech; for example, in drama lessons, pupils respond well. Where drama was used in Year 3, the teacher developed pupils' oral skills effectively and helped them to practise the language to be used in later written work.

77. Standards in reading are in line with national expectations in Year 2 and in Year 6. The

range of ability in all classes is wide and, in Year 2 for example, ranges from the standards expected of Year 2 to those expected of Year 6 pupils. Most pupils have an appropriate range of strategies for tackling unfamiliar words, and correct errors when the sentence does not make sense, but a minority do not persevere enough with their understanding of letter sounds and use a 'nonsense' word in order to keep going. Most pupils are given books that are appropriate for their ability but some younger higher-attaining pupils who have chosen their own books struggle too much with challenging vocabulary to be able to enjoy the text. Teachers keep accurate records of the books pupils have read but, where there are no home reading diaries, parents do not have enough information about the difficulties their children might be having, and are unable to help them as much as they might.

78. Standards in writing in Year 2 and Year 6 are in line with national expectations. Year 2 pupils write in a variety of forms: imaginative or favourite stories, instructions and factual accounts. But they do not use as wide a range of written vocabulary as is usually seen. Simple spellings are accurate, and letters are usually formed correctly and are consistent in size, but writing is not always as tidy as it could be. Higher-attaining pupils have a good understanding of basic grammar, write sentences accurately and are starting to join their handwriting. All pupils' books show good progress since the start of the school year. Pupils in Year 6 use writing in a wide variety of forms; they write independently about their science, record historical work well, describe their design processes when making model shelters and show a good understanding of character in their story telling. Most understand the basic grammatical skills of writing, spell accurately and are developing an appropriate handwriting style. Many are not yet skilled enough in using complex sentences to extend meaning, and do not have the range and depth of vocabulary needed to make their writing as varied and interesting as it might be. All pupils have made good progress, and approximately a quarter of them are well on track to achieve the higher level – Level 5 – in the national tests at the end of the school year.

79. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good in all parts of the school. Basic skills are taught more effectively than at the time of the previous inspection. Teachers now manage their classes very well and pupils' behaviour is good. Pupils are keen to learn and do their best because they find the work interesting and have a positive attitude to school. Relationships are very good. Learning is effective because teachers divide up the lesson into appropriate sections, are well prepared, and set work that reflects the range of ability within each group. This is particularly the case in Year 5 and Year 6, where pupils benefit from the employment of extra staff so that the two classes in each year group can be divided between three teachers. Throughout the school, learning support assistants make an important contribution to the learning through their effective teaching of small groups and quiet support for pupils who have special educational needs. Homework is used appropriately, as when pupils in Year 6 prepared arguments for and against mobile phones for later work in class.

80. Some very good teaching was seen during the inspection when pupils were stimulated by the teachers' enthusiasm. They understood very clearly what they would be able to do better by the end of the lesson, and knew the high standard they were expected to achieve. One very good example was seen in Year 4 when the teacher's energetic style was infectious and enthused the pupils. Activities moved on briskly but careful monitoring made sure that every pupil made progress. Standards were rigorous, pupils understood why a word like 'lovely' was not acceptable, and were encouraged to develop their skills through practice. 'A good one word answer!' said the teacher. 'Can you put it into a sentence for me?' Good humour kept the learning enjoyable.

81. Good teaching and learning were observed in many lessons because teachers are skilled in asking questions that make pupils think. They explain the purpose of the lesson clearly and use the different parts of the session to develop a range of skills. A good example was seen in Year 6 when, within the one lesson, there was a good mix of activity. This included learning a new spelling rule, developing a deeper understanding of letter writing, and checking understanding. The purposeful final ten minutes brought the parts of the lesson together and indicated how the work would develop the next day. When lessons or activities are too long, the teaching is less effective. In one example, the teacher read an extract to the class for 20 minutes. Pupils listened carefully, and the passage was well read, but they did not move onto the main part of the lesson fast enough; they therefore did not make as much progress as they could have done.

82. Target setting is used effectively. Teachers have a good understanding of their pupils' ability and target sheets are pasted into books so that pupils know the skills they need to develop. Targets are especially effective when they are written in a language the pupils understand. Teachers mark work conscientiously, but a minority do not set a consistently high standard in their own writing. In one example, books contained a number of helpful suggestions to show pupils how to improve but each of the teacher's sentences started without a capital letter and omitted the full stop. Computers are used appropriately in many classes to present finished work in an attractive manner, to develop skimming skills in reading text on the Internet, or as an alternative way to draft and correct work.

83. The co-ordinator is experienced and has worked hard to support staff in raising standards. He monitors teachers' planning against the work in pupils' books and is able to form a good picture of standards and areas of strength or weakness. He works closely with the co-ordinator for assessment to use the outcomes from national and other tests to modify planning, set targets, organise groups and track individual pupils' progress. The literacy governor has a good understanding of the national strategy and works regularly in the school; this gives her a good understanding on which to base reports to the governing body. The main library, which has an appropriate range of fiction and non-fiction, is very conveniently situated for pupils in Years 4 to 6 to find information to support their learning.

## **MATHEMATICS**

84. There has been good improvement since the last inspection. The quality of teaching and learning has improved, assessment procedures are well established and are used with increasing effectiveness. Standards are rising. Pupils in Years 1 to 5 have benefited throughout from the teaching of the National Numeracy Strategy. Teachers are increasingly confident in teaching the elements of the strategy. They use assessments and analyses of pupils' performance in national tests effectively to plan appropriate work for pupils of all abilities. Information from the regular tracking of pupils' progress indicates that the school is on track to achieve the targets set with the Local Education Authority for 2003.

85. Pupils in Year 6 attain standards that are below those expected. However, in view of these particular pupils' prior attainment and with good support for their differing abilities, they have achieved well. A high proportion of pupils have special educational needs in the year group, and pupils in the present Year 6 have not benefited throughout from the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy. Most pupils can calculate using addition, subtraction, multiplication and division, in order to develop further number skills. In a lesson in Year 5, pupils progressed well with their understanding of multiples of six, seven and eight, and they collaborated positively when playing a game that reinforced their knowledge. Higher-attaining pupils in this year used their basic skills easily when converting millimetres to centimetres, and were inventive in thinking of alternative ways to measure a curved line. In Year 6, pupils used their subject vocabulary well to describe how they would plot a graph, and higher-attaining pupils comfortably used frequency tables to plot the data on bar charts. However, pupils often have difficulty in explaining clearly how they have solved problems.

86. By the end of Year 2, pupils build soundly on earlier learning, achieve satisfactorily and reach levels in line with national expectations. In Year 1, pupils quickly chose the right answer in addition sums to 10 and went on to 'double', 'count on' and calculate 'one less'. They were very excited when they saw a pattern of numbers emerge in their simple calculations. Lower-attaining pupils worked hard to position numbers from the smallest to the largest. In Year 2, pupils enjoyed the challenge of halving and doubling numbers and making pairs of numbers to make ten, and were successful in adjusting numbers – rounding up - when working with nine and 19, and they particularly enjoyed working against the clock.

87. Teaching and learning are good overall. The National Numeracy Strategy is firmly established and teachers' subject knowledge is good. Teachers are well prepared for their lessons with different groups of pupils and, consequently, pupils are able to succeed in their activities. Teachers teach the basic skills effectively so that pupils have a good grounding to approach new work; pupils are encouraged to listen carefully and to recall facts and strategies that they have

learnt earlier. This was particularly evident in Year 5, when pupils gained new knowledge quickly and the higher-attaining pupils were sometime ahead of the teacher with calculations. In mental arithmetic sessions, teachers get pupils to show their answers on small boards, so that every pupil has to display an answer – there is no hiding place. Pupils then extend their learning as they consider solutions, compare strategies and share results. Pupils often present their written work well, and by the end of Year 6 use mathematical equipment such as rulers and compasses effectively. Teachers manage pupils skilfully by providing appropriate work, monitoring their performance in class, and making the required outcomes of activities clear. As a result, most pupils behave well and gain satisfaction in lessons.

88. In numeracy lessons, teachers across each year group put pupils into three groups formed according to ability. Each teacher then prepares work at three levels within the set. In some lessons, there continues to be weakness in the pace and challenge for highest-attaining pupils. There is, however, good provision for a gifted pupil who makes good progress through the stimulating use of ICT. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support from learning support assistants who keep teachers fully informed of the progress of pupils during lessons. Overall, teachers use the National Numeracy Strategy well. Their increasing confidence and better provision of investigative activities has had a good effect on raising standards. However, lessons are sometimes too long, especially in Years 3 to 6, and this affects the pace of both the introductory mental arithmetic sessions and the period of review at the end of lessons. In the longer lessons, the pace slackens during these periods, teachers' questions are insufficiently brisk and there is insufficient challenge, especially for more able pupils. As result, pupils' ability to calculate speedily is not always challenged and extended well enough, and the learning is not consolidated as succinctly and well as it could be.

89. Overall, teachers assess pupils' attainment and progress well and check pupils' work during lessons regularly and supportively. Information from assessments of pupils' attainment and progress feed well into the long and shorter-term planning. It is also used effectively to set targets that help pupils to see what they have to do to improve their performance in mathematics. However, these targets are not used well enough in teachers' marking of work to help pupils to achieve accuracy or understand where they have gone wrong.

90. The management of the subject is good. The co-ordinator has monitored teaching and planning well, with good support from advisory staff from the Local Education Authority. The use of ICT is limited, but it is used increasingly to enhance pupils' learning; for example, when pupils in Year 6 create formulae to calculate cumulative prices in spreadsheets. Effective auditing of the subject shows that the difference between the performance of boys and girls is narrowing by the end of Year 2. Resources are good overall, except for the poor quality of screens for use with overhead projectors; teachers use these effectively in lessons, but the magnified images are not always as sharp as they could be.

## **SCIENCE**

91. Pupils achieve standards in line with national expectations in Year 2 but standards are below national expectations in Year 6. Throughout the school, there has been further improvement since the last inspection in pupils' ability to predict and record during investigative activities. This is having a significant effect on pupils' achievement, but pupils in Year 6 have not had time to make up for earlier weaknesses in the school's provision. A brighter picture emerges as pupils in younger classes are achieving at a faster rate. The quality of teaching has improved as teachers throughout the school work together with increasing effectiveness. Pupils now achieve well by the end of Year 2 and satisfactorily by the end of Year 6.

92. By the end of Year 2, pupils know about the five senses and that living things change and grow. Practical activities such as handling, planting and caring for seeds, help pupils to gain a sound understanding of growth in plants. Work here links well with sketching and painting in art and design, in which pupils observe closely before making detailed drawings of flowers and leaves. As they investigate sound, pupils explore how musical instruments produce notes. They develop an increasing sense of scientific enquiry and ask pertinent questions that lead to interesting discoveries and measure the difference it makes to sound levels when they cover up their ears.

Everyday life is never far from their thoughts; for example, when they remark that 'It's dangerous to cover up your ears when crossing the road because you won't hear the traffic'. Teachers make learning interesting; for example, when they take pupils on a 'listening walk' and then discuss the sounds they have heard. In exciting work about changes in materials, pupils freeze small items into ice cubes and then measure the time it takes for the ice to melt and release the items. Teachers encourage pupils to observe closely; when pupils look at objects and categorise them according to what they are made from, for example. In further investigations pupils find out which materials bend, stretch and twist. Pupils have a fair knowledge of scientific words and meanings.

93. In Years 3 to 6, pupils progress satisfactorily based on their earlier learning, but their progress is hampered by weak skills of communication. In discussions, pupils demonstrate that they know about a satisfactory range of scientific phenomena but often have difficulty in expressing their ideas. In their written work, pupils in Year 6 show that they understand a number of scientific ideas; for example, when they compare properties of materials and understand the effects of temperature change. They know the principal parts of the human body and how to keep themselves healthy. Evidence from pupils' past written work suggests that the tasks set were well matched to pupils' abilities. They have carried out a number of scientific enquiries and have recorded their work by making notes, writing up experiments and drawing graphs and charts. They have used scientific vocabulary correctly. However, too many printed worksheets are used, and pupils are not given enough opportunity to organise and record their investigations in their own way. The presentation of pupils' work is variable in Year 2. Teachers' marking does not include enough reference to pupils' scientific understanding to generate helpful dialogue that could extend pupils' learning.

94. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory, but there were examples of good and very good teaching during the inspection. Teachers manage pupils effectively so that they have positive attitudes to science, enjoy lessons and behave well. The difference between the better and less effective teaching was in the pace of the lessons. In the most effective lessons, teachers were well prepared, had a good knowledge of the subject and gave clear and lively explanations. The teachers were enthusiastic and seemed to enjoy the activities as much as the pupils. For example, in a very good lesson in Year 4, the teacher looked amazed at the beautiful pattern of colour in the cross section of celery which had been standing in food colouring. Pupils learned about capillary action in a way that would help them to remember it. A significant feature of the very good teaching in this lesson was the way the teacher had organised the desks so that the pupils could move easily to see the results of the experiment. Pupils with special educational needs are included effectively in lessons, in which they are helped well by learning support assistants.

95. Teachers use effective questioning to build on pupils' learning and take it forward. They use a range of interesting teaching strategies to maintain the attention of the pupils. Specific scientific vocabulary is promoted well, but sometimes teachers do not allow pupils enough time to explain what they are doing or express their ideas. Reading is promoted satisfactorily, but writing is restricted as pupils use too many printed worksheets to record their findings. Pupils improve their reading as they look for information in books and on the Internet; they use numeracy satisfactorily as they measure amounts and temperatures of materials and record their findings in graphs and charts. In ICT, pupils' skills in using simple electronic equipment, for example for measuring temperature, are not yet established.

96. The subject is well led and managed, and the confidence of the staff in teaching science has grown because of well-organised professional training. The co-ordinators have analysed the school's national test results for weaknesses and these have been addressed. Teachers now make good use of careful assessments of pupils' progress to inform long and shorter-term planning, but effective assessment procedures have not been in place long enough to promote the faster progress of pupils in Year 6 when they were in the younger classes. A clearer picture is emerging of standards throughout the school, and the capacity for further improvement is good. A newly organised scheme of work supports teachers with their planning so that pupils develop skills, knowledge, and understanding in a systematic way from year to year. Good use is made of simple resources; for example, a large log in the corner of the playground provides the habitat for a number of insects – one pupil found 11 different kinds.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

97. In Year 2 and Year 6, pupils achieve standards that are above national expectations. Although little teaching was seen, evidence from pupils' work demonstrates that they have benefited from good teaching and progressed well.

98. In Years 1 and 2, pupils become increasingly skilled in using a wide range of techniques and materials including pencils, crayons, charcoal, paints and fabrics. Their observational drawings and work on pattern become more detailed as they grow older. Pupils are encouraged to observe carefully before they do very good detailed drawings of faces. By the time they reach Year 2, pupils draw well-observed, detailed pictures; for example, when they sketched flowers in a science lesson. Pupils benefit from teachers' encouragement to explore texture, colour and line. In a good lesson in Year 2, the teacher provided an interesting range of objects for pupils to feel before they made collages from different kinds of paper. Three-dimensional work includes making tiles from clay. The tiles, decorated with a range of well-drawn plants and animals, have been assembled to make an attractive wall plaque.

99. By the end of Year 6, pupils demonstrate a broad range of skills that they use to support work in other subjects. For example, pupils in Year 6 drew extremely detailed designs of places to shelter as part of their study in design and technology. Some of this work is of high quality; for example, the drawing of a gazebo, with a beautifully designed hexagonal roof, pillars and railings. Work with textiles is also of good quality. Pupils made beautiful patterns on material, using a simple batik technique. In mathematics, pupils drew amusing sketches of people to illustrate a problem-solving topic. From the work seen, pupils are keen on art and design. They present their work with commitment and pride, and teachers display it attractively. A very good variety of prints of work by well-known artists is displayed in the corridors and halls, providing inspiration and artistic knowledge for the pupils. Pupils with special educational needs gain self-esteem and success in a subject that does not rely on their ability to read or write. Literacy is developed well in art and design as pupils extend their vocabulary of colours, materials and techniques. Mathematical shapes and patterns are developed as pupils explore texture and design. Pupils' competence in ICT is extended as they explore the use of shapes, lines and colours in computer drawing packages.

100. Artistic techniques are taught very well so that pupils are able to express their ideas in many ways. Teachers encourage pupils to use their imagination and explore materials and colours to create interesting effects. The teaching of art and design is led well by the enthusiastic co-ordinator, who monitors teachers' planning and pupils' finished work. Pupils' work is displayed very attractively so it is given value and provides examples for other pupils. A system for assessing pupils' attainment and progress, closely linked to the taught curriculum and supported by a portfolio of annotated work, is gradually being developed. The scheme of work is based on national guidance and emphasises features, such as observational drawing, which are strong in the school. Resources are adequate and teachers make good use of natural objects and features in the school environment for sketching.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

101. Judgements on pupils' attainment and progress are based on a very limited number of observed lessons, examination of teachers' planning, discussions with pupils and teachers and the scrutiny of displayed work. From this evidence, standards are at least in line with national expectations in Years 2 and 6, and pupils achieve well. Throughout the school, there is a wide range of work of good quality on display.

102. In Years 1 and 2, pupils develop an understanding of how and why things are made. They begin to recognise that in order to produce useful products, they need to plan and prepare carefully and acquire specific skills. Recent work by pupils in Year 2 was well linked to the wider curriculum as they prepared detailed designs and made puppets. They demonstrated a good range of skills for cutting, fixing materials together and finishing products. This work was particularly successful in helping pupils with special education needs to use specific vocabulary to label drawings and make lists; there was less emphasis on writing sentences, which they often find difficult. The teacher



used the puppets skilfully to develop pupils' speech and listening. The work of higher attaining pupils is well executed and displayed.

103. Similarly, pupils in Year 6 have recently extended their learning in a range of subjects through work in design and technology lessons. In the topic, 'Shelters', thought-provoking displays show how pupils have explored different reasons for needing shelter – from rain, sun or cold. The work involved careful planning, with a creative, artistic perspective. Sketches for designs were detailed, and pupils considered the materials they would need for their models, which were well made. In Year 4, pupils planned and made sandwiches. They worked co-operatively, were enthusiastic and behaved well. The teacher linked this work well to pupils' learning in science and health education. As pupils tasted the variety of sandwiches, the teacher questioned them skilfully and they became more aware of the marketing of products, where tempting the eater is an important factor. They knew that chocolate spread was not the healthiest option, but voted it the most popular filling. Pupils learned at a very good rate and made very good progress in understanding the need to explore the requirements of the customer before making a product. The plain bread and butter sandwiches were not very popular.

104. From the work seen and the lessons observed, the quality of teaching is good. It ranges from satisfactory to very good. Teachers are enthusiastic and the teaching of skills is consistent so that pupils build effectively on what they already know and can do. Pupils enjoy the subject too, and boys and girls work together co-operatively to achieve success. Literacy is developed well through research, sometimes on the Internet. Numeracy is promoted effectively as pupils draw accurate designs and measure materials. The examples of very good teaching were supported by the teachers' very good planning and secure knowledge and understanding of the subject.

105. The subject is led well by the co-ordinator, who carries out an audit of resources each year and requests appropriate funding from the governing body to support improvements. Resources are carefully stored and well cared for, and the recent purchase of 'design and technology trucks', containing a wide range of simple tools and useful components, is having a positive effect on standards. There is a comprehensive policy and a helpful scheme of work for the subject. These give good support for teachers and provide a sound structure for the planning of lessons. As the scheme is being implemented, the co-ordinator is developing sensible assessment procedures so that pupils' attainment and progress can be easily recorded.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

106. Pupils achieve in line with national expectations in Years 2 and 6. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, have equal access to the curriculum and make satisfactory progress.

107. In Years 1 and 2, pupils gain geographical skills through well-planned first-hand experiences. Teachers organise visits in the local area so that pupils become more aware of how maps represent physical and man-made features. As they walk around the village and note the principal buildings, pupils collect information which they later transfer to simple maps, which they use to plan routes between home, school and other familiar places. By the end of Year 2, pupils apply these skills to the wider world when they study the island community of Struay and compare it to their own. Work is linked effectively to other subjects so that pupils gradually recognise how the environment affects the way humans live. In science, pupils experiment with ice, consider what to wear in different kinds of weather and investigate the seasons and the growth of plants. The work is well planned so that pupils develop a growing understanding of the relationships between the physical world and human existence.

108. In Years 3 and 4, teachers build effectively on earlier work. They ensure that when pupils study maps of the local area, they have sufficient prior knowledge to be able to link features on a map to the symbols in the key. By the end of Year 6 pupils know more about world at large. Teachers expect pupils to find information in books, CD-ROMs and on the Internet. For example, pupils investigate weather patterns in other parts of the world and compare them with local records. They understand the effect of weather on human activity. In work on temperature and distances, pupils employ their mathematical skills effectively. Teachers plan helpful opportunities for pupils to

develop their ability to express their ideas and listen to the views of other people. For example, pupils discussed the benefits and costs of tourism to a local community. As a result, they gained a deeper understanding of how it may bring wealth to an area but there may be a cost in the effect on the environment. Higher-attaining pupils benefit from exploring such aspects of geography more deeply. As they study different faiths in religious education, pupils recognise that people live in a variety of ways that are determined by weather and culture, but that there are shared features such as families, homes and employment.

109. Although pupils express their knowledge and understanding, keenly but sometimes with difficulty, during discussions, the slow pace in some lessons often means that pupils do not have time to record their work on paper in sufficient depth. Much of pupils' written work is done on worksheets and, as a result pupils do not have enough opportunities to record their work in an individual way or practise their writing skills.

110. The quality of teaching and the leadership of the subject are satisfactory. The co-ordinator monitors teachers' planning and pupils' work carefully and makes sure that each class has sufficient resources. This helps teachers to provide interesting lessons and moves pupils' learning forward at a sound pace. The scheme of work is based securely on national guidelines, and procedures for assessing and recording pupils' attainment and progress.

## **HISTORY**

111. No direct teaching of history was observed during the inspection, but scrutiny of teachers' planning, pupils' work and discussions with pupils and teachers indicate that pupils reach nationally expected standards and progress well in Years 2 and 6, and that the quality of teaching is satisfactory throughout the school. The pupils appreciate the school's provision of a broad range of experiences, such as visits to a castle and the Royal Armouries exhibition, and they are enthusiastic about history.

112. Teachers choose topics that are interesting and relevant to pupils. In Year 1, pupils build on their learning about how they themselves have changed over time. They explore further back, before they were born, and find out about how their parents and grandparents played and were taught. As they delve further into the past, pupils in Years 1 and 2 learn about important events in history through studying the lives of famous people. They begin to recognise that groups of people do not always agree with their rulers; for example, when they learn about Guy Fawkes and the Gunpowder Plot. Pupils gain a deeper understanding of how significant figures from the past have influenced life today. They know that Florence Nightingale's work in the Crimea has affected the development of nursing to the present day. As a result, pupils gain an increasingly balanced knowledge of events and consequences and gain a growing sense of chronology.

113. By the end of Year 6, pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of a good number of periods of history and, using their mathematical skills, can sequence these over time. In Years 3 to 6, they study the ancient civilisations of Egypt and Rome and Tudor and Victorian times. They become more aware of the cultural diversity in the societies they study. Social history is taught well, and pupils have a clear picture of how domestic life and hierarchical social structures have changed over the centuries. Teachers plan visits to museums and places of interest where pupils get the chance to dress up and act out everyday activities as they might have been in the past. For example, older pupils visited the Victorian kitchen at a stately home and discovered the grinding reality of the hard work in cooking without modern facilities and equipment. Work is linked well to pupils' learning in other subjects; for example, when a variety of artists come to the school for musical performances, dramatic productions. These experiences bring history alive and make learning fun as pupils are involved in workshops linked to particular historical periods. The lively approach to the subject has a positive effect on pupils' acquisition of vocabulary, and drama adds to opportunities for pupils to improve their linguistic skills.

114. Throughout the school, pupils are taught to find information about the topics they study from books, photographs, computers and artefacts. In Years 3 to 6, and in Years 5 and 6 in particular, pupils use their literacy skills effectively to assemble information and write in some detail about the topics they study. Higher-attaining pupils extend their skills of research well by synthesising

information from a variety of sources. In Years 1 and 2, pupils often record their work in lively labelled drawings, and this mode of recording is used well to help pupils with special educational needs to record their historical work throughout the school. For example, pupils in Year 6 produced attractive folders of work covering many areas of life in Victorian Britain. They demonstrated a sensitive understanding of how life was very different for the rich and poor in earlier periods of history.

115. The leadership of history is sound, and the management of the subject is developing well as the co-ordinator gains a clearer picture of standards by monitoring teachers' planning and pupils' work. The schemes of work, based on nationally agreed guidelines, are helpful in guiding teachers with a progressive set of lesson plans. Procedures for the assessment and recording of pupils' attainment and progress are embryonic and not sufficiently established to identify the attainment of groups of pupils or individuals. The co-ordinator organises sufficient resources for teachers to teach the required elements of the subject.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

116. Standards of attainment in Years 2 and 6 are now in line with national expectations. Since the last inspection, ICT has been a priority in the school's development plan, and there has been satisfactory improvement in pupils' attainment. Judgements on pupils' attainment and progress are based on observations of lessons, scrutiny of pupils' work and displays and discussions with teachers and pupils. Classes are timetabled regularly to use the school's computer suite, which is now fully operational and is helping to raise standards. Pupils make good progress throughout the school, with faster progress in Years 3 to 6. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from using simple programs to improve their spelling and understanding of simple mathematical processes.

117. In Years 1 and 2, pupils use computers confidently. They read the simple instructions carefully in a good range of simple programs, and recognise that the machines respond to precise signals. They have produced a fair range of work that demonstrates their ability to word-process, using capital letters and simple punctuation. This links well with their learning in English. In mathematics and science, pupils use computers to handle data and plot graphs. For example, having collected information about their classmates' favourite fruit, pupils in Year 1 created graphs that gave sharp graphic images of the distribution of favourites. The teacher asked probing questions which helped pupils to sort out their ideas and make appropriate decisions about labelling the axes and sorting out the information. Pupils explore a range of software packages and become increasingly skilful, at a level appropriate for their age, in using a graphics package to draw pictures. Teachers plan the use of ICT in art, when pupils draw pictures on computers, as others do pencil sketches or paintings. In this way, pupils become increasingly aware of how ICT can be used alongside traditional methods of communication.

118. In Years 3 to 6, pupils become more selective and competent as they use and explore an increasing range of programs. As they word-process, pupils edit their writing more adeptly and, by Year 6, are able to block and move paragraphs, add and edit text from other sources and import images from a bank of pictures. In a good lesson in Year 6, pupils entered data on to a spreadsheet, adding formulae to calculate cumulative figures. The work was set well at different levels so that all pupils benefited from the lesson. Pupils are able to work independently and confidently and show understanding of the wider implications of ICT. They become familiar with a fair range of electronic equipment by the time they leave the school. They use tape recorders confidently in all classes, and by the end of Year 6 become more familiar with equipment such as digital cameras. However, they do not use ICT enough in science, as the use of electronic measuring equipment is not yet established in the school. Teachers include the use of the Internet appropriately to extend pupils' learning. In Year 6, pupils looked for information as part of their work in personal, social and health education, when they were discussing the negative effects of some drugs.

119. The quality of teaching is good overall. It is better in Years 3 to 6 than in Years 1 and 2. This

is because teachers in the older classes are incorporating the use of ICT more effectively into the teaching of other subjects. As a result of this, pupils acquire and build on their skills in ICT at a faster pace. However, the more regular use of computers, when this is a sensible method of engaging pupils interest and taking their learning forward, is still an area for development throughout the school. Staff training, through the government's New Opportunities Funding, has been well managed and all staff have participated. This is evident in the confidence staff show in lessons and in their own use of ICT for planning and display work. Teachers use the interactive whiteboard imaginatively to teach new skills; this promotes higher standards. Pupils enjoy working with teachers on the whiteboard, as they do whenever working with electronic equipment. Boys and girls work well together, and pupils are keen to help one another to achieve success in solving problems. Good work in ICT is displayed attractively throughout the school, so that pupils' self-esteem is raised and there are good examples to emulate.

120. Senior staff have monitored the teaching and learning of ICT effectively, and the new co-ordinator for the subject has made a positive start in continuing the development of ICT with the support of colleagues. Provision for ICT has improved, and there is a satisfactory range of software for teaching and learning across the curriculum. A particularly effective aspect of the school's provision in the subject is the imaginative use of funding from the Education Action Zone to support a number of children who are gifted and talented. These pupils achieve well. Equipment for control and monitoring is now available in the school and the organisation of its use is included in the school's next action plan. The better provision of computers in the classrooms and the installation of a computer suite now offer more opportunities for pupils to improve their skills in ICT.

## **MUSIC**

121. As few music lessons were observed, no judgments are made on attainment or teaching. From observation of a number of musical experiences in the school, scrutiny of planning and discussions with pupils and staff, it is clear that provision and standards are improving. A satisfactory scheme of work supplements lively published material and gives good guidance to teachers. The well-qualified co-ordinator gives good support to non-specialist teachers, and a visiting music specialist has demonstrated good practice to less confident teachers.

122. Pupils in both Years 2 and 6, both boys and girls, speak of their music lessons with enjoyment and enthusiasm. Pupils in Year 2 recalled the names of simple instruments that they used to make the sounds of the 'Hungry Caterpillar' as it munched through different kinds of food. They described the kinds of sound that their chosen instruments made and why they had chosen them. The pupils readily sang songs they learnt for Christmas production; they were word-perfect and the singing was tuneful.

123. Pupils in Year 6 are equally enthusiastic about music in school. They described African music they had heard and talked with interest about how they had composed similar pieces, using percussion instruments. They expressed their enjoyment in using computer programs to record their compositions. 'Singing assemblies' are popular, and the pupils are enthusiastic about the songs they have learnt. The co-ordinator for music, supported effectively by other staff, makes well-planned use of singing assemblies to improve pupils' musical knowledge. She leads them creatively and ensures that pupils are alert and that they listen for the tempo and know exactly when to stop singing. Good diction is promoted, and this contributes well to the development of pupils' speech. Pupils practice two-part songs with gusto, and their enthusiastic response on hearing that they are to sing songs, such as 'Big Nell and Ned', indicates how much they enjoy these musical sessions.

124. The co-ordinator's good subject knowledge makes a valuable contribution to the provision of musical experiences for the pupils. She supports teachers with their planning and raises the confidence of those whose musical knowledge is less secure and who welcome her advice as they come to grips with the new scheme of work. The monitoring of teaching and the assessment of pupils' progress are planned for development alongside the implementation of the scheme. The plan for the development of the subject, with support from the advisory service of the local education authority, gives the school the good capacity to raise pupils' attainment in music.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

125. In Year 2 and Year 6, standards are in line with national expectations and pupils achieve satisfactorily. The school offers a broad and largely balanced curriculum for physical education. It encompasses a satisfactory range of activities and is developing provision for dance. Pupils have lessons at the local swimming pool and most pupils can swim 25 metres by the end of Year 6. Both girls and boys are included in all activities.

126. In Year 2, pupils have developed an awareness of space and can move around using different parts of the body in a variety of ways. In a good lesson in Year 2, pupils responded very well to the teacher's instructions as they developed their own ways of moving around the hall. The pupils concentrated well, worked quietly and used their bodies to create different shapes. In Year 1, pupils persevered as they developed simple sequences of gymnastic movements, including rolls and balances. Pupils are encouraged to observe the work of others with the aim of improving their own performance. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 develop skills in games at a sound rate, and use a good range of strategies for defence and attack when practising skills for playing games. Their moral and social development is good in the subject, as pupils learn to keep rules, play fairly and recognise the importance to good health of regular exercise. Some pupils hone and extend their skills during extra-curricular activities at different times of the year, when they are involved in football, 'quick' cricket, 'tag' rugby, netball and athletics. The school is trying to get more pupils to take part in extra-curricular activities. During residential visits, older pupils have opportunities to take part in adventurous outdoor activities.

127. The overall quality of teaching is good and lessons are planned well. Teachers emphasise the need to warm up the muscles before exercise and the importance of a cooling down period at the end of lessons. Pupils listen well to instructions, show great enthusiasm for the subject and make good progress during lessons. The planning of lessons is good, and teachers build well on pupils' earlier skills. For example, pupils in Year 1 were encouraged to revisit skills taught in a previous lesson and improve both the quality and the level of their skills. In Year 5, pupils responded well to a range of instructions as they acquired strategies for defending and attacking during a game of basketball. In most lessons, teachers manage pupils very well. Where the teaching is less secure, the pace is too slow as pupils wait passively for turns to perform activities. As a result, they miss the opportunity to reinforce taught skills and are then reluctant to persevere with tasks.

128. The development plan for the subject is good and the policy is currently under review. The co-ordinator gives sound leadership and, having monitored the policy, scheme, planning and resources, has identified the teaching of dance and the improvement of resources for outdoor games as priorities for development. The school is taking part in a project for sports' co-ordinators and has made valuable links with a local college to support both curricular and extra-curricular work. Resources for physical education are satisfactory overall, but more are needed for games. They are managed and stored effectively and are easily accessible to staff and pupils. The school has adequate indoor and outdoor play areas and a playing field, but the latter is some distance away and is only suitable for use during dry weather, as it can be very muddy.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

129. Standards in Year 2 are in line with expectations indicated in the locally agreed syllabus but are above them in Year 6. This is an improvement since the standard was reported four years ago. Progress is good overall because pupils are used to reflecting on deeper issues as well as gaining new knowledge. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because they are fully included in the oral work, and written tasks are often set at a level appropriate for their ability.

130. Pupils in Year 2 have a sound understanding of the main events in the life of Jesus, and know that He was a healer and teacher. They have a secure understanding of the parable of the Prodigal Son, and recognise the importance of forgiveness. Pupils in Year 6 have a good recall of the basic facts about Hinduism. The study of different cultures and faiths links with work in

geography, and pupils know that religious faith plays a significant role in many people's lives. Pupils are aware that important annual customs reflect deeply held beliefs; for example, the Hindu festival of Diwali and the Christian period of Lent. They have a secure understanding of the events of Holy Week and Easter Sunday, and higher-attaining pupils can explain why the Resurrection is important to Christians. Pupils have studied a number of parables and were able to reflect on how the 'moral' of such stories had an implication for their own lives. They are used to considering a range of personal ideas and beliefs such as mortality, and have their own values and commitments. The inspection took place at the beginning of Lent and this was the theme for the week's assemblies. It was notable how pupils brought the conclusions of their class discussions to the assemblies; for example, when they talked about 'sacrifice' and related what they were going to give up to remind them of Jesus' time of fasting. The level of demand on pupils' skills of speaking and listening are higher in religious education than in other subjects. It is a subject linked to reflection, in which teachers listen to pupils well and provide them with a wealth of suitable vocabulary which helps them to express their feelings.

131. The standard of teaching is good. Teachers prepare carefully and use a range of Bible stories to enable pupils to gain new knowledge. For example, Year 1 pupils recounted the story of Zacchaeus and suggested how helping other people had changed their lives. The quality of teaching was good because the lesson started with a clear explanation of what the pupils would have learned by the end. The story was told well, and the written activity gave pupils of all abilities an opportunity to record what they had learned. Pupils in Year 6 studied the story of Adam and Eve. The learning was good because they worked in a mature manner and made a serious attempt to understand a Creation story and relate its underlying message to their own experiences. The teaching was good because the subject material was handled sensitively and pupils had a planned opportunity to reflect on the consequences of their actions. Literacy, including an awareness of holy writing in other faiths, is developed well.

132. The headteacher is the co-ordinator of the subject, and she has monitored provision and pupils' response. She leads strongly and has used the subject effectively to develop a way of working that includes regular opportunities for reflection on the deeper issues of life, and to promote the values and aims of the school. Although pupils are not formally assessed at the end of each block of work, plans to do this are well advanced. Some use is made of ICT to research on the Internet, and the library contains a variety of suitable texts about a range of world faiths. Assemblies meet the requirements for an act of collective worship. The quality is varied, but good examples were seen in individual classes and when year groups came together.