

# INSPECTION REPORT

**WALKLEY PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Sheffield

LEA area: Sheffield

Unique reference number: 107094

Headteacher: Miss J Sheard

Reporting inspector: Mr J White  
17242

Dates of inspection: 17<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> February 2003

Inspection number: 246648

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

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Burnaby Crescent

Sheffield

Postcode: S6 2RZ

Telephone number: 0114 2340550

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr D Squire

Date of previous inspection: 13<sup>th</sup> October 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
17242	Jeff White	Registered inspector	Science; art & design; design technology; educational inclusion; English as an additional language	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?
13526	Richard Barnard	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
20891	Sean O'Toole	Team inspector	Information and communication technology (ICT); religious education; Foundation Stage; special educational needs	
23566	John Iles	Team inspector	English; geography; history	
20911	Judy Dawson	Team inspector	Mathematics; music	How good are curricular and other opportunities?

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

The school is bigger than average with 256 pupils (131 boys and 125 girls) in the main school, of whom 35 are in the reception year. A further 47 children attend the part-time nursery. The roll has risen since the last inspection. There is a significant gender imbalance in Years 4 and 6. The school admits pupils from a wide and diverse area and there is considerable potential for educational disadvantage. The school's location close to the two city universities generates temporary, short term pupil admissions from a wide range of cultural backgrounds. Free school meals' eligibility is above average and the number of pupils with statements of special educational needs is also above average. Pupil mobility is quite high. About 20 per cent of pupils are of minority ethnic background, the largest group being of Asian heritage. Several languages apart from English are spoken, including Arabic, Somali, Portuguese and Urdu. About five per cent of pupils are of mixed white and black Caribbean background. Very few pupils are at the early stages of English acquisition. Attainment on entry to the nursery is broadly well below average. Pupils are housed in two separate buildings. The school is involved in the Excellence In Cities project.

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

Walkley Primary School is a good school, with several very good features, that copes well with an above average turnover of pupils, especially in the junior years. Although most pupils do not reach average standards in English, mathematics and science they make good progress over time and achieve well in lessons. In the vast majority of other subjects pupils meet or exceed expectations. The headteacher leads the school very effectively and is well supported by the staff and governors. Strong team work is a key feature of the school's work and it is a cohesive and harmonious community. Pupils behave very well and have very positive attitudes to their learning. Good value for money is provided.

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

- Very good leadership ensures that the staff work very well as a team and are committed to helping the school improve
- Because of good teaching, pupils throughout the school make good progress over time and achieve well in lessons
- Provision for special educational needs is very good
- Pupils are enthusiastic learners, behave very well and have very good relationships with each other and the staff

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

- Standards in English, mathematics and science
- Standards in information and communication technology
- Attendance

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

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

Since the school was last inspected in October 1997 it has improved well. Key issues pertaining to the monitoring of teaching and the curriculum, the professional development of teachers, assessment and the quality of information to parents have all been addressed fully. The school has improved in other ways. Teaching and pupils' progress are now good overall rather than satisfactory. In Year 2, standards have risen in art and design, design and technology, geography, history and physical education. In Year 6, standards have risen in art and design, design and technology, geography and music. Standards in ICT remain below what is typical for pupils' ages mainly because of a lack of resources. The rate of pupil turnover, especially in Years 3-6, is greater than at the time of the last inspection and, coupled with lower attainment on entry to the school, has contributed to a fall in overall standards in English, mathematics and science. However, there is now an upward trend of improvement in these subjects. Provision for special educational needs has

improved and is now very good. Partnership with parents is also much improved. Leadership and management have improved particularly well and the school's capacity to continue to improve is very good.

## 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	E	E	E
mathematics	E	D	E	D
science	E	D	E	D

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

The high rate of pupil mobility has undoubtedly affected the school's results in the national tests for pupils in Year 6 and comparison with the performance of other schools should be treated with caution. The school's trend in performance over five years has been broadly in line with the national trend and prior to 2002, the school's performance, compared with schools with similar free school meals' eligibility, had improved. The high pupil turnover in the junior years makes it difficult for the school to set statutory targets with reasonable confidence. In 2002, targets in English and mathematics were not met. Following the dip in performance in 2002, standards are rising and in the current Year 6 standards in English, mathematics and science are below average but not well below. A key inspection finding is that pupils in Year 6 have made good progress during their time in the school, and they achieve well in lessons.

Pupil turnover is not a significant factor in the infant years. In the 2002 tests for pupils in Year 2, the school's performance compared favourably with similar schools especially in reading and mathematics. The current Year 2 is not such an able group and standards in English, mathematics and science are below average. However, these pupils have made good progress since they entered the school and they achieve well in lessons. Children in the nursery and reception year are making good progress overall and are on course to reach the expected learning goals in physical and creative development. Many are unlikely to reach the expected goals in the other areas of learning because their attainment on entry to the nursery is broadly well below average. Standards in ICT are below expectations in Year 2 and Year 6 and in all other subjects standards are at least what is typical for pupils' ages. Pupils make good or better progress in almost all these subjects. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language make good progress overall. In much of the work the most able pupils achieve well.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils' attitudes are very good and they are enthusiastic learners.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is very good overall and racial harmony is a strong feature.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils respond very well to opportunities to take responsibility and relationships are harmonious.
Attendance	The attendance rate is well below the national average.



The attendance rate is affected by the number of holidays taken during term time and the high amount of sickness.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is good overall and in about a third of lessons it is very good or better. Teaching is good in the nursery and reception year and there are particular strengths in the teaching of physical and creative development, most notably the high expectations. A combination of direct teaching of skills and opportunities for children to learn through play ensures that they make good progress in all the areas of learning. English and mathematics are taught well in Years 1-6 and good opportunities are provided for pupils to apply their literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects. Pupils are invariably very well managed and consequently have very positive attitudes to their learning. Lessons are well planned to meet the range of pupils' needs and the use of discussion and questioning is often characterised by brisk pace in pupils' learning. Good subject knowledge is a feature of much of the teaching except in information and communication technology where teacher's expertise is too variable. Teachers' marking is inconsistent; despite some good examples, not enough guidance is given to pupils to help them improve their performance.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is suitably broad and pupils are offered a good range of learning opportunities, including good extra-curricular activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision is very good and all pupils are supported very effectively. This ensures that pupils make good progress towards meeting their individual targets. Those with statements make very good progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Provision is good and as a result pupils make similar progress to their peers. Few pupils are at an early stage of English acquisition.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Overall provision is very good and especially strong in pupils' moral and social development. The school is a cohesive and harmonious community despite being on two sites.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The quality of day-to-day care is very good. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are particularly successful.

Partnership with parents is good.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher gives strong and purposeful leadership and is very well supported by the senior management team and co-ordinators. The staff work very well as a team. The school is very well managed and runs very smoothly.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors fulfil their responsibilities well and are well involved in strategic planning.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Procedures for monitoring and evaluating the school's work are very thorough and appropriate action is taken to address weaknesses.
The strategic use of resources	Finances are managed efficiently and staff and learning resources are deployed well.

Governors apply the principles of best value well, for example in maintaining a good level of support staff. The quality of staffing is good. Resources are adequate overall but the accommodation has weaknesses. The nursery accommodation is in poor condition and is in need of refurbishment. Some of the nursery resources are in need of replacement.

## 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>• Children like school and behave well</li> <li>• Teaching is good and children are making good progress</li> <li>• Children work hard and are being helped to become mature and responsible</li> <li>• Most parents feel the school is well led and managed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information about how their children are getting on</li> <li>• The amount of homework</li> <li>• The range of extra-curricular activities</li> </ul>

The vast majority of parents who expressed a view are very supportive of the school. The inspection team agrees with parents' positive views. The school provides good information to parents on how their children are getting on and the quality of pupils' annual reports is very good. Homework is used well by the teachers. The school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities. An especially good feature is the provision of residential visits.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

- 1 On admission to the nursery, most children's skills, knowledge and understanding are well below those expected for their age and most lack confidence in using English effectively. The good provision in the nursery and reception Year means that children get off to a good start and make good gains in learning. Progress is good for children of all abilities and ethnic backgrounds because the staff focus well on the needs of individuals. Children are very successful in practical work and by the end of the reception year most attain the goals expected for their age in physical and creative development. However, only about a quarter attain the early learning goals in the other areas of learning because of their low level of skills on admission to the school and their restricted vocabulary. By the end of the reception year, standards in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world are below those expected and most children are about six months behind. Children grow in confidence and are well prepared for the next stage in their schooling although their personal, social and emotional development is a little below that expected for their age.
- 2 A distinctive feature of the school is the degree of pupil mobility especially in the junior years. For example, in 2002, about 22 per cent of pupils in Year 6 joined the school during the junior years. In the current Year 6, 30 per cent of pupils did not join the school at the usual time of admission. More than half of the latter pupils have below average or well below average prior attainment. Inevitably these factors have affected standards in the national tests at age eleven and comparisons with other schools need to be treated with caution. However, pupils that stay on through the school from Year 3 to Year 6 make good progress over time. Although there is some movement of pupils in the infant years it usually occurs after the national tests for seven-year-olds. Apart from a significant dip in prior attainment in 2001, pupils' results in Year 2 have rarely dipped below average since 1999. However, prior attainment in the current Year 2 is broadly lower than in last year's group. In the work seen in the current Year 2 and Year 6, attainment in English, mathematics and science is below average. With the exception of English in Year 2, the attainment is lower than at the time of the last inspection. This is because of the generally poorer attainment on entry to the school. However, key inspection findings are that pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 have made good progress over time and they achieve well in lessons because the teaching and learning are good.
- 3 Pupils make good progress in English in all year groups. The national literacy strategy has been implemented effectively and extra time is allocated to teaching reading and handwriting. Pupils have good opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills and as a result they gain in confidence as they become older. The use of a local poet has had a significant influence on improving junior pupils' writing skills. Pupils apply their literacy skills well in other subjects such as art and design and geography. Similar progress is made in mathematics throughout the school. Pupils' very good attitudes to the subject contribute significantly to their progress. The successful promotion of pupils' application of mathematical skills, for example, in problem solving and in data handling in other subjects such as geography is helping to raise standards. Pupils also make good progress overall in science but it is more consistent in the acquisition of subject knowledge and understanding than in scientific enquiry. The main reason is that pupils are not given enough opportunities to explore

their own ideas. A key area for improvement in pupils' work in English, mathematics and science is in the setting of targets to help individual pupils improve their performance.

- 4 Standards in art and design, design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education have all risen since the last inspection. The key reason is the teaching, which is now good rather than satisfactory overall. Standards in art and design and design and technology are above expectations. Good development of observational drawing and opportunities for pupils to evaluate their work are strengths. Standards in music are good in the upper juniors especially in the quality of the choir's performance. The tuition by one of the specialist music teachers is having a significant impact on raising standards. In the work seen in physical education standards were good and above expectations in Year 2. Teachers' improved subject knowledge is an important reason why standards in physical education have improved. In geography and history, standards are typical for pupils' ages. Improvements have been made because the curriculum is better and good opportunities are provided for first hand learning, for example in the use of visits. Standards in religious education meet expectations and are similar to those at the time of the last inspection. In all the above subjects most pupils make good or better progress and, overall, achieve well in lessons. Standards in ICT are below expectations in Year 2 and Year 6 and have fallen since the last inspection. Progress across the school is unsatisfactory. The key reasons for the unsatisfactory attainment and progress are: a lack of resources, insufficient staff expertise, too limited use of ICT in other subjects and lack of challenge for the most able pupils.
- 5 Provision for pupils with special educational needs (SEN) has improved since the previous inspection and includes better teaching and learning. Pupils make good progress overall and those with statements make very good progress because of well-focused and effective support. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 especially benefit from high quality teaching and support and make very good progress in basic skills. Although the standards achieved by the pupils are below average at the end of Years 2 and 6 it is a mark of the school's success that these pupils are on track to achieve their personal targets.
- 6 About a fifth of pupils are of minority ethnic background. Several pupils speak English as an additional language (EAL) but only a few are at an early stage of English acquisition. Ethnic minority pupils achieve well and make progress in line with their peers. They are well represented in the above average ability groups.
- 7 With the exception of ICT, and occasionally in other subjects, high attaining pupils achieve their potential. The headteacher and staff have focused on meeting the needs of the latter pupils following analysis of national test results in English, mathematics and science, especially at age eleven. In the current work in Year 6, high attaining pupils are, in the main, succeeding well in these subjects.

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

- 8 Pupils' very good attitudes and behaviour, and their very good relationships with staff and each other, are key strengths of the school and have a very positive impact on their achievements and personal development. Standards are higher than those reported at the previous inspection.
- 9 Pupils say they enjoy coming to school and this is echoed by their parents. Many say what they like best about the school is the teachers. Their enjoyment of learning is

evident throughout the school from nursery to Year 6. For example, in Year 5/6 geography lesson pupils were delighted to follow up a visit they had made to Castleton in the Peak district and very successfully recorded results they had collected about the environment. Pupils respond very well to the broad range of curricular and extra-curricular activities provided and this helps them not only to develop self-esteem and confidence but also has a very positive impact on their achievements in art and design, physical education, history, geography and music.

- 10 Pupils with SEN have very positive attitudes to school and participate fully in school life with enthusiasm and commitment. Their behaviour is very good and they show much respect for their teachers and others. This is because they feel valued and included in the school. They listen well and follow instructions carefully. They form effective relationships with adults and other pupils and are confident enough to make suggestions and to join in discussions. In an excellent English lesson in a Year 3 and Year 4 class they talked competently about direct and indirect speech and responded with delight and hard work when the teacher said; "One of the most exciting things I do is mark your books."
- 11 In the great majority of lessons observed during the inspection, pupils showed a very good interest in their work and wanted to do well. The pupils in the nursery and reception classes have settled well. They soon develop a positive approach and enjoy their activities when given a choice, or when directed by the adults. The very good relationships between adults and children showed very well in the nursery when children were engrossed in listening to a story and then giggled with delight as they enhanced their learning by using musical instruments very well to add sound effects. Attitudes remain consistently very good as pupils move through the school. Excellent physical effort was observed in several physical education lessons in Years 1 and 2. Obvious enjoyment was shown by all who participate in the choir.
- 12 Behaviour is very good. There have been no temporary or permanent exclusions over the last two years, a figure well below the national average. Pupils respond very well to the very consistent approach by all staff to behaviour management. They are developing a very good sense of fairness and awareness of the impact of their actions on others. They know the reasons for the school rules. No bullying was observed during the inspection. Pupils and parents show few concerns about potential issues in relation to oppressive, racist or sexist attitudes or behaviour. Racial harmony between pupils reflects the school's very positive approach to social inclusion.
- 13 Pupils' personal development is very good. Most pupils organise themselves and take responsibility for their own work. For instance, in a Year 1 mathematics lesson they arranged themselves, with the tallest at the back, to view the CD-ROM and then independently recorded the time they spent on the computer. Pupils undertake a wide range of duties and responsibilities; for example, acting as house captains, arranging fundraising such as sponsored walks, and older pupils helping younger ones with a range of activities such as sports day. Pupils' independence and their self-confidence are developed very well, for example, when they participate in the residential visits for pupils of all ages, and in the "Talent Show" for pupils in Years 3-6. Pupils are very well engaged in the life of the school and the local community. They are developing a very good appreciation of moral, social and environmental issues. Relationships are very good throughout the school. Pupils are very friendly and chatty. They all get on well together and help each other. Very good relationships between staff and pupils in lessons help pupils in their learning. Pupils also co-operate very well in pairs and

groups, as was seen in a Year 1 physical education lesson where they produced, with excellent precision and skill, a wide range of machine-like movements.

- 14 The attendance rate is well below the national average and is lower than that reported at the time of the previous inspection. However, a steady but significant increase has taken place over the last four terms. Most pupils arrive promptly and lessons start on time. The main reasons for absence are pupils taking holidays in term time and an unusually high level of sickness. The impact of holidays is particularly seen at the start of the school year with many pupils throughout the school missing key parts of their learning. This causes an extra burden on the staff. Sickness has been very noticeable this term with over half of the pupils in Year 1 being absent during one week in January.

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

- 15 The overall quality of teaching is good and in about a third of lessons seen it was very good or better. Because of good teaching most pupils learn well and improve their acquisition of key skills, knowledge and understanding in the vast majority of subjects and areas of learning.
- 16 Teaching in the nursery and reception year is good and all staff have a secure knowledge of how young children learn, which enables them to plan effective lessons and interesting activities that motivate the children. The children are good learners who work hard, maintain effective concentration, listen attentively and work together well. They are enthusiastic about coming to school and are keen to explore and investigate. Children with SEN are taught effectively and receive good additional support. Similarly, children with EAL are also taught well and staff make good use of a variety of resources to help them understand new words and ideas. Staff are very patient and show much care for the children and this is reflected in the good teaching of personal, social and emotional development. Throughout the nursery and reception classes there is good teaching of communication, language and literacy, and mathematical development. Staff successfully combine the introduction of new skills with opportunities for the children to learn through play. The teaching of creative and physical skills is especially effective as the staff have high expectations and the children respond to them by working hard and following instructions. The development of English language skills permeates the teaching and staff use every opportunity to stimulate speech, for example, through puppet shows and drama. There is good teaching of knowledge and understanding of the world and much is based in practical work. However, the range of equipment and resources in the nursery hampers some activities. Staff are vigilant in caring for the children and record details of their progress, making good use of the information to plan the next step in learning. The atmosphere of encouragement does much to help the children to succeed.
- 17 Lessons in Years 1-6 are usually structured well and learning objectives are clear. Pupils are managed very effectively and as a consequence they behave very well. Teachers' and support staff's relationships with pupils are harmonious and contribute strongly to pupils' learning. Support staff are well deployed and their work is good. The very good or better teaching is often characterised by high expectations, for example, in art and design and physical education, and results in pupils' achieving very well. Discussion is often used effectively, especially when teachers ask well-focused questions to elicit pupils' recall of previous work and also to encourage them to explain their thinking, for instance in mathematics. The pace of learning is frequently brisk on these occasions. In those lessons that were satisfactory a good

pace of learning was frequently not sustained throughout. In religious education, pupils' confidence in their teachers enables them to share their personal beliefs and experiences. However, only rarely, in any subject, do teachers correct pupils' oral use of standard English or "model" spoken English for them to emulate. Teachers make good links between subjects especially when promoting pupils' literacy and mathematical skills. Good subject knowledge is a feature of much of the good teaching and sometimes accompanied by well considered use of resources. The exception is in ICT where teachers' expertise is too variable and the lack of sufficient resources restricts pupils' learning. The use of setting for English and mathematics in some of the year groups and the use of ability grouping elsewhere help teachers to meet the range of pupils' needs. In general, teachers know their pupils well and plan their work accordingly. The absence of an adequate system for assessing pupils' ICT skills makes it difficult for teachers to build on what pupils already know and can do. Teachers' marking lacks consistency and too often does not give enough guidance on how pupils could improve their work, despite some good examples.

- 18 The teaching of pupils with SEN is good with some very good and excellent lessons in Years 3 and 4. Teachers take good account of the pupils' Individual Education Plans (IEPs) when planning work and the organisation of pupils into sets by ability means that pupils are often taught English and mathematics by especially well qualified and skilful teachers with a deep knowledge of how pupils with learning difficulties make progress. The very good contribution made by support staff also contributes to effective learning. These staff are briefed well and frame questions in such a way that the pupils are challenged but are able to cope with what is expected. The teachers make it very clear to the pupils at the beginning of lessons what is to be taught and thoroughly review their understanding at the end of lessons. Assessment of the pupils and guidance through good marking makes it clear what the pupils need to do next to improve. A particular strength in the teaching is the way in which the staff use praise to raise the pupils' self esteem and this promotes an enthusiasm for learning and confidence in the pupils. The pupils work hard and produce good quantities of work taking pride in presenting it well.

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

- 19 There has been an improvement in the curricular provision since the last inspection and it is now good throughout the school. The curriculum is broad and balanced and relevant to the pupils' needs. All subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education have schemes of work, based on government guidance and Sheffield Local Education Authority schemes of work, to ensure that pupils are taught the National Curriculum effectively as they move through the school. The school is a caring, supportive community and the curriculum is enriched with very good provision for personal, social and health education (PSHE), which is taught within all subjects, although there is no formal scheme of work or discrete planning for this. Health education, drugs awareness and sex education are taught through the science curriculum and aspects of personal development, relationships and citizenship permeate throughout the curriculum in, for example, history, religious education and geography. The curriculum for children in the nursery and reception classes is good because it is based on effective guidance and meets the needs of children of all abilities and backgrounds. Staff have a good understanding of the national guidance for the Foundation Stage and use it well when planning activities. All aspects of the curriculum are covered in sufficient depth and there are effective links between the nursery and reception to ensure that skills, knowledge and understanding are developed consistently.

- 20 The school has worked hard to ensure that all pupils have good access to the curriculum and that pupils develop their skills as they move through the school. This is a challenging task as the number of pupils in each year group makes mixed aged classes unavoidable. The two-year cycle for most subjects is designed to ensure that pupils do not repeat work and as much as possible is done to ensure that skills are practised regularly. There are strong links between the subjects so pupils receive a cohesive learning experience. Subject leaders monitor the curriculum effectively and the provision of a leader, for most subjects, in both the infant and junior buildings ensures that teachers have accessible advice on curriculum issues. There is a weakness in the use of ICT across the curriculum because of unsatisfactory resources, a lack of good in-service training for the teachers, and not enough time spent on the subject to enable pupils to make appropriate progress. There are very few pupils with EAL who are at an early stage of English language acquisition but the school provides bilingual assistance, where possible, when it is needed. In general, ethnic minority pupils are supported well. The school is involved in the Excellence in Cities (IEC) initiative and is making good use of the range of activities provided within the LEA for the gifted and talented pupils.
- 21 The curriculum and provision for pupils with learning difficulties throughout the school is good, and very good in Years 3 and 4 and for those with statements. The school often accepts pupils with learning and behavioural difficulties from other schools and meets their needs very well. All pupils are supported very effectively, according to their individual needs, by well-matched work, good use of additional literacy support and setting pupils by ability. The special needs co-ordinator (SENCO) makes a very effective contribution in supporting the work with these pupils and provides helpful guidance for her colleagues. IEPs are well written and used by staff in planning lessons. They are reviewed regularly and targets are carefully explained to the pupils. Support staff have a thorough knowledge of the IEPs and are briefed very well so that their support is sharply focused. Procedures for identifying pupils with SEN are very good. A clear policy gives good guidance to staff. The SENCO has a very good overview of the work and monitors the provision to make sure that targets are appropriate and are being tackled. The new Code of Practice is working well.
- 22 The national literacy and numeracy strategies are implemented well throughout the school. In Years 3-6 pupils of similar abilities or in the same year group are taught together and the curriculum is carefully planned to meet the needs of all abilities. English and mathematics are promoted well throughout the curriculum. For example, the oldest pupils wrote good quality poems to complement their studies of rivers in geography and produced impressive artwork on the same theme. Aspects of mathematics, particularly data handling and measures, are promoted in science, design technology and geography. In ICT pupils use data they have collected to learn how to use spreadsheets. However, these are not used as part of pupils' mathematics curriculum.
- 23 The range of extra-curricular activities for pupils in the juniors is good and some are open to seven-year-olds, for example, football. Clubs include a range of sports including fencing, basketball, hockey, chess and rounders. The science club supports the gifted and talented pupils [and one friend of their own choosing]. Pupils have access to keyboard and recorder tuition and there is a high quality and thriving choir. The number of school visits is impressive and ranges from a residential visit for the nursery children, who have an overnight stay at Whirlow Hall Farm, to a week at the Thornbridge Education Centre for the oldest classes. Visits to local museums, art galleries and environmental visits support aspects of the curriculum. There are



good links with King Edward's School that provides teachers to give older pupils experience of different languages and there is a range of science, mathematics or language projects designed to link the oldest pupils with their new schools. Myers Grove School provides opportunities for pupils to use their ICT facilities.

- 24 Links with the local community are good. Several local religious leaders take assemblies regularly and one of these runs a youth group attended by some of the pupils. Local businesses support the school by providing equipment and funds. A garden centre provided plants and contributed to outdoor equipment for the nursery. Small businesses collect money to provide equipment and small prizes for the pupils. The choir and recorder groups perform with the local brass band and at a senior citizens' home.
- 25 The overall provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good and permeates the work of the school. Provision has improved well since the previous inspection. The shared and committed approach of all staff has a very positive impact on the atmosphere created throughout the school and contributes very well to pupils' personal development.
- 26 Spiritual development is good. Assemblies provide good opportunities for pupils to reflect on a range of issues. Music is used well to create a reflective atmosphere both in assemblies and in parts of some lessons. Displays around the school are used well to celebrate pupils' work and to encourage their enjoyment of learning. Moral and social development is very good and is guided by the school's behaviour policy, which sets a strong moral code. Staff are excellent role models and encourage pupils to distinguish right from wrong, and to develop good manners and politeness. The use of rewards, including the house system, is very popular with pupils, and is very effective in both encouraging good moral values and also developing confidence and effort. Pupils are encouraged to share resources and help others. Especially good is the way they are encouraged to care for the needs of all pupils new to the school or those who are worse off than themselves. Racial harmony is promoted very well. Pupils are encouraged to undertake responsibilities, for example, in the dining rooms and when helping younger ones with activities. There are very good opportunities for them to develop independence especially through participation in residential visits from an early age. Good opportunities are provided to help them develop as good citizens such as raising funds for charities.
- 27 Multi-cultural awareness is promoted well through the celebration of a range of festivals and the study of religions. The school uses pupils well to share their religious experiences and backgrounds. The opportunity for the upper juniors to experience a range of other languages is a welcome initiative. There is further scope to promote pupils' awareness of the historical, and geographical aspects of the different cultures represented in the school, for example, the Caribbean. Art and design, poetry and music contribute well to pupils' cultural development. ICT is under-used for learning about, and experiencing, pupils' own and other cultures.

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

- 28 Very good care is provided and standards have improved since the previous inspection. Pupils feel very secure and valued.
- 29 Health and safety procedures and monitoring are very good. A good clear policy guides practice, and potential issues and risks are identified and dealt with. The building supervisor provides crucial support and expertise. Security arrangements

are very good especially when taking account of the demands of the large site. Very good care is taken at the end of school to ensure a responsible adult collects each pupil from the nursery and reception classes. Child protection procedures and awareness are very good. Staff handle issues with a sensitive but rigorous approach. First aid arrangements are very good with very effective staff training ensuring all areas of the school are covered. Pupils' personal development is monitored thoroughly; all staff know the pupils very well and provide very good personal support, which enables every pupil to develop confidence and feel valued. Equal opportunity is a key feature of school life. The support for pupils new to the school enables them to settle very quickly.

- 30 Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are very effective. The behaviour policy, with its emphasis on the use of rewards and praise, is having a very positive impact on pupils' attitudes, behaviour and development of self-esteem. The most consistent approach adopted by all staff contributes well to the success of the policy. Procedures to discourage and deal with bullying, racist or sexist behaviour are very good and any potential incidents are monitored and recorded promptly and rigorously.
- 31 Attendance is monitored and promoted satisfactorily. The school has had teething troubles with a computer-based system but is now well placed to use this more effectively. It is supported by a strong direction given by the Local Education Authority and good systems set up by the learning mentor. The school is not sufficiently rigorous in discouraging holidays in term time and impressing on parents the impact on their child's learning of taking such holidays.
- 32 Procedures for measuring pupils' attainment and progress were unsatisfactory at the time of the last inspection. The school has worked hard to address this issue and assessment is now satisfactory for all subjects apart from ICT. There are termly assessment weeks when pupils' achievements are measured, particularly in literacy and numeracy. These are used to group pupils by ability in order to match the work to their needs. There is some analysis of the results of the tests to identify any weaknesses and to adjust the curricular planning. In the infants, teachers record pupils' achievements on a regular basis. The school uses both statutory and optional national tests to measure pupils' attainment in English, mathematics and science annually and to set targets for pupils' attainment in the national tests in Years 2 and 6. Each pupil has a record of the National Curriculum levels they have attained in these annual tests. Simple but efficient class record sheets are kept to identify how much pupils have learnt, based on the termly assessments at the end of units of work. ICT is the exception to this. Staff in the nursery and reception classes have a good understanding of the key steps in promoting effective learning. They make thorough and accurate observations of the children and record them regularly so that they track the children's progress and monitor their performance. Good use is made of the information to plan children's work. This is especially effective in identifying and meeting the needs of children with EAL and those with SEN.
- 33 Although there are sound procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and for setting targets for year groups in Years 1-6, there is no coherent system for tracking individual pupil's progress over time. Teachers know their pupils well but it is currently difficult for them to assess pupil's rates of progress or to use the assessment data to set individual targets so that each pupil knows what he or she needs to do to achieve well. It is also difficult for subject co-ordinators to monitor the effectiveness of initiatives such as grouping pupils by ability or changes in the teaching or curriculum. The school is updating its systems for recording pupils'

achievements and is already working towards using ICT to correlate pupils' test results so that their progress can be tracked. There is a teacher responsible for assessment in both the infants and the juniors. They are well informed and have a very clear understanding of what is needed.

- 34 Pupils with SEN are cared for very well. Staff work hard to ensure that all pupils are able to participate at the correct level for their ability through the use of very structured assessment procedures. Pupils' progress is regularly checked and matched against the targets in their IEPs. Regular reviews of statements and IEPs ensure that learning never stands still and the staff willingly try different methods and approaches to maximise pupils' learning.

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

- 35 The partnership with parents is good and has a positive impact on pupils' attitudes. The school has worked hard to improve on the satisfactory standards described at the time of the previous inspection.
- 36 Parents' views of the school expressed at the parents' meeting and in response to the pre-inspection survey, and given during the inspection, are predominantly positive. Details of parents' and carers' views of the school can be found in the Parents' Summary.
- 37 Parents show good involvement in the work of the school and support homework. They also help in the organisation and support of fundraising events, make resources, such as story sacks, and have especially helped in the development of the school site, including the outdoor play area for the nursery. Parents did the very interesting and colourful decorations of all the cloakroom areas. Parent governors play a very effective part in the good liaison between school and home. The school is making very good efforts to involve parents further in the school and their children's education. Newsletters are regular and give very good information on school life and areas of work to be covered by every class each half term. Parents are made most welcome in school and all staff are readily available if problems arise. Annual reports give parents very good information on their children's progress; a strong feature is the consistent approach to setting precise targets for improvement. Good induction arrangements and liaison arrangements in the nursery help children settle quickly and also encourage parents to become part of the school; a process which continues consistently throughout the school.
- 38 Parents of pupils with SEN are kept very well informed of how well their children are making progress. They are invited to attend reviews and contribute to setting targets. Parents say that they value the school's work with their children and believe that it contributes much to their children's enjoyment and success at school.

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

- 39 The headteacher leads the school very effectively and is well supported by the deputy headteacher and senior management team (SMT). Staff have every confidence in the headteacher and she enables them to fulfil their roles as co-ordinators very well. The collegiate approach to leadership ensures that all staff are well involved in decision making, work together extremely well as a team and have a clear vision of where the school is heading. The school has improved well since its last inspection especially in leadership and management. The shared commitment to improve and the capacity to succeed are very strong.

- 40 The school is managed very effectively and communication systems work very well. Given the school's split site this is an important inspection finding. Ensuring that the key stage team leaders are members of the SMT and that subject responsibilities are shared between the two sites helps to achieve continuity in the curriculum and progression in pupils' learning. The school development plan (SDP) indicates a continued drive to raise standards and its priorities are very clear. Action plans for each subject are an integral part of the whole school's planning and have clear success criteria. Governors are well involved in devising the SDP and work collaboratively with the SMT; they helped to devise the current plan. Systems for monitoring and evaluating the school's work are sufficiently rigorous and involve governors and co-ordinators as well as the SMT. Performance management is well established and all members of the SMT act as team leaders. Pupil performance objectives are well linked to the school's priorities. There are good examples of action being taken as a result of monitoring. For instance, the school's drive to raise standards in writing came about because of a combination of lesson observations and scrutiny of pupils' work. Lesson observations in English, mathematics, science and ICT take place annually and the SDP indicates very clearly when other subjects will be monitored in line with the school's priorities.
- 41 Governors' roles and responsibilities are very clear and include oversight of subjects. They especially find the written reports from subject co-ordinators very helpful. Governors know the school well. Finances are managed efficiently, with the help of an LEA bursar, and grant funding is used appropriately. The governors have committed expenditure to maintain the provision of support staff. This decision has represented good value for money because the support staff contribute very effectively to pupils' learning. Governors applied best value principles well in improving the school's security. They are fully aware that, given the pupil mobility, a key measure of the school's success is how far pupils make progress, and comparison with the performance of other schools may not always be entirely valid. A number of governors are parents and some work in the school. This regular contact benefits the whole governing body.
- 42 The headteacher gives a strong lead in equal opportunities and the inclusive nature of the school's approach. All pupils are welcomed, irrespective of when they join the school, and the headteacher and staff value the school's ethnic and cultural diversity. All pupils make good progress. The special needs co-ordinator (SENCO) makes a very effective contribution in managing the provision for SEN and through her enthusiasm inspires her colleagues. The school has a group of committed and hard-working support staff who contribute much to the progress of the pupils. Training is a regular feature of the school's work and staff have a good understanding of the Code of Practice. All statutory requirements regarding SEN are met and the governors take a keen and active part in monitoring this aspect of the school's work.
- 43 The provision for the Foundation Stage is managed very well. All staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities and there is a good sense of teamwork which brings cohesion to curricular development and teaching. Monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning are good. The staff are well qualified and have good expertise in working with young children. Staff training has been used well to ensure that all are familiar with recent developments.
- 44 The accommodation for the nursery is in poor condition although there is a good outdoor play area which has been improved since the previous inspection. The building is in need of refurbishment and many of the resources are old and in need of

replacement. Equipment and accommodation for the reception classes are satisfactory. Staff make good use of the resources available. There are other weaknesses in the two school buildings. Although many of the classrooms are spacious some are thoroughfares and the dining area in the junior building is used as a classroom. Staff and pupils cope well with the disadvantages. Learning resources are mainly adequate but there are not enough for ICT. The junior non-fiction library has too limited a stock of books and some are out of date.

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

45 The governors and headteacher should:

- (1) Raise standards in English, mathematics and science by:
  - implementing a coherent system for tracking individual pupils' progress<sup>1</sup>
  - setting targets for individual pupils' performance and sharing them with the pupils
  - making sure that marking helps pupils to improve their work  
Paragraphs 3, 17, 33, 63, 69-70, 74-75.
- (2) Raise standards in ICT by:
  - improving staff expertise and resources<sup>1</sup>
  - extending the use of ICT across the curriculum<sup>1</sup>  
Paragraphs 4, 7, 17, 20, 22, 27, 32, 44, 69, 73, 87-91, 95, 107
- (3) Improve attendance by:
  - discouraging holidays taken in term time<sup>1</sup>
  - making more thorough use of the recently introduced computerised system for monitoring attendance<sup>1</sup>  
Paragraphs 14, 31

## **OTHER ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED FOR INCLUSION IN THE ACTION PLAN**

- Give pupils more opportunities to explore their own ideas in scientific enquiry  
Paragraphs 3, 72-73.
- Seek ways to improve the nursery accommodation and resources<sup>1</sup>  
Paragraphs 44, 47
- Improve the junior library especially in the provision of geography and history books reflecting a range of cultures  
Paragraphs 44, 60

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<sup>1</sup> Indicates that the school has recognised the issue in its current school development plan

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## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	62
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	30

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	9	14	26	13	-	-	-
Percentage	15	22	42	21	-	-	-

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)	23	256
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	-	63

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	-	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	-	39

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	27

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	11
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	22

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.2

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.6

National comparative data	5.4
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National comparative data	0.5
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*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	12	25

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	8	5	9
	Girls	23	21	25
	Total	31	26	34
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	84 (73)	70 (70)	92 (88)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	8	9	9
	Girls	23	23	22
	Total	31	32	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	84 (70)	86 (73)	84 (65)
	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	18	22

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	11	16
	Girls	15	12	19
	Total	23	23	35
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	58 (70)	58 (61)	88 (85)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	2	2
	Girls	14	2	3
	Total	24	4	5
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	60 (59)	10 (57)	13 (61)
	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	199	-	-
White – Irish	-	-	-
White – any other White background	4	-	-
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	15	-	-
Mixed – White and Black African	1	-	-
Mixed – White and Asian	4	-	-
Mixed – any other mixed background	2	-	-
Asian or Asian British - Indian	1	-	-
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	2	-	-
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	-	-	-
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	10	-	-
Black or Black British – Caribbean	8	-	-
Black or Black British – African	1	-	-
Black or Black British – any other Black background	3	-	-
Chinese	1	-	-
Any other ethnic group	-	-	-
No ethnic group recorded	5	-	-

*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)	12.3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23
Average class size	23

#### Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	237

#### Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	39
Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	49
Number of pupils per FTE adult	13

FTE means full-time equivalent.

### Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	4.1
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	4.8

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0.3
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

### Financial information

Financial year	2001-2002
	£
Total income	806,091
Total expenditure	817,182
Expenditure per pupil	2,155
Balance brought forward from previous year	46,146
Balance carried forward to next year	35,055

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	294
Number of questionnaires returned	112

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	66	29	4	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	56	38	2	1	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	51	41	4	0	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	38	30	16	6	10
The teaching is good.	63	32	1	0	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	50	37	10	3	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	66	22	4	5	3
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	68	24	1	2	5
The school works closely with parents.	41	42	8	5	4
The school is well led and managed.	44	35	5	4	12
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	60	35	1	0	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	29	21	20	3	27

## **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**

- 46 The children make a good start to school life in a caring and purposeful environment. They benefit from a well-focused curriculum, which meet their needs and is interesting and sufficiently challenging. On starting in the nursery most children have levels of skills, knowledge and understanding which are well below those expected of three-year-olds and this is particularly so regarding their language development. Attainment on admission has declined since the previous inspection and the staff have been careful to take this into account when planning activities. The quality of provision in the Foundation Stage has improved since the previous inspection and there has been good improvement to the outdoor play area. Because of improved teaching, the rate of the children's progress has also accelerated and is now good. The nursery and reception classes are managed well and the staff work as an effective team. By making good use of sharply focused assessment the staff build successfully on the children's previous experiences to ensure that there is good challenge and opportunity for the children to consolidate learning. The children achieve well and are prepared effectively for the next stage of their education. In spite of the good provision and teaching, few children, about a quarter, attain the early learning goals in the areas of learning by the end of the reception year. The exceptions are in physical and creative development, which are about the level expected by the start of Year 1.
- 47 On reaching their third birthdays, the children are taught part-time in the nursery class before transferring to reception classes either in the September or January of the year in which they are five. The quality of the accommodation in the nursery is poor and in need of refurbishment. Although resources for nursery children are adequate there is a restricted range and the quality of equipment is mostly unsatisfactory. The reception classes are better equipped. There is good co-operation between nursery and reception classes and the provision is managed well by an enthusiastic leader. This ensures that transfer between the years is very effective and the staff clearly understand what has been already taught and successfully build upon good foundations. The staff plan well to promote the children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development making lessons stimulating, varied and challenging. Central to this is the way that staff value everyone's opinions, feelings and beliefs.
- 48 The teaching in the nursery and reception classes is good overall and there is some excellent teaching of physical development, which promotes very good progress. The children thrive in an atmosphere of purpose and challenge and the individual attention they receive from staff means that they all make good gains in learning. Staff are very good at identifying children who have particular learning needs and, in consultation with parents, plan individual work linked to IEPs where appropriate. Additional support for these children means that their special educational needs are met. Children with EAL are also given good extra help and this enables them to join in with all activities and to make good gains in learning English. The staff have a good understanding of the different backgrounds of the children and provide books in the children's home language and plan topics which celebrate a good range of cultural traditions.
- 49 Lessons and activities are planned well and each member of staff is clear about their role. All staff are involved in monitoring the children's progress and keep detailed records of observations which are used to plan work.

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

- 50 The children make good gains in their personal, social and emotional development but by the end of the reception their attainment is below that expected for their age. Nonetheless, the children are prepared well for the next stage of learning and are enthusiastic and excited about school life because of the good teaching of this area of learning. Children quickly adapt to the routines of the nursery and respond well to adults. They enjoy choosing their own activities and sometimes the more mature work with friends in a variety of play such as the home corner. Most select resources for themselves and show a keen interest in the tasks set; they respond especially well when adults play games with them and this helps to foster a good understanding of collaboration and teamwork. These skills are extended in the reception classes where more is expected of the children in taking decisions and in working independently. The children readily share toys and equipment and enjoy each other's company, with boys and girls and children of different ethnic backgrounds working together happily. In discussions, they showed a real interest in plants and animals and those with pets talked about how to care for them. Throughout the Foundation Stage the children are very well behaved and many have learnt conventions such as saying "please" and "thank you". The effective balance between child chosen activities and direct guidance from the staff means that children feel secure and make progress within a caring environment. The weaker aspect of the children's development is linked to their communication, language and literacy skills; few children competently discuss and negotiate with their friends and the development of creative ideas in independent role-play is hampered by below average speaking skills

## **Communication, language and literacy**

- 51 By the end of the reception year about a quarter of the children achieve the early learning goals in this area of learning but standards overall are below average. The children, including those with SEN and EAL, make good progress because the teaching is good. Children with EAL are helped through well-focused support and learn much by watching their friends at play. Children with SEN are often assisted in their learning and special attention is given to asking well-crafted questions that stimulate thoughtful answers. Questions are designed to stimulate all the children to speak in sentences and there is careful and sensitive correction of incorrect speech. The staff focus well on improving children's speaking and listening skills through role-play and drama. In an excellent lesson in the nursery the teacher led the children through a dramatic and action packed story, drawing ideas from the children. The children concentrated very well and contributed much including some very unusual ideas. In the nursery, the staff encourage children to "write" by providing ample opportunities to practise and pretend, for example, to make shopping lists. This is extended well in reception where children pretend to be doctors writing prescriptions. More formal aspects of handwriting are also taught well. The teaching of reading is good and staff spend much time sharing stories, learning rhymes and poems and providing opportunities for the children to learn new words as well as build words from letter sounds. Much emphasis is given to early reading with regular practice at home and school and the children are developing a love of books and stories. Story times are an integral part of the school day and the staff fire the children's imagination with a wide range of stories and effective delivery which holds the children's attention. In the reception classes, good account is taken of the children's ages and abilities and lessons are planned to include lots of practical work and opportunities to practise writing, read together and play games. There is very good use of rhymes and songs to extend the children's vocabulary and to develop an understanding of sentence structure. Most children listen attentively, write their own names and recognise a few

words but lack skills in writing for different purposes and in using a wide vocabulary. Although most speak clearly they have difficulty in sustaining a conversation.

### **Mathematical development**

- 52 The children make good progress in this area of learning but by the end of the reception year only about a quarter achieve the early learning goals in mathematical development and standards are below average. The teaching is good in both the nursery and reception classes because there is a successful balance between practical work and direct teaching of number, counting and the use of rhymes and songs. Activities are matched well to the children's ages and abilities. By the end of the reception year, most children count in the correct sequence to 10 and recognise basic numerals. They are less secure in using mathematical vocabulary such as "more", "less", "greater" and "smaller". The children enjoy practical work and concentrate effectively when matching numbers and shapes. Most know the names of shapes such as circle, square and rectangle. Their skills in adding on one are appropriate for their age but few are able to subtract.

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

- 53 Few children attain the early learning goals in this area of learning by the end of the reception year although they achieve good success in using computers and practical work such as making models. Children draw successfully using a variety of computer tools and also have reasonable control when using the mouse. In the nursery and reception classes, there are good opportunities for the children to improve their knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development through practical work such as playing in sand and water and the staff structure these activities well to ensure that learning is purposeful. In one activity the children explored the unusual texture and shape of a pineapple and staff capitalised on the children's interest by extending the lesson to explore scientific ideas about floating and sinking as well as using the fruit to provide an example of healthy eating. The children benefit from good teaching. Children with SEN and those with EAL take a full part in the curriculum because adult help is on hand to guide them in making good progress. Children's scientific vocabulary and understanding is below average although they enjoy exploring ideas such as sinking and floating and understand that electricity is important in everyday life. They know that their bodies change as they grow older and that toys and games have changed since their parents were little. They talk about how they travel to school and recognise some of the features and buildings in the area. Children enjoy building models using construction toys and the more able follow simple plans to create models of houses. In both the nursery and reception classes there is good attention given to teaching about the children's cultural and religious traditions.

## Physical development

- 54 Children excel in this aspect of their development and make very good progress because of high calibre teaching in both the nursery and reception classes. By the end of the reception year most of the children attain the early learning goals in this area of learning. In the nursery, an excellent lesson in movement and drama extended the children's physical skills and did much to broaden their use of language and actions in communicating ideas. The school's much improved outdoor play area also makes a good contribution to the children's physical development. Boys and girls join in enthusiastically in both formal and informal activities. In the nursery they pedal vigorously around a track showing good poise and balance and showing good stamina. The staff intervene at just the right points to move learning on. For example, three boys on the climbing frame were encouraged to work together to devise different ways of reaching the top; their concentration was intense. Children are encouraged to be independent and most now change independently. In an excellent lesson in the hall the reception teacher moved learning on at a brisk pace but also provided opportunities for the children to practise and reflect upon their achievements. The children successfully balanced and rolled different balls showing good control. The lesson was also used well to extend language skills as the children discussed words associated with speed and direction and then went on to express their preference for different balls. In the classrooms the children improve their dexterity by handling a variety of tools and equipment carefully. They are improving their skills in holding pencils correctly and this is helping them to form letters correctly.

## Creative development

- 55 Children enjoy all aspects of creative work and make very good progress in developing a wide range of skills that equip them for Year 1. The teaching is good and by the end of the reception Year most children attain the goals expected for their age in creative development. Boys and girls of all abilities and backgrounds improve their skills, knowledge and understanding at a very good rate. The only weakness in their creative development is due to their limited range of vocabulary, which hampers their progress in imaginative role-play. The children create well-crafted and attractive pictures illustrating different natural phenomena such as the waves of the sea by mixing thick paints of blue and white to create a stippled effect. They take good care when preparing for art lessons and clear up after themselves. Their pictures of buildings are a good example of successfully combining skills such as cutting, drawing and sticking. The children love singing and dance and join in enthusiastically. They keep together as they sing and most are able to clap in time to a beat, following the lead of an adult.

## ENGLISH

- 56 Standards for pupils in Year 2 are below average and similar to those described in the last report. Standards in Year 6 are also just below average but better than the national test results in 2002. Many of the high attaining pupils attain above average standards. Although standards in the last report were higher than those currently seen, the social context of the school has changed considerably. Direct comparisons do not reflect accurately the good progress the school has made in adapting teaching strategies to meet the diverse needs of its changing community. Since the previous inspection, the number of pupils with below or well below average prior attainment has increased and there has been a significant increase in the number of pupils leaving and joining the school at non-standard times. These factors have inevitably affected standards in the national tests for pupils in Year 6, which have tended to be

well below average. However, in general, pupils make good progress during their time in the school including those with SEN and those with EAL. Pupils throughout the school achieve well in the vast majority of lessons. Pupils' individual needs are carefully considered in teachers' planning. The collegiate approach of teachers and teaching assistants to provide work that is challenging, yet promotes self-esteem and pupils' confidence to succeed, is a significant strength of the school's work. Teaching is good and the partnership approach to learning enables all pupils to take part in worthwhile experiences regardless of their gender, ethnicity or individual needs.

- 57 The national literacy strategy has been implemented effectively and the co-ordinators provide very good leadership. The strategy has been adapted to ensure that reading and writing are reinforced across subjects and additional time is allocated to support reading and handwriting. This approach is working well. Pupils of all ages enjoy books and the presentation of work is improving. There are variations between classes which indicates some inconsistency in the expectations teachers have of pupils to write neatly and in the application of handwriting skills to present work across subjects.
- 58 Speaking and listening skills have a high priority. Although standards are below average at seven and eleven this is often because pupils do not have the breadth of vocabulary to describe their learning in detail. Often pupils give one word answers rather than complete sentences and younger pupils use gestures to support their descriptions. Across subjects, pupils' speaking skills do not enable them to articulate their depth of knowledge and understanding. Teaching is good and in two lessons features of excellence were seen when teachers "modelled" language very effectively and required the pupils to use the language in their responses. Pupils of all ages listen well and by the time they leave the school they understand how opinions can be used to support debate and know the importance of description to hold the interest of both listeners and readers. Good links are made between the spoken and written word. Attitudes are very positive and although pupils do not find formal speaking easy they persevere and are confident to present their best efforts. This reflects the value teachers place on individual responses. Errors are corrected sensitively using questioning which seeks alternatives and maintains self-esteem. In this way pupils learn through critical self-analysis and adult support and are rewarded appropriately for their efforts.
- 59 Reading is promoted through the literacy hour and separate reading sessions that offer pupils extended opportunities for independent and guided reading. Although standards in Year 2 are below average pupils use phonics to decode words and make use of dictionaries and glossaries to locate information independently. The weakness lies in the fluency and pace of reading and pupils' ability to discuss the content of their reading. This reflects the weaknesses already described in speaking skills. Many pupils use punctuation marks to support reading with meaning and demonstrate the good teaching that has taken place as they alter the tone of voice in response to exclamation, question and speech marks. Pupils in Year 1 know that changes in the size of font or print can signal a message to the reader. Year 6 pupils are encouraged to recognise the range of reasons for both reading and writing. They quickly and efficiently access information by using contents and index and indicate their favourite authors. Pupils say they enjoy the adventure in these books and the triumph of good over evil. They relate well to the child heroes and this is often reflected in their personal writing. Pupils carry out independent research in subjects such as geography and history, for example, when they researched the different rivers of the world. They are also taught to pick out the essential features of text and



to record their findings under specific headings. With adult support pupils successfully create reports that contain key facts.

- 60 Most parents support their children and complete entries in their reading record books. These are monitored by teachers and provide a good record of the range of reading. The library in the junior building does not offer a wide enough selection of non-fiction books and many of them are old and in need of replacement. Many books do not attract pupils to read and there is a limited range of books to reflect the school's growing cultural diversity.
- 61 Standards in writing are below average and there are variations in the quality of presentation of work and handwriting skills. Most pupils take pride in writing in a joined and legible script. Exercises to reinforce punctuation and grammar are presented well particularly those of more able pupils, while independent creative writing is more varied in presentation. In Year 2, handwriting sessions link letter formation to the recognition of spelling patterns that support pupils' reading and writing. Good progress from September to February was evident in a scrutiny of pupils' work as they increased the quantity and range of their writing. Pupils experiment with punctuation but still need adult reinforcement to use commas, full stops and capital letters. In Year 6 there is a good range of writing including poetry. A local poet has given very good support and her visit inspired pupils to write poetry about a river linked to their geographical study. One pupil referred to 'the silent whispers in the rivers' and used language well to create a haunting mood. A writing workshop for Year 5 also supported story writing, which required the use of description, about an old house. Pupils were required to make choices that added interest and encouraged independent decision making. Links to history are made as pupils write reports for Roman and Celtic newspapers as the opposing armies prepare for battle.
- 62 Frameworks for writing encourage pupils' independence and enable them to structure their work. Pupils enjoy writing, although they do not find it easy. They also enjoy sharing their work. They critically analyse their writing through class discussions and value the suggestions made by their friends and teachers. Pupils rely less on adults and frameworks by Year 6 and many are able, fluent writers. Their books reflect a good range of writing including stories, poems, plays and reports.
- 63 Results of statutory and non-statutory tests are analysed to judge the rates of progress of different groups and to plan intervention strategies to support improvement. While assessment arrangements are satisfactory, the procedures for setting targets require refinement. In one class individual targets are set which tell pupils precisely what they need to do next to improve. This practice needs to be extended across the school to ensure a more coherent system to track progress and involve pupils in monitoring their own learning. Marking of pupils' work is inconsistent. While there are good examples of teachers showing pupils how to improve their work, this is not consistent practice. The effectiveness of marking could be improved by linking comments to pupils' individual targets. There is also some inconsistency in the use of computers to develop pupils' word processing skills. These are areas for improvement.

## **MATHEMATICS**

- 64 In the 2002 national tests, Year 6 pupils' achievements were well below those of other pupils nationally in numeracy and all areas of mathematics including shape, space and measures and data handling. Standards have risen since then. Although the present Year 6 are still not reaching the expected levels overall, the number of pupils

working at the higher levels is similar to that of pupils in other schools. Year 2 pupils achieved similar standards to those of pupils in other schools nationally in 2002. This year, although there are a number of pupils who are achieving the higher levels, a significant number are not achieving the expected level and pupils' attainment is below average overall. The school had identified the need to ensure that there is sufficient challenge for the more able pupils and has been successful in meeting their needs. Good teaching and pupils' very good attitudes to their work, as well as the organisation of the pupils into groups of similar abilities or single age groups in the juniors, enable all pupils to achieve well, including the significant number of pupils who find mathematics difficult and those with SEN. There is no significant difference between the achievements of boys and girls and pupils with EAL make similar good progress.

- 65 There has been a decline in children's abilities on entry to the nursery and reception classes since the last inspection when pupils achieved average standards in Years 2 and 6 and made satisfactory progress. In spite of the lower standards, there has been an improvement in both the teaching of mathematics and pupils' progress. A significant number of pupils leave or join the school in the juniors so comparisons between the year group in Years 2 and 6 are unreliable.
- 66 Many pupils in Year 2 have a sound knowledge of place value to 100. A significant number apply their knowledge of number processes to solve problems and find patterns in numbers. In a lesson about time, for example, pupils used their understanding of the five-times table to count round the clock in five-minute intervals, more able pupils calculating the number of minutes in half an hour. When working with money these pupils used mixed coins to purchase items within £1 and the most able worked out the change from £1. However, a significant number of pupils are insecure about place value and some have difficulty adding and subtracting within 10 without counting materials and adult support.
- 67 Year 6 pupils of average and above average abilities apply their mathematical skills well, solving problems and seeking the most effective strategies to calculate. The teachers have been very successful in promoting this aspect of mathematics, which they had identified as a weakness by analysing pupils' test results. The same approach to learning is applied in lessons for the less able pupils and this constant use and application of numeracy skills are helping them to consolidate their learning. The majority of pupils have an appropriate understanding of shape, space and measures. In one lesson, the more able pupils rotated shapes, identifying the co-ordinates on a grid. The most able pupils began to find patterns in the co-ordinates in order to predict the position of their shapes. Many pupils understand the relationship between multiplication and division and convert fractions to decimals and percentages. About a third of the pupils, however, are not yet secure in the mathematics they need to achieve the expected level in Year 6 and struggle to identify the appropriate process to use when calculating. Most pupils use effective methods for storing and retrieving data but the less able pupils struggled to find ways of calculating all possible combinations for a selection of three main meals with one of three side dishes.
- 68 Almost all the teaching and learning are of good quality throughout the school and there were no unsatisfactory lessons observed during the inspection. There are significant strengths in the relationships between the teachers and their pupils, teachers' management of the pupils and teachers' knowledge of mathematics. All teachers question their pupils in ways that encourage them to think and adjust the teaching and the content of the lesson to accommodate how well the pupils have

learnt. In an excellent lesson the youngest infant pupils were measuring the length of mice's tails using cubes. While the least able pupils worked with the learning mentor with short-tailed mice, the teacher realised that some of the most able pupils were competent and accurate when measuring long tails. At the end of the lesson she tested pupils' knowledge and introduced a metre stick with a promise of tape measures for the next lesson. This challenged the most able pupils by extending their learning beyond what is expected in Year 1. Where the teaching is less successful this match of work to the pupils' ability is not so accurate. In one lesson, for example, pupils were asked to complete worksheets to compare length without an understanding of "long" and "short".

- 69 While pupils make good progress in the majority of the lessons, occasionally the length of the lesson, in some cases well over an hour, means that pupils lose some of their momentum. Sometimes the more able pupils have nothing to do as the teacher supports other pupils. In the best lessons, a challenge is always to hand to expand learning. Most teachers generate enthusiasm for new learning by hinting at the work to come in the next lesson. Teachers encourage pupils to use mathematical vocabulary accurately but very few teachers insist on accurate English when describing processes or answering questions. Homework is set appropriately to support the learning in the classroom and sometimes involves research to support, for example, lessons about handling data. A weakness in the teaching is the inconsistency in marking throughout the school. Teachers mark work accurately and praise effort but rarely give advice about how their pupils could improve their skills. Some pupils have targets for mathematics but few know what these are and there is no mention of pupils' targets in the marking. Much of the work completed in the infants is filed away and pupils cannot see the progress they have made over time. Although pupils use ICT to create databases, in general, computers are under-used.
- 70 The subject is well led. The two subject leaders work very well together and are committed to raising standards. They look at teachers' planning and observe lessons as well as sampling pupils' work. Termly tests measure pupils' skills and teachers use the outcomes from statutory and voluntary national tests to identify any weaknesses in pupils' performance. For example, because few pupils achieved the higher levels the school concentrated on challenging the most able pupils. Weaknesses in the way pupils tackled written problems has resulted in a focus on this aspect of learning. The outcomes from the tests enable teachers to group pupils of similar abilities and to move pupils to different groups when appropriate. This information is not yet used to track individual pupil's progress so teachers are unable to easily identify any changes in pupils' rates of learning. Pupils do not have a clear understanding of what they need to do to achieve well. The data about pupils' achievements is in the process of being correlated to enable teachers to track progress and the subject leaders have a very good understanding of the ways to use this data to set targets and identify any inconsistencies in teaching and learning. Assessment procedures have improved since the last inspection.

## **SCIENCE**

- 71 Standards are below average in Years 2 and 6. The prior attainment of most pupils is lower than at the time of the last inspection when standards were average overall. The quality of teaching has improved and most pupils make good progress over time and achieve well in lessons, including the pupils with SEN and those with EAL. In the 2002 national tests, Year 6 pupils did well to achieve more Level 4s than in other schools nationally. However, they achieved far fewer Level 5s and as a result the

school's average points score was well below the national average. Standards in the current Year 6 are better because there are more high attaining pupils.

- 72 Most pupils in Years 1 to 2 make good progress. Year 1 pupils successfully record their work on "all about me" in simple pictures and words. They are aware that pushing and pulling are forces and recognise that air moves. Since September 2002, much of the work of pupils in Year 2 has been in life processes and living things, and physical processes. Most recognise that humans and animals reproduce, and pupils name human body parts accurately. In their work on forces, pupils show that they know what constitutes a fair test, for example, when testing how far a toy car travels on different surfaces. Scientific enquiry is a regular feature of pupils' work and there are good examples of high attaining pupils in particular explaining their findings well. The content of the work is very similar for all pupils irrespective of their abilities and there is little sign of pupils pursuing their own ideas.
- 73 Most pupils in Years 3 to 6 also make good progress especially in acquiring scientific knowledge. Work on electrical circuits has been thorough in Years 3 and 4 and includes testing objects for their conductivity. Year 3 pupils' work on magnets includes clearly expressed conclusions and appropriate use of scientific terminology. There are inconsistencies in the quality of presentation in Years 3 and 4 and on occasion pupils' work is too prescribed by work sheets. Pupils in Year 5 and Year 6 are gaining sound knowledge and understanding of the solar system and of healthy living. A Year 5 pupil evaluated his weekly diet thoroughly and drew important conclusions from his findings. High attaining Year 6 pupils explain how micro-organisms can be beneficial or harmful. They also show above average knowledge of the main functions of the organs of plants. In general, Year 6 pupils have opportunities to record their work, not only in writing, but also in drawings and graphs, including line graphs. Much of the drawing is careful and well presented. However, pupils are more unsure than is typically found for pupils of this age, about how to investigate their own ideas for scientific enquiry. Although links with literacy and numeracy are effective, ICT is very under-used.
- 74 The quality of teaching seen in lessons was good overall and never unsatisfactory. Most pupils achieved well. The most effective teaching was at the beginning and end of lessons when teachers addressed the whole class. On these occasions, the pace of pupils' learning was often brisk because the teachers' well-focused and challenging questions captured pupils' interest and kept them on their toes. For example, in a Year 5/6 class the teacher's question; "What factors will keep me healthy?" elicited a good response from the pupils and helped the teacher to ascertain how much had been retained from their previous work. Learning objectives for the lesson were then shared with the pupils so that they knew exactly what was expected of them. In a Year 1 lesson the teacher's clear questioning made sure that pupils with SEN were fully involved. In most of the lessons, pupils' work was organised to provide different levels of challenge. However, much of their written work is too similar and suggests that not enough opportunities are provided for pupils to explore their own ideas and record their findings in their own way, especially those who are the most able. The quality of teachers' marking is too variable; it ranges from being helpful to the pupils to being merely a series of ticks without any suggestions for improvement. Teachers make good use of classroom displays to promote pupils' scientific interest and these include pictures and artefacts. Support staff are well deployed and make a good contribution to pupils' learning. Teachers and support staff manage pupils very well and as a consequence pupils behave sensibly and show positive attitudes.

- 75 The subject is well led. The science co-ordinator undertakes lesson observations annually, scrutinises pupils' work and monitors planning. In common with English and mathematics, assessment procedures are satisfactory and now need to include a more coherent system for tracking individual pupils' progress.

## **ART AND DESIGN AND DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

- 76 Standards in art and design are above expectations in Year 2 and Year 6 and better than at the time of the last inspection. However, only a small amount of work was seen in Year 6. Much of the small amount of work seen in design and technology was also good and is an improvement on the work seen during the last inspection.
- 77 Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have good opportunities to learn from famous artists' work. They looked at and talked about Picasso's portrait of a weeping woman and then drew their own colourful portraits. Pupils in Year 2 studied a picture by Monet and then sponged painted their own vivid interpretations. Year 2 pupils' portraits based on work by Modigliani and Lautrec show good observational skills and careful use of paint and pastels. Pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 make good use of paint to mix colours and make interesting prints. For instance, pupils etched a design in polystyrene tiles, painted it and then printed it onto paper.
- 78 The good development of observational skills is sustained in Years 3-4. Pupils studied work by Cézanne and focused particularly on his brushwork and use of colour. They then used a limited palette of particular colours to produce their own still life pictures. These show good attention to form, shape and texture and effective use of colour. Very careful and expressive use of pen, pastels and ink has resulted in closely observed drawings of natural objects including a ram's skull. An especially good feature of the work is pupils' written evaluation of their efforts. In Years 5-6, good links are made with literacy. For example, pupils in one class wrote a class poem and then used mixed media to produce pictures of waterfalls of a good standard. In another class pupils have used pastels well to draw pictures of rivers. Other good work includes costume designs, and pastel pictures of the solar system as part of work in science. A weakness in pupils' work is the use of sketchbooks. Despite the occasional good pencil drawing, there is little refinement of skills as the pupils become older and the sketchbooks are not used as a means of pupils progressively developing their own ideas. A number of ICT programs are used in art and design. For example, Year 6 pupils designed posters linked to a science topic and their work included importing pictures. Pupils also use the Internet to research information on famous artists.
- 79 There is some especially good work in design and technology in Years 1 and 2. Pupils in Year 1 talked about what makes a good puppet and then joined materials in different ways to make their own. They also evaluated their work. For example, one pupil wrote; *"Stapling was the easiest way to join material because it was quick"*. Year 2 pupils made winches using different sized spools, after studying a fishing reel brought in by a pupils' father. Year 2 pupils also demonstrated their above average skills and accuracy when they used wood, glue and wire to make model wells with buckets that were successfully winched up and down. They evaluated their work clearly. Good work in Year 6 includes pupils' design specifications for making bread and an evaluation of the "product" for appearance, texture and taste. Model rockets have been evaluated against three criteria: aesthetic appearance, flight and build quality.

- 80 Only two lessons were observed, both in art and design. The teaching was never less than satisfactory and was excellent in one of the lessons. In the latter, the teacher's very clear guidance on how pupils could improve their skills in observational drawing and excellent use of a wide range of resources helped pupils to achieve very well. Very good provision was made not only for a pupil with SEN but also for a pupil with particular talent in art.
- 81 Currently, there is no co-ordinator for art and design and the position is being reviewed. The deputy headteacher manages design and technology and provides good advice to the staff including in-service training and model lesson plans. A recent important initiative has been the increased work in food technology.

## **GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY**

- 82 Standards in both subjects are in line with those expected for pupils in Years 2 and 6. This represents very good progress bearing in mind pupils' attainment on entry to the school. At the time of the last inspection standards were low in geography. In history, standards were below expectations in Year 2 and in line in Year 6. Improvements in teaching and the curriculum have contributed significantly to the rise in standards. The regular teaching of the study units for both subjects enables standards to be maintained throughout the school through the links made to the teaching of basic skills.
- 83 Teachers fulfil the school's aims to provide a broad and balanced curriculum in both subjects. A strong emphasis is placed on providing practical opportunities to support learning. Very good use is made of the local environment and educational visits to secure pupils' interest and understanding. Nursery pupils have the opportunity to experience a night away from home, staying at a local farm, and the time increases to two nights in Year 2. A residential field trip to Castleton enabled pupils in Year 6 to compare and contrast their own environment to a small village mining community. Very good links are made to other subjects and particularly to science, literacy and numeracy. Pupils compared the shopping opportunities of Castleton and Sheffield and created an information leaflet for visitors linking their knowledge of writing persuasive text learned in literacy. Year 5 related science to map work in geography during a visit to 'The Earth Centre' in Doncaster. This provided an opportunity for pupils to practise their skills within a specific context and many were eager to complete further research for homework. Links were also made to ICT as pupils had the opportunity to use the Internet to research the area further.
- 84 Year 2 pupils have a good understanding of how to research projects using books, artefacts and ICT. They learn the differences between their own toys and those from the past. For example, they struggled to identify any modern toys made of wood and were surprised at the simplicity of toys long ago. They were confident to compare and contrast these artefacts and the differences in lifestyles between people in the past and current times. They use pictures and photographs to look at clothing and design, and features of transport. They showed great interest in photographs of people who lived over one hundred years ago, the grandparents of a community member. They handled an old doll very carefully and showed sensitivity to the sentimental value this had for the visitor. Visits to places of geographical and historical interest, including museums, bring learning to life. Visitors to the school, for instance a "Roman soldier", bring vitality to history and this enriches pupils' learning. These rich opportunities enable pupils to meet community members and develop an understanding of the needs of others, including the elderly. The local church also supports learning about the past and present within the locality. In geography, Year 2

pupils compare mainland life to that of the imaginary island of Struay. They learn about the differences and similarities in activities and industries between island and city life, looking at how remote communities develop communication systems that link them to large towns and cities. Pupils compared this work to personal experiences, for example, fishing boats seen in other countries and the holiday and leisure industries.

- 85 Teaching is good and two very good lessons were seen, one in history and the other in geography. In these lessons teachers maximise the use of local residents to make learning meaningful and fun. Classroom activities have strong links with educational visits and pupils draw on their experiences starting from first hand knowledge. This investigative approach to learning helps them to feel confident and to contribute to discussions. Teachers plan lessons that capture the interest and imagination of pupils. In a good lesson in Year 4 pupils investigated the contents of a dustbin and built up a profile of the teacher and her family. This helped them to value primary and secondary sources of evidence. A minor weakness in geography is in map reading in Year 6 where pupils have difficulty distinguishing physical and political maps. However, they identify mountains and rivers, define continent and countries and use appropriate subject language, for instance when describing an estuary and tributary.
- 86 The leadership of both subjects is good and the co-ordinators support teachers well. The current priority is to develop assessment procedures that are both reliable and manageable. The school development plan and the co-ordinators' action plans outline very clearly the future plans for the subjects in line with the school's priorities. Some books and atlases are out of date and need replacing. The school is aware of this weakness and is seeking ways to address the shortfall in provision.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

- 87 Standards in ICT have shown little improvement since the previous inspection and are below average in Year 2 and Year 6. There is little difference in the standard of work of boys and girls. Progress in ICT has been inconsistent and unsatisfactory over time, because pupils have limited opportunities to use computers to support their work in other subjects and to practise and refine their skills. Pupils with SEN also make unsatisfactory progress as they have insufficient opportunities to use a good variety of computer programs. Pupils with EAL follow the same course of study as their peers and their progress is also unsatisfactory. Progress in developing basic skills and techniques is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. The main reasons for uneven progress and low standards are as follows:
- the school has poor resources and insufficient computers
  - staff expertise is too variable
  - pupils in mixed age classes follow the same course of study and this leads to lack of challenge and opportunity for the more able
  - there are insufficient opportunities to use computers to support learning in other subjects
- 88 Year 2 pupils have satisfactory skills in word processing; they competently change fonts, styles and colour of text and make use of a variety of tools. These important skills were developed well in a lesson in Year 1 where pupils were taught how to use a word bank to help them spell correctly and to amend their work. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make satisfactory progress in combining text and graphics to create geometric pictures of robots and this work links well with mathematics. In some interesting work, linked to personal, social and health education, pupils explored feelings and ideas in their writing. One pupil carefully selected different fonts and sizes of print and

wrote: "Perhaps one day I'll be a teacher because I'm very kind." Pupils have little understanding of control technology, how ICT can be used to support their work in other subjects or the part it plays in everyday life.

- 89 By Year 6, pupils have sufficiently advanced word processing skills to perform basic functions, such as amending their writing, but few write directly on to the computer using their skills of editing to improve their work. Pupils have an appropriate grasp of data handling and successfully create simple databases and spreadsheets to find the cost of holidays for different groups. On visits to a local secondary school they learned how to create posters using clipart and pictures from the Internet to provide illustrations for their work on space. In the main, there are few links with other subjects although pupils have used the Internet to find out information to support their topics in history and geography. Most can remember sending and receiving e-mails. Nevertheless, pupils lack competence in creating multi-media presentations, creating and modifying sequences of instructions, using computers to measure temperature and to record findings systematically.
- 90 In the lessons seen, the teaching was satisfactory overall with a few good lessons, but the impact of teaching over time has been unsatisfactory. This has resulted in unsatisfactory learning. Discussions with pupils showed that they are keen to use computers and work hard during lessons but the inadequate number of computers means that there are often gaps between the teaching of new skills and the opportunity for pupils to practise them. During lessons, teachers hold the pupils' attention through clear explanations and by providing opportunities for a few pupils to demonstrate new skills. They manage the pupils' behaviour well. The teachers introduce technical vocabulary and most pupils are now competent in using basic computer terms. Although individual lessons are planned and prepared well, the lack of a good system to assess pupils' previous skills means that some work is repeated unnecessarily and the more able are not extended enough. The limited resources have a detrimental impact on learning, because pupils of differing abilities are restricted to working at the same level with little opportunity to explore and investigate programs independently.
- 91 The school has a well-structured plan to improve standards, resources and teaching. There has been some training for staff but more is needed to raise teachers' competence; their lack of confidence means that some lessons proceed at a slow pace because the teachers are unsure of the next step. The subject leader has a clear understanding of how to move the subject forward and all staff share this common purpose but improvement is hampered by lack of funds. The school uses national guidance as a basis for teaching but there has been insufficient adjustment to take account of the different ages and abilities in each class and this slows the progress of the older and more able pupils. A significant area for development is in using computers to support work in other subjects and especially in extending pupils' literacy and numeracy skills.

## **MUSIC**

- 92 Standards in music have risen since the last inspection and in Year 6 pupils achieve higher than average levels. Standards in Year 2 meet expectations. The quality of pupils' singing is particularly good throughout the school and the music produced by the choir is well above that usually heard from ten and eleven-year-olds. Pupils enjoy their music making activities and the tuition provided by the visiting specialist music teachers is a strength of the school. They provide good recorder and keyboard tuition and maintain the high standards of the choir. One of the teachers also shares her



expertise with the class teachers, teaching very good class music lessons to junior classes in turn.

- 93 Infant pupils sing a range of songs from around the world confidently, enthusiastically and expressively, reflecting their teacher's enjoyment of the subject. Year 2 pupils identify a range of types of music from South American Pan Pipes and the "Flight of the Condor" to "Wild Asses" from "The Carnival of Animals". They spot when the tempo changes and identify high, low and "middle" sounds. They make good progress in their lessons, particularly in their aural skills as they listen very carefully and behave impeccably. The teaching was good in the lesson observed during the inspection as the teacher has high expectations of pupils' skills in distinguishing and evaluating different sounds.
- 94 Music teaching is never less than satisfactory and that of the music specialist is very good or better. The oldest pupils record rhythms using standard notation. They use musical terms such as "dynamics", "pitch", "rhythm", "concord" and "discord" accurately and know that a diatonic scale consists of eight notes while there are five in the pentatonic scale. They know the names and hand signals for the tonic sol-fa system. Recorder players accompany the class confidently and pupils sustain up to four part rounds accurately because of the very good conducting and support from the teacher. The specialist teacher shares her appreciation and response to music with her pupils and her lessons make a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The teaching was satisfactory in a lesson taught by the class teacher and pupils' achievements were appropriate for their age. The teacher made it clear that she knew they lacked confidence in their performance and this caused some inhibitions during the lesson. She made good use of resources, giving pupils the security of recorded music to support their work.
- 95 The school has recently introduced a new scheme of work for the subject and the two subject leaders support both parts of the school very well. The specialist music teacher is deployed very effectively, ensuring that pupils have appropriate knowledge and skills to cope with the curriculum for the year group as well as ensuring good levels of instrumental and vocal performance throughout the juniors. Music for assemblies is linked to assembly themes and regular concerts and performances ensure that pupils' skills are valued. A boy and a girl are awarded the "Songbird of the Week" shields and it is evident that the pupils across the school are proud of their achievements and enjoy music. There are appropriate resources for music, including electronic keyboards and a range of recorders. There are no resources for composing using computers and the use of ICT is an area for development.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

- 96 Standards in Year 2 are above the expected levels and higher than those described in the previous report. Only one lesson was observed in Year 6 and pupils attained the expected standards in dance.
- 97 There has been good improvement since the previous inspection. The school uses the latest national guidelines, supplemented by a commercial scheme, to plan and teach the subject. Teachers work alongside professional coaches provided by local leisure services for the progressive development of key skills in football, hockey and basketball. This has improved teachers' subject knowledge and raised the quality of teaching throughout the school. The commitment of the staff, led by the subject co-ordinators, has raised the profile of the subject for all age groups. After school clubs extend the range of opportunities to develop skills further and are popular with pupils.

All areas of physical development are built upon consistently and pupils of all abilities, including those with SEN and EAL, make good progress. Boys and girls perform equally well.

- 98 The school recognises the importance of swimming. Pupils travel to the university pool to develop their skills and confidence in water. A large majority of pupils are able to swim at least 25 metres by the time they leave the school. A significant number of pupils have private tuition and swim further than the minimum requirement.
- 99 Gymnastic equipment for pupils in the infants has been improved and this has enhanced provision for this age group. Very good attention is given to health and safety. Teachers ensure that pupils take great care when setting out apparatus. Year 2 pupils have good poise and control. They work with partners and co-operate well to create linked movements that involve travelling on both the floor and on apparatus. They combine jumps, rolls and balances to create sequences and make good progress as teachers encourage them to develop smooth links when they change activities. Pupils develop appropriate jumping techniques, extending their fingers and toes and controlling landings. Teachers' planning is of good quality and clearly indicates how these skills are to be developed further in the junior classes. In games, pupils in Year 2 take part in challenging activities to improve their ball skills using hands and feet to control the movement of footballs. They begin to learn the fundamentals of rugby football and these early skills are developed further in the juniors. Pupils with SEN are well supported by classroom assistants and this enables them to take part in the same activities as their friends.
- 100 Dance is an important part of the physical education programme. Pupils in Year 2 create dances based on the flight of the condor using pan pipe music from the Andes. Cross-curricular links are good, for instance when pupils estimated the length of the wing-span of the condor. The work is extended in Year 6 as pupils work in groups to create 'folk style' dances and learn to time the sequences and improve their precision. Pupils invent creative routines to complement the rhythm of the dances.
- 101 The quality of teaching is good with examples of very good and excellent practice. Lessons are very well planned and demonstrate teachers' enthusiasm and improving subject knowledge. Teachers know their pupils very well and provide work to ensure good progress is maintained. Very good relationships between teachers and pupils accelerate learning. Warm-up sessions receive good attention and prepare pupils well for more rigorous exercise. Pupils thoroughly enjoy all aspects of physical education. The previous report commented on a minority of pupils who responded inappropriately in dance. In the lessons observed during the current inspection, the behaviour of all pupils was very good.
- 102 The subject is very well led by the subject co-ordinator. His enthusiasm and subject knowledge offer good support to teachers. The school uses an all weather pitch for much of the work in games. There are plans to improve this facility by fitting Astroturf to the existing area. Physical education makes a good contribution to the social and moral development of pupils.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

- 103 Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection and the quality of teaching has improved. In Year 2 and Year 6 standards are in line with those indicated in the syllabus followed by most schools in Sheffield. Overall, pupils make

good progress because much of the teaching is stimulating and captures the pupils' attention through practical activities and the use of religious objects to bring the subject to life. Pupils with EAL make good progress because the staff actively involve them in lessons and help them to talk about their beliefs and traditions. Pupils with SEN participate fully in lessons often supported by classroom assistants who provide good guidance, so that the pupils learn effectively and express their own ideas clearly. Boys and girls join in lessons with equal enthusiasm and achieve similar standards.

- 104 Year 2 pupils have a good understanding of symbolism through their topic "Belonging". They talk with enthusiasm about organisations they belong to and show much pride in their school and being part of it. The teachers make good use of discussions to enable pupils to explore ideas and to improve their speaking skills. This approach fosters an atmosphere of mutual respect and provides the pupils with opportunities to explore ideas such as friendship, beliefs and traditions in a caring and thoughtful way. As a result, pupils show much tolerance and interest in their classmates' varied lifestyles and faiths. Pupils have a secure knowledge of special signs, symbols and books of a variety of religions. They also know about a variety of festivals.
- 105 Pupils in Year 6 have grasped the essential similarities and differences between Christianity, Judaism and Islam. They show good respect for the different traditions and this helps them to understand and appreciate the various beliefs held by pupils at the school and to create religious and racial harmony. Pupils keenly discuss the basic tenets of faith and show a particular interest in pilgrimage such as Hajj. They also understand that some Christians and Jews make pilgrimages. Their knowledge of Bible stories is sound. They accurately retold the "Prodigal Son" and also showed clear understanding of the meaning behind the story of the Good Samaritan. Most pupils say that they enjoy learning about religion and understand the important part it plays in some people's lives.
- 106 Teaching and learning are good. The successful introduction of a new scheme of work in Years 3 to 6 has enabled teachers to plan work that builds effectively on previous learning. Good attention is paid to the locally agreed syllabus for religious education and all aspects of the syllabus are covered appropriately. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and make good use of interesting anecdotes and religious objects to bring the lessons to life. Pupils are taught well to respect others and to appreciate special books and articles of worship. Many lessons include good opportunities for pupils to discuss ideas and share experiences and personal beliefs, and pupils show much interest at these times. Pupils respond well to the teaching and concentrate throughout lessons. They work hard and produce good quantities of well-presented work. Teachers add positive comments to the pupils' work but do not use marking well to guide pupils on the next step in learning or to encourage further research. In a very good lesson in Years 3 and 4, the teacher created an atmosphere of sacredness as the pupils acted out the Passover meal. The teacher then moved the learning on very well by asking probing questions, which got the pupils thinking. This style of teaching also helps to promote pupils' speaking and listening skills. Pupils' reading and writing skills are enhanced through the teaching of religious education as the teachers encourage them to use a variety of sources of evidence and to record their findings in different ways, either on well-structured worksheets or by writing independent accounts.
- 107 The subject is led and managed effectively and has brought about improved consistency in teaching and learning throughout the school. There is an adequate range of resources to support the teaching although ICT is not used sufficiently.

Pupils are given good opportunities to carry out research by using the library and some follow their interests through by doing extra work at home. At the end of each topic the teachers assess how well pupils have understood by testing their knowledge. They keep useful records of the pupils' achievements.