

INSPECTION REPORT

ST MARY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Halifax

LEA area: Calderdale

Unique reference number: 107546

Headteacher: Mr P Copley

Reporting inspector: Mr D Page
1028

Dates of inspection: 6 – 9 May 2003

Inspection number: 246687

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	5 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Swires Road Halifax West Yorkshire
Postcode:	HX1 2ER
Telephone number:	01422 362 365
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr K Canning
Date of previous inspection:	November 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
1028	D Page	Registered inspector	Science Information and communication technology Educational inclusion English as an additional language	What sort of school is it? School's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further?
9798	V Ashworth	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?
29261	P Ward	Team inspector	Art and design History Music Areas of learning in the Foundation Stage	
31175	A Allison	Team inspector	Mathematics Design and technology Physical education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
32159	B Remond	Team inspector	English Geography Special educational needs	How well is the school led and managed?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Mary's Catholic Primary School is bigger than other primary schools with 295 pupils compared with the average size nationally of 242. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, (12.2 per cent), is broadly in line with the national average. The percentage of pupils whose mother tongue is not English, (six per cent), is higher than in most schools. One of these pupils is at an early stage of language acquisition. The main languages, other than English, spoken by pupils are: Urdu; Punjabi; Greek, and Italian. There is currently one refugee. The percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs, including statements, (19.3 per cent), is broadly in line with the national average. There is a wide range of types of need, many pupils having moderate learning difficulties or physical disabilities. The percentage of pupils with statements of special educational needs, (1.7 per cent), is broadly in line with the national average. The number of pupils who join and leave the school other than at the usual time, is very high. The school is situated in a ward which exhibits some social advantage. However, only 18 per cent of children come from this ward, and the school draws pupils from a very wide area. Half the pupils come from areas exhibiting some level of social deprivation, and 10 per cent come from areas with very high levels of disadvantage.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The effectiveness of St Mary's Catholic Primary School is very good. Standards on entry are broadly average for this age group. By the end of Year 6, in work seen, standards in English and science were well above the national expectation, and in mathematics were above expectation. The school helps pupils to make very good progress. Teaching is very good and often excellent; behaviour is excellent; leadership by the head is excellent, and management by senior staff and subject co-ordinators is very good. Given how effective the school is, its context, and the money it receives, the school provides very good value for money.

What the school does well

- The head provides excellent leadership through effectively sharing his clear vision for the school, creating strong relationships, and inspiring and motivating his colleagues.
- Management by senior staff and subject leaders is very good. They are very effective at using evaluation and the analysis of data to identify priorities for development.
- Teaching is very good due to teachers' understanding of the subject and their pupils' needs, and as a consequence pupils make very good progress and achieve high standards.
- Attendance is very good and pupils are very keen to come to school.
- Pupils' behaviour is excellent, they form strong positive relationships with peers and adults and their attitudes to school are very good.
- Teaching assistants make a very significant contribution to learning.
- The especial nature of the school contributes significantly to the excellent provision for spiritual development and the very good provision for moral, social and cultural development.
- The school cares for its pupils extremely well.

What could be improved

- In some lessons, pupils are not encouraged to work independently, and more opportunities need to be created for pupils to take responsibility around the school.
- The library resources are insufficiently well developed.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Since the last inspection, the school has made very good improvements in all the areas identified in that report. Standards of attainment in art in the lower school have been significantly raised; assessment has been improved and is now excellent for the core subjects, although some inconsistency remains in marking; the schemes of work have been dramatically improved and often address the needs of pupils in great detail; the role of the head and subject leaders in monitoring teaching and learning has been substantially developed and is now very good, and higher attaining pupils are very effectively challenged.

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				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	2000	2001	2002	2002	
English	E	B	C	C	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
mathematics	C	B	C	C	
science	B	A	B	B	

By the end of the Year 2 in 2002, standards in mathematics were very high and in the top five per cent of schools nationally; in writing standards were well above the national average, and in reading, standards were around the national average. This picture was repeated when the results were compared to similar schools on the basis of free school meals. Standards in science, as measured by teacher assessment, were very high and in the top five per cent of schools nationally. Performance in the different aspects of the three core subjects is generally even. Over the last five years, the trend in performance in mathematics has been dramatically better than the national trend; in writing it has stayed more or less in line with the national trend, while in reading it has fallen. Performance in national tests in 2002, for both reading and writing were dramatically improved. By the end of Year 6 in 2002, standards in science were above the national average; and for English and mathematics were in line with the national averages. When compared to similar schools on the basis of free school meals, this picture was repeated. There is no significant difference in the relative performance of boys and girls throughout the school. When taking all three subjects together, the trend in improvement at the school has been in line with the national trend over the last three years. The school met its appropriately challenging target in English but failed to meet its challenging target in mathematics.

All pupils, regardless of ethnicity; special educational need; gender; level of prior attainment, or whether learning in English as an additional language, are helped to achieve very well. Standards in literacy throughout the school are well above national expectation. Standards in numeracy throughout the school are above national expectation and rising. Standards seen in lessons in English were well above national expectations for pupils throughout the school. This is a slightly different picture to that shown in the most recent national tests, due to the differences between year groups and the high mobility of pupils at the school. Throughout the school in mathematics, standards in lessons were above those expected. By the end of Year 2 in science, standards of work seen in lessons and books were above national expectation, and by the end of Year 6 were well above expectation. In all other subjects, standards seen were above expectation, except in design and technology and the Foundation Stage, where standards were in line with expectation.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. The pupils show great enthusiasm for their school both in lessons and other activities.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Excellent. Pupils are keenly aware of the high expectations of their teachers, which reflect the strong values expressed in the school's Mission Statement.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. The headteacher and staff place a very high priority on developing relationships. Their example as role models leads to very good relationships, which make a very positive contribution to the education provided.
Attendance	Very good. Many pupils insist on attending in circumstances where it would be reasonable for them to stay at home.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching and learning at the school are very good. Teachers manage their classes excellently and as a consequence lessons move at a brisk pace and pupils make very good progress. Pupils work extremely hard and persevere exceptionally well at their tasks. Teaching in English is very good. The national literacy strategy is firmly embedded in the school's curriculum, consequently punctuation, grammar and spelling are taught systematically and very well throughout the school. Teaching in mathematics is very good. Standards in numeracy are rising because the teachers have a very good knowledge and understanding of the national numeracy strategy and the quality of teaching has improved across the school and is now very good. The school meets the needs of all pupils regardless of gender; level of prior attainment; ethnicity; special educational need, or whether they are learning in English as an additional language. This is in part due to the way teachers ensure all pupils are included in every lesson and feel highly valued, and also due to the significant impact made by learning support assistants. Teaching in science is very good. Relationships between teachers and pupils are very good and contribute to the very good progress pupils make. In some lessons, teachers provide such a high level of guidance that pupils' opportunities to work with independence are restricted. Teaching in: information and communication technology; history; art and design, and music is very good. In: the Foundation Stage; design and technology; geography, and physical education, teaching is good. Learning support assistants are very well briefed and form a very strong, knowledgeable, dedicated and caring team. While they make a significant impact on all pupils' learning, it is particularly noticeable for those pupils with special educational needs or learning in English as an additional language.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. The school makes very good use of cross-curricular links. An excellent range of activities is provided outside lessons.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. A knowledgeable special educational needs co-ordinator organises provision very well, and pupils are very well supported by dedicated, caring teachers and learning support assistants.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Very good. Individual pupils' needs are identified at an early stage on entry to the school and appropriate support is provided.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. The provision for the pupils' spiritual development is excellent. Provision for their moral, social and cultural development, is very good. The school has developed a climate where pupils can grow, flourish, respect others and be respected.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Excellent. The strong Catholic tradition has contributed towards the establishment of an all-pervading family atmosphere which offers pupils every opportunity to do their best.

The school works very well with parents, keeping them very well informed of events at the school and seeking very effectively, to involve them in the work of the school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The excellent leadership of the headteacher is a major strength of the school. Management by senior staff and subject leaders is very good.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Excellent. The governing body has an excellent understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. The governors' annual report reflects the enthusiasm and determination of the governors.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. Success has been achieved in part due to the corporate discussion amongst teachers and governors about how to evaluate the outcomes of development priorities.
The strategic use of resources	Excellent. The school makes excellent use of its resources with very good consideration being given to best value and the impact of spending on learning.

The school has adequate numbers of staff to meet the needs of the National Curriculum. The school's accommodation is very spacious and allows for the effective delivery of the curriculum. The school has good resources overall, but there are insufficient books in the school libraries to meet the needs of the pupils as independent learners.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The teaching is good.• Behaviour in school is good.• Parents feel comfortable in approaching the school.• The school expects their children to work hard.• The school is helping their children become mature.• The school is well led and managed.• Their children like coming to school.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The least popular issue, whether their children got the right amount of homework, attracted only seven per cent of negative responses.

The parents' views of the school, as expressed in the meeting held before the inspection, and in the replies to the questionnaire, are extremely positive. In replying to the questionnaire, at least 93 per cent of parents felt positive about all the issues. The inspection team found evidence to support this positive view of the school and that homework was set within national guidelines.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

- 1 By the end of the Year 2 in 2002, standards in mathematics were very high and in the top five per cent of schools nationally; in writing standards were well above the national average, and in reading, standards were around the national average. This picture was repeated when the results were compared to similar schools on the basis of free school meals. Standards in science, as measured by teacher assessment, were very high and in the top five per cent of schools nationally. Performance in the different aspects of the three core subjects is generally even. There is no significant difference in the relative performance of boys and girls. Over the last five years, the trend in performance in mathematics has been dramatically better than the national trend; in writing it has stayed more or less in line with the national trend, while in reading it has fallen. Performance in national tests in 2002, for both reading and writing were dramatically improved.
- 2 By the end of Year 6 in 2002, standards in science were above the national average; and for English and mathematics were in line with the national averages. When compared to similar schools on the basis of free school meals, this picture was repeated. When compared to similar schools on the basis of prior attainment, the comparison in English and science remained the same, while in mathematics standards were below the average for similar schools. There is no significant difference in the relative performance of boys and girls. Over the last five years, the trend in performance in science has been faster than the national average, and for English and mathematics has been broadly in line with the average. When taking all three subjects together, the trend in improvement at the school has been in line with the national trend over the last three years. The school met its appropriately challenging target in English but failed to meet its challenging target in mathematics.
- 3 All pupils, regardless of ethnicity; special educational need; gender; level of prior attainment, or whether learning in English as an additional language, are helped to achieve very well.
- 4 Standards in literacy throughout the school are well above national expectation. Standards in numeracy throughout the school are above national expectation and rising due to the effective way in which teachers have integrated the national strategy into their teaching. Standards seen in lessons in reading; writing, and speaking were well above national expectations for pupils throughout the school. This is a slightly different picture to that shown in the most recent national tests, due to the differences in between year groups and the high mobility of pupils at the school. By the end of Year 2 and 6 in mathematics, standards in lessons were above those expected for pupils of this age. By the end of Year 2 in science, standards of work seen in lessons and books were above national expectation, and by the end of Year 6 were well above expectation. In all other subjects, standards seen were above expectation, except in design and technology and the Foundation Stage, where standards were in line with expectation.
- 5 The majority of pupils with special educational needs achieve below average scores in the national tests at the end of Year 2 and in standardised tests for older pupils, despite having made very good progress when measured from their standards on entry. Their needs are clearly identified at an early stage. Information gathered from teachers, parents, pre-school provision and relevant outside agencies such as

medical and education departments, is used to provide very good individual educational programmes. Targets are specific, realistic and often challenging. They are measurable, and attainable and reviewed regularly. When they are not met, they are sympathetically amended in order to make them more accessible. The school is committed to raising standards for all pupils. The school has established very effective systems for supporting pupils with special educational needs. It responds very well to the challenges presented by: the high rate of pupil mobility; a growing special needs register, and increasingly diverse needs. In spite of the difficulties faced, the co-ordination of human and physical resources is very good and this is resulting in many pupils making very good or better progress. The majority of pupils with special educational needs make very good progress towards targets on their individual educational plans, and this is due to the quality of support afforded to special educational needs pupils by all teachers, learning support assistants, pupils and parents.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

- 6 Behaviour throughout the school is excellent. The quality of pupils' attitudes to their school and work is very good. Personal development, and particularly relationships with members of staff and each other, are also very good. All these factors make a great contribution to the harmonious and friendly atmosphere within the school.
- 7 The pupils show great enthusiasm for their school both in lessons and other activities. They enjoy the sense of belonging, and would not wish to be at any other school. Many pupils insist on attending in circumstances where it would be reasonable for them to stay at home. Minor ailments are ignored in their anxiety not to miss a moment of school. Most pupils show interest in their work, and share and co-operate with others. They demonstrate very good levels of effort and concentration in lessons and are keen to join in all school activities. There is a very positive attitude to learning throughout the school, which is encouraged from the moment the children enter Reception. They want to learn, and most persevere with their work.
- 8 Because behaviour is excellent there are no exclusions. Pupils are aware of the high expectations of their teachers, which reflect the strong values expressed in the school's Mission Statement. All pupils know how to behave in the corridors, in the dining hall, and in the playground where supervision is discreet. They work and play very happily together.
- 9 The headteacher and staff consider it a very high priority to develop relationships. Their example as role models leads to very good relationships, which make a very positive contribution to the education provided. This very caring attitude is evident throughout the school community creating a very strong family atmosphere. Pupils are very polite and considerate to adults coming into the school and are willing to enter into conversation when given the opportunity. They are able to relate in a mature manner and are extremely pleasant. Pupils willingly respond to questions and requests. There is no evidence of bullying in the school. On the very rare occasions when it does occur, it is dealt with quickly and discreetly. Pupils are clearly taught to think about what they do, and to respect the feelings of others, and this is evident in their attitude towards each other.
- 10 The pupils are willing to take responsibility when this is offered and regard it as a privilege. Older pupils are encouraged to look after the younger ones, particularly in the playground where Year 5 take on this responsibility. Year 6 act as buddies for the Reception class during the first term. Pupils also volunteer to clear plates at lunchtime. They are active fund-raisers who are encouraged to write their own mini

business plans. There are classroom monitors, and prefects are appointed for particular activities when the school is open to visitors during the year. Pupils are also involved in forming teams for competitive football each year. There is an active school council, which was not observed in session. However, in conversation with the members, it is apparent that this forum is taken very seriously and many good ideas are put forward and action taken whenever possible. Although this aspect of the school's work is good there are opportunities for further development. Attendance at the school is very good and well above the national average during the last reported period. Unauthorised absence is broadly in line with the national average.

- 11 The school is very successful in helping pupils on the special needs register to develop very good attitudes to work and raise their self esteem. Pupils are expected to respond positively in any situation. They are actively encouraged to support each other in the classroom; during physical education; at before- and after-school clubs, and at informal times, such as lunchtime and playtime. This results in these pupils working well together and developing very good relationships with their peers. Behaviour amongst pupils with special educational needs is usually excellent but the school has excellent strategies and support in place to deal with any inappropriate behaviour.
- 12 Pupils with special educational needs form very effective relationships with their peers (who often give very good support within class) and all adults. They feel perfectly secure when contributing to the discussion elements of lessons and teachers positively encourage their contributions. The school's inclusive policy is actively followed in the classroom and, in out of school activities. Pupils' needs are recognised and their peers, and adults, are sensitive to them. On occasions, pupils are asked to contribute to the review of their individual education plans.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

- 13 Teaching and learning at the school are very good. Teachers manage their classes excellently and as a consequence lessons move at a brisk pace and pupils make very good progress. Pupils work extremely hard and persevere exceptionally well at their tasks. Teaching in English is very good. The national literacy strategy is firmly embedded in the school's curriculum, consequently punctuation, grammar and spelling are taught systematically and very well throughout the school. Teachers value the contribution to lessons made by all pupils, regardless of gender, ethnicity, special educational need, or level of prior attainment. Teachers are sensitive to all pupils' needs, including those learning in English as an additional language. Lower attaining pupils are given time to share their work and ideas with others, and there is a high expectation that all pupils behave respectfully. As a result, attitudes to work, and behaviour are very good and this contributes significantly to pupils' overall progress. On occasion, the extent of guidance given to pupils restricts the opportunities for them to develop a more independent approach to learning.
- 14 Teaching in mathematics is very good. Standards in numeracy are rising because the teachers have a very good knowledge and understanding of the national numeracy strategy and the quality of teaching has improved across the school and is now very good. Teaching is never less than good and more than half the teaching seen was very good or excellent. All teachers plan very well for the different levels of prior attainment within the classes. Teachers make sure at the beginning of the lesson that pupils know what it is that they will know, or be able to do by the end of the lesson. In the concluding part of the lesson, teachers give pupils good opportunities to reflect on what they have achieved in the lesson. This promotes confidence and self-esteem very well, as well as knowledge of their progress.

- 15 Teaching in science is very good. Relationships between teachers and pupils are very good and contribute to the very good progress pupils make. Lessons move at a lively pace which ensures pupils remain interested and engaged. Teachers' subject knowledge is confident and ensures they tackle all aspects of the programme of study. In some lessons, teachers provide such a high level of guidance that pupils' opportunities to work with independence are restricted.
- 16 Teaching in: information and communication technology; history; art and design, and music is very good. In: the Foundation Stage; design and technology; geography, and physical education, teaching is good. Homework is set regularly in many subjects, which supports pupils' learning. Assessment in the core subjects is excellent and used extremely well to ensure pupils know how well they are doing; to provide them with short term targets to improve, and to inform teachers' lesson planning. Teachers generally mark pupils' work carefully and comments generally help them to evaluate what they have done. There is some inconsistency in the extent to which marking helps pupils to improve their work.
- 17 The school meets the needs of all pupils regardless of gender; level of prior attainment; ethnicity; special educational need, or whether they are learning in English as an additional language. This is in part due to the way teachers ensure all pupils are included in every lesson and feel highly valued, and also due to the significant impact made by learning support assistants. Special educational needs support is very well organised and the teaching these pupils receive is very good. There is a very good working relationship between the special needs co-ordinator; the acting special needs co-ordinator; teachers, and learning support assistants. Learning support assistants are very well briefed and form a very strong, knowledgeable, dedicated and caring team. They feel very well supported by teachers; the special educational needs co-ordinator; head teacher, and each other. They have daily briefings with teachers and report back regularly. There is a high level of specialist expertise amongst the staff involved with special educational needs pupils. All staff have attended training at school, some delivered by the special needs co-ordinator. The acting co-ordinator has certification in dyslexia, and a learning support assistant is qualified to tutor a 'Better Reading' scheme. The fact that pupils with special educational needs often make very good progress is testimony to the degree and quality of support and encouragement that they receive both from class teachers and learning support assistants.
- 18 In literacy and numeracy lessons in particular, activities and tasks are very well matched to the needs of pupils with special educational needs. Teachers and learning support assistants know their pupils very well, are very involved in target setting for them and give very good support through carefully fashioned tasks to ensure that targets are met. This is reflected in the high frequency of completed, and partially met targets set for pupils within their individual educational programmes. This was evidenced in a Year 6 literacy lesson. The learning support assistant followed the guidance on the pupil's individual educational programme by ensuring that the pupil had the correct resources to support their writing of a story. Pupils also use the computer to help them complete set tasks within the time scale allotted to other pupils, thus demonstrating that they can manage their own learning.

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

- 19 Since the last inspection there has been a very good improvement in the school's curriculum. There is now an assistant headteacher who leads curriculum co-ordination. In the Foundation Stage a carefully planned programme helps children to settle into school with ease. The school also plans for all subjects for pupils in Years 1 to 6 using the latest national guidance. The commitment to providing quality learning experiences across the whole range of the curriculum is exemplified very well by the achievement of the Arts Mark Gold Award and the Active Mark Award.
- 20 The curriculum for pupils in Years 1 to 6 meets all requirements of the National Curriculum well and there is a very good range of learning opportunities. The school rightly gives priority to English and mathematics in order to raise standards further, and to enable all pupils to apply both the skills and knowledge learned in these subjects in other subjects. For example in a Year 1/2 design and technology lesson, the teacher drew words such as 'terrifying', 'fierce', 'gorgeous', 'beautiful' and 'camouflaged' from the pupils in discussion of characters from Little Red Riding Hood. As a result, pupils generated good ideas for their designs for hand puppets based on these characters.
- 21 The National Literacy Strategy and National Numeracy Strategy are fully in place. The National Literacy Strategy is used well to raise standards in English while the National Numeracy Strategy is used very well to raise standards in mathematics. There is good, planned emphasis on the knowledge and understanding of key vocabulary in subjects. In a Year 5 mathematics lesson, the teaching ensured that pupils understood and used accurately the terms 'numerator', 'denominator', 'percentage' and 'equivalent'. Mathematical skills of measuring and data handling are consolidated across the curriculum, for example in science and design and technology. Knowledge and understanding of time is fostered well in geography when pupils learn about time zones.
- 22 There are policies in place for all subjects that give teachers good guidance about how a subject should be taught. All policies derive from the school's mission statement that underpins very effectively the very good provision the school makes for all pupils. The school has adopted nationally agreed guidelines for all subjects and has adapted these where the school feels it is in the best interests of the pupils, for example the food technology aspect of design and technology. The apparently low time allocation to art and design, design and technology, geography, history and music on the timetable is significantly augmented. The school plans very well to ensure that all subjects are fully covered by making good use of planned cross-curricular links. For example, when designing and making musical instruments, pupils enhance their knowledge and understanding of both design and technology and music. As a result, standards in these subjects are never less than those expected nationally and in some subjects are higher. For example, standards of attainment in art by the end of Year 2, a weakness identified in the previous inspection, are now higher than those expected nationally.
- 23 The curriculum is very well planned to meet the needs of all pupils. The need to challenge higher attaining pupils more effectively, another weakness identified in the previous inspection, has been successfully addressed. This is clearly shown in teachers' planning where work is provided according to the prior attainment of pupils, particularly in English; mathematics and science, but also in other subjects. Additionally, extension activities are provided for those higher attaining pupils who work more quickly than others. Pupils for whom English is an additional language are

very well catered for to ensure they have full access to the curriculum. Individual pupils' language needs are identified at an early stage on entry to the school and appropriate support is provided. When appropriate, and where available, support in the mother tongue is provided. The determination to ensure these pupils integrate well and make progress equal to their peers, leads the school to provide additional support from its own funds.

- 24 Pupils with special educational needs have full access to a broad and balanced curriculum. Individual plans are drawn up for pupils on the special educational needs register by the class teacher. This is done in conjunction with the learning support assistant, and where appropriate, the special educational needs co-ordinator, or outside agencies. Targets set are attainable and realistic and are very well focused. Each specifies a review date. The special educational needs co-ordinator is a full-time class teacher but is still very involved in rewriting pupils' plans and monitoring them across the school. Overall, the plans are very good.
- 25 There are seven pupils with statements of special educational need and the school is meeting its statutory requirements fully. Reviews of statements take place on an annual basis and the targets set inform the individual education plans. The register of pupils with special educational needs is well maintained and up-dated each term by the co-ordinator. The register fully reflects the requirements of the new Code of Practice. The register lists 28 pupils at school action and school action plus stages. This is broadly in line with the situation nationally. The school places a strong emphasis on identification at the earliest possible stage. This is well justified in relation to the growing number of pupils on the school's register and the high rate of pupil mobility. The school fulfils this task very well.
- 26 Staff are very aware of the new Code of Practice and have received training relating to the changes of practice. They also implement effectively the school policy for special educational needs. Members of staff, the special educational needs co-ordinator and learning support assistants are all involved in parental liaison providing support to those on the special educational needs register.
- 27 There is good provision for personal, social and health education. This is taught through Education for Personal Relationships, which is integrated mainly in religious education and science and physical education. The detailed scheme of work, drawn up by teachers and parents, with help and advice from the local education authority, covers all aspects of personal development. Pupils are taught from an early age about healthy eating, care of the body and the use and misuse of drugs. Older pupils receive sex education in line with the school's policy. The very positive atmosphere throughout the school, the excellent behaviour of the pupils and the high level of courtesy they show to their peers, as well as to adults, reflects the quality of this provision. However, there are insufficient opportunities to foster pupils' independence.
- 28 An excellent range of activities is provided outside lessons to enrich the curriculum. The school makes very good use of funding from its own budget, and other sources such as the national Education Action Zone initiative, to support this provision. Currently, there are lunchtime and after-school clubs or activities related to: sports; gymnastics; dance; music, including choir and orchestra; Italian, and French. While most of these are led by teachers, some are led by parents and outside agencies. For example, the Italian classes are taught by staff employed by the Italian consulate. Most of these opportunities are for pupils in Year 3 and above, but younger pupils have opportunities as well. For example, there are a lunch-time country dance session led by an artist in residence, and an after-school mini-tennis session run by outside sports specialists.

- 29 The local and wider communities make an outstanding contribution to pupils' learning. There are very strong links with the church. Members of the local community visit the school to support learning in history, by talking about their experiences of the Second World War, and science and health education, when babies are brought in to classrooms. Artists in residence for both dance and painting, including a former pupil who is now a professional dancer, have made a very significant contribution to arts education. Members of the Northern Ballet have also visited and pupils have been to see ballet rehearsals. Visiting Afro-Caribbean dancers made a very good contribution to pupils' cultural development. An excellent link with the headquarters of a national building society resulted in the school contributing to the staff development programme of that company. By training company staff in how to help pupils with reading, the school and other local schools, benefited from help provided by company staff.
- 30 Outside experts contribute very well to physical education provision, for example when teaching games skills to pupils in Year 2, and through involvement in after-school activities. Pupils also have the opportunity to learn to play musical instruments. Very good use is made of the locality in the teaching of geography and history through, for example visits to the People's Park and Piece Hall. The residential education visit to Ilkley for pupils in Year 6 not only makes a significant contribution to the physical education programme through opportunities for orienteering and adventurous activities, but also fosters personal development very well. Year 6 pupils talked enthusiastically about this experience, particularly the teamwork needed in a competition to get a bucket of water across an assault course. All of these experiences not only ensure that pupils are provided with an exciting and significantly enriched curriculum, but encourage pupils to achieve higher standards.
- 31 There are very good links with local nurseries and those secondary schools to which most of the pupils transfer at the end of Year 6. The school also runs its own Parents and Toddlers group. There are also very good links with colleges of further and higher education whose students benefit from having the opportunity to practise their skills in a school that exhibits high professional standards. At the same time, pupils benefit considerably from the contribution made by these students. The assistant headteacher is the school-based tutor. The school is also working actively with a designated Sports College and its partner primary schools to produce a common system for assessing and recording attainment in each aspect of physical education. This is further evidence of the school's commitment to providing a high quality curriculum for all its pupils. The school also allows outside agencies such as the Workers Education Association to use the school to run courses in the evenings and at weekends. As the courses, such as 'Helping in School', are often attended by parents, there is a benefit to the school as parents are better able to help pupils in classrooms and at home.
- 32 The provision for the pupils' spiritual development is excellent. Provision for their moral, social and cultural development, is very good. This is an improvement since the last inspection when spiritual development was judged to be very good and moral social and cultural development to be good. Very good systems are now in place to evaluate the success of the provision.
- 33 With regard to the provision for pupils' spiritual development, the school has developed a climate where pupils can grow, flourish, respect others and be respected. Christian values are nurtured, reflecting the mission statement of the school and the Catholic faith. Excellent opportunities are provided to encourage pupils to consider other people's beliefs and feelings. Assemblies are a special time

where the strong community spirit pervades. The choice of artefacts, the quiet discussion of feelings, emotions and their impact on others, together with the absolute stillness, enables pupils to reflect. The singing of hymns is a most moving experience as teachers and pupils interpret them with such feeling and sincerity. Teachers pay very good attention to the difference in pupils' learning needs, valuing their questions and allowing them to share their thoughts, concerns and questions. Pupils' spiritual awareness is also raised in a wide range of lessons. The use of art, music, dance, writing and poetry, have a significant impact on the development of a sense of spirituality. The spiritual retreats in Year 6 provide time for self-evaluation and exploration of feelings about a wide range of experiences. The prayer room, which is available for pupils of all faiths to use, provides them with increased opportunities for prayer and quiet reflection.

- 34 The school's provision for pupils' moral development is very good. There is a strong moral framework, where high expectations of behaviour, self-discipline and very good relationships are fostered. Opportunities are provided across the curriculum for pupils to discuss moral codes of their own and other cultures. All staff set a very good example for pupils through the high quality of their relationships with one another and with the pupils. The school rules are displayed in all classrooms and implemented well. Teachers take the time to explain the impact of their behaviour on others and to encourage pupils to think about the consequences of their own actions on others. Classroom displays reinforce the school's values.
- 35 Provision for pupils' social development is very good. A sense of community is fostered where all pupils are valued. Pupils are successfully encouraged to relate positively to each other, to be considerate, courteous and respectful of others needs beliefs and cultures. There are some opportunities to take responsibilities, a good example being when representing individual and class views to others as members of the school council. There are opportunities for pupils to work together to achieve a particular goal, for example when performing as a group. Within classrooms, pupils are encouraged to work together co-operatively. In some lessons, teachers plan groupings so that those with strength in a particular area of learning share their expertise with others. Very good examples of collaborative learning are seen in most lessons. Although in some lessons pupils are encouraged to work independently and to take on responsibilities, these opportunities need extending further. Weekly extra-curricular activities, including the school choir and orchestra regularly perform in assemblies in the parish and local community. Information and communication technology, French and Italian classes also promote all round development, positive lifestyles, cooperation and citizenship. Cooperative experiences are provided through good opportunities for pupils to participate in a wide range of sporting events. Arrangements are made for pupils to confront issues such as violence and bullying, sex education and the danger of hazardous substances. Fund raising for charities is a strong feature of school life. Each year pupils in Year 6, have the opportunity to participate in a residential visit. This is an important aspect of social provision where there are good opportunities for the development of confidence, independence and personal skills.
- 36 Provision for cultural development is very good. In lessons, very good opportunities are found to promote understanding of the wider community. In art, pupils look at the work of famous artists. Experiences are carefully planned to extend pupils' knowledge of other times, as well as their own and other cultures and beliefs. Pupils learn about African culture, Asian drama and dance and what life was like in the time of the Vikings. Music, including the work of famous composers, jazz and folksongs as well as opportunities to participate in local events, further enhance pupils' knowledge and understanding. Pupils' cultural knowledge is increased through the

use of well-chosen stories and poems, visitors and the regular visits to places of educational interest, such as Eden camp, to learn about the second world war. Local museums are used to study the Egyptians very effectively to support the curriculum and enrich pupils' experiences. Very good arrangements are made to ensure that pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education. Positive links have been forged with a neighbouring school to enable pupils to exchange cultural experiences and knowledge of others life styles in order to prepare pupils well for living in a multicultural society.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

- 37 The school takes excellent care of its pupils. The strong Catholic tradition based on gospel values has contributed towards the establishment of an all-pervading family atmosphere which offers pupils every opportunity to do their best. The headteacher and staff know the families, and know each child as an individual, and there are very effective measures in place to ensure the necessary support and guidance for all pupils. This is a very good improvement since the last inspection.
- 38 Procedures for child protection are very well established and extremely effective. The headteacher is the designated person responsible and receives regular training. All the staff are well informed and the local authority procedures are followed. The school enjoys excellent relationships with the education welfare officer and school nurse who provide continuous support. The school works hard and successfully with other outside agencies. There are, in addition, extremely effective procedures in place to check on the health, safety and well being of all. The school has recently achieved the local authority healthy school status.
- 39 There is very close monitoring of pupils' academic performance and personal development which starts from the moment the child enters school. Comprehensive records are kept on all aspects of pupil development. These are monitored regularly. Pupil records of personal achievement are added to regularly and retained. The school celebrates all successes occurring both in and outside school. Pride is taken in encouraging latent talent in sport and the arts. The headteacher's awards for all achievements are highly valued by the pupils and are an important feature of the weekly assembly.
- 40 Very effective procedures are in place for promoting good attendance. Pupils are keen to be in school and try hard to win the 100 per cent attendance certificates. Parents fully understand the importance of informing school of any unexpected absence early on the first day. Registers are completed quickly and efficiently and returned to the office. The school has been very successful in stressing the importance of attendance and punctuality and their contribution towards the attainment and progress of the pupils.
- 41 Excellent procedures support and promote appropriate standards of behaviour. There is a detailed policy which is applied consistently across the school, together with a clear code of conduct. Pupils are aware of the rewards and sanctions and understand what is expected of them. Behaviour is monitored at all times and recorded where necessary. The school is extremely successful at eliminating oppressive and racist behaviour. The adopted practice of prevention rather than cure, is greatly assisted by the very strong caring relationships which exist within the school.
- 42 Pupils with special educational needs are very well integrated into the caring environment of the school. The school has procedures in place to identify pupils who

may have a learning or physical disability. When a concern is first raised, either by the parent or class teacher, the pupil is monitored. If necessary, the pupil is placed on the school's special needs register. Pupils requiring specialist help with mobility, speech therapy or with a specific learning difficulty, have the necessary support and guidance provided either in school, or from external agencies. A teacher has a specific qualification in the teaching of pupils who are dyslexic. The school supports specialist help well. Between reviews, learning support assistants, where possible, support pupils in line with the specialist guidance.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

- 43 The school has developed and maintained very strong links with parents. The survey of parents' views before the inspection, and at the pre-inspection meeting, showed that parents are extremely well satisfied with the school's provision. All parents spoken to had a very high opinion of the school. They particularly like the family atmosphere and the extremely high standard of care, where their children are taught to support each other and work hard. They feel the school offers a large breadth of experience, in addition to an academic education, and has worked hard in establishing a very strong partnership with them.
- 44 The school's links with parents are very good and start early with a well established induction process which includes the provision of a very helpful early years handbook. Parents are encouraged to come into school to assemblies, prayers and religious celebrations, sports activities and shows. All parents are known to the school and there are ample opportunities to speak to staff at the beginning and end of the day if necessary. A variety of short courses are available for parents. The school makes very effective arrangements to ensure parents are able to attend 2 parents' evenings a year. These are very well attended and organised, and most appreciated by the parents. The before and after school club and mother and toddler group are successful initiatives which enhance the school's provision of facilities for parents.
- 45 There are very good opportunities for parents to become involved with the work of the school. The policy on parental help gives clear guidelines for volunteers, who are warmly welcomed. They in turn are well supported by the home link worker who is also engaged in developing better relationships with those parents who are not so involved with the work of the school. There is a very effective Parent Teacher Association which raises substantial amounts of money from a wide range of events. This association is very well supported by the community and its success reflects the very hard work which is enthusiastically given by the members.
- 46 Parents receive very good quality information and the annual reports to parents on their children's progress, are full and detailed. The school handbook and governors' annual report to parents are detailed and informative. There are regular newsletters which are attractively presented and provide an extremely useful calendar of events. Details on curriculum are sent home and reading records are completed by both parents and school. The home-school agreements are readily signed reflecting parents' interest in the school. The school appreciates the work of the parents and the parents feel valued.
- 47 The school has very good relationships with parents of pupils with special educational needs. Parents know who the special educational needs co-ordinator is and they are informed of any concerns at the earliest stage. They are welcomed into the school to discuss courses of action and teachers and learning support assistants have regular formal and informal contact. Parents of pupils who have individual education plans take part in the review process by contributing their views towards the setting of

targets for the pupils concerned. The partnership with parents is very strong. Parents are supported when appropriate, by learning support assistants in their dealings with external agencies, such as visits to medical personnel. Parents are very appreciative of the school's commitment to their children's education and welfare, and afford good support for the school and their children.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

- 48 There has been very good improvement in the leadership and management of the school since the previous inspection. There is now a well-structured senior management team that focuses very well on the development of the school. The deputy headteacher organises day-to-day matters and has responsibility for health and safety and residential trips. The assistant headteacher leads on curriculum assessment, and further key staff co-ordinate foundation/lower school, and upper school departments. Generally, subject co-ordinators' leadership is now very good and they are very effective at using evaluation, and the analysis of data, to identify priorities for development. They have management time to monitor the teaching and learning in their subjects. Senior managers monitor specific aspects of the curriculum and the whole thrust of school management is to raise the quality of teaching and learning. The school improvement plan is very clearly focused and matched very well to financial resources. Financial information and budget decisions are shared with governors and spending is clearly focused on identified priorities. Staff development is very good, with training directed to improvements in teaching and learning. Learning support assistants are well qualified for their work, especially in support of pupils with special educational needs. Governors have an excellent understanding of the work of the school. Committees meet regularly and monitor the progress of developments very thoroughly.
- 49 The headteacher's excellent leadership has provided extremely clear direction for the school and this is very closely linked to the aims and values of the school. They are evident throughout all aspects of school life, creating a very positive and supportive atmosphere and a sense of commitment that is displayed by all who work in the school. He has succeeded in inspiring and enthusing all who contribute to school life. There are very high expectations of pupils' standards of achievement and behaviour, excellent relationships and equality of opportunity for all. Decision making by the teachers with management responsibilities means that there is a strong commitment to the developments in teaching and learning. Strengths in teaching are used very well to influence the work of other teachers and to better meet the learning needs of the pupils. The school, through planned improvement, has given a high priority to school self-evaluation and target setting. The rise in the performance of the pupils in national tests reflects this structured development in the work of the school.
- 50 The way the governing body carries out its management of the school is excellent and it fulfils its statutory duties. A very clear view of the work of the school comes from their excellent understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. This excellent contribution to the work of the school is a result of the committee structure that oversees curriculum; personnel; buildings and health and safety, and finance. The skills of some outside support agencies are used to support their management of the school, and training in their role means that they are in an excellent position to have a positive influence on future developments. Procedures to check the effectiveness of teachers' professional performance are excellent and used to sharpen the focus of these developments and to improve the standards of teaching. The chair of governors meets regularly with the headteacher and so makes a very constructive contribution to the ongoing work of the school. The governors'

annual report reflects the enthusiasm and determination of the governors to involve parents as fully as possible in the learning of their children.

- 51 The school has adequate numbers of staff to meet the needs of the National Curriculum. All teaching and non-teaching staff have a current job description, which refers to their subject and managerial responsibilities. The excellent way members of the school management team monitor performance helps to provide focussed training opportunities to improve teaching and support for all groups of pupils. In particular, some learning support assistants are trained by outside agencies and receive accredited qualifications in recognition of their skills. They have also provided training for a large, local business in the private sector. The school has gained the Investors in People Award, which indicates the value placed on the development of all staff employed in the school. This very good focus on improving the quality of teaching is a major factor in the rising standards achieved by the pupils.
- 52 Priorities in literacy are supported by teachers' performance targets that are linked to developments as outlined in the school improvement plan. Procedures are very good for helping new staff to become effective as quickly as possible. Visits are arranged prior to teachers and learning support assistants taking up their appointments. Personal contacts are established with other teachers and class responsibilities are allocated that make best use of particular skills. Newly qualified teachers are supported very well, with opportunities to observe best practice and to develop their teaching skills where appropriate. Mentors and 'buddies' support them and are used very well.
- 53 Very good awareness of the direction in which the school needs to develop and the sharing of these objectives with all staff have brought a very good level of commitment to the success of development projects. Success has been achieved as a result of the corporate discussion amongst the teachers and governors about what needs to be done and how to evaluate the outcomes of development priorities. This leads to the school successfully improving teaching and learning through the development of school self-evaluation. As a result standards have risen. However, developments have not yet fully focused on the pupils as independent learners.
- 54 Provision for special educational needs is led and managed very effectively by the special educational needs co-ordinator. She is very well-organised; well-informed; approachable; supports her colleagues very well, and has built a very effective, collaborative team to support pupils. During her absence, there is an able and effective acting special needs co-ordinator. Both have a full-time class commitment but non-contact time is readily made available. The school uses money allocated to special educational needs very well and demonstrates the school's very strong commitment to this area. The specific budget for spending on learning resources for these pupils is used to support a wide range of special needs including mobility; dyslexia; dyspraxia; speech and communication, and autism, in addition to behaviour and a range of academic learning needs.
- 55 The governing body fulfils its responsibilities for pupils on the school's special educational needs register very efficiently. There is strong support from the link governor, who has a clear understanding of this aspect of provision. The governing body is kept very well informed as a result. Governors have given special educational needs provision a high priority and to that end, funding is sought from a variety of sources. The success of this positive action is reflected in pupils' attitudes; their endeavour, and the very good progress made under the very skilful guidance of teachers and learning support assistants. Access to most parts of the building and grounds has been made suitable for disabled persons.

- 56 The school's policy has been recently reviewed and is in line with the new requirements outlined in the 'Code of Practice'. It affords very clear guidance in procedures for identification and support of pupils on the special educational needs register. Supporting documentation, including behavioural management and the co-ordination of pupils who are identified as being gifted and talented, is also in place.
- 57 The school's finances are very well managed. There are very efficient and effective procedures to track spending and excellent procedures for determining the priorities for financing the school improvement plan. The school is prudent in its spending with very good consideration being given to best value and to the impact of spending on learning.
- 58 The school's accommodation is very spacious and allows for the effective delivery of the curriculum. The plentiful areas for displays of work are very well used in the celebration pupils' achievements and create focal points for discussion and appreciation. Classrooms are of a satisfactory size and are in a satisfactory decorative order. The halls are well utilised and one also acts as a dining room. The relatively new computer suite is in regular use. The pupils have access to adequate hard surface areas and there is a very good-sized field. The school has good resources overall, but there are insufficient books in the school libraries to meet the needs of the pupils as independent learners.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

59 In order to improve the quality of provision and the standards attained by pupils, the governors, headteacher and staff should address the following:

- i) the opportunities for pupils to work independently, and for pupils to take responsibility around the school, need to be further improved by:
 - (1) carrying out an audit of the current level of opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their own learning;
 - (2) providing in-service training for staff in ways of encouraging greater pupil independence;
 - (3) include opportunities for pupils to work independently in teachers' lesson planning, and
 - (4) review opportunities for pupils to take responsibility around the school.

Paragraph numbers: 10; 13; 15; 27; 35; 53; 58; 87; 106; 106; 116; 138, and 149.

- ii) the library resources need to be improved by:
 - (1) carrying out an audit of the current level of book and other library resources;
 - (2) reviewing the school's current plans for library development to ensure that the focus is more effectively placed on improvements in the quality and quantity of books, and
 - (3) carry out the school's plans to improve the siting and access to the library.

Paragraph numbers: 58; 69; 80; 81; 112; 133, and 144.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

57

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

34

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	8	20	20	9	0	0	0
Percentage	14	35	35	16	0	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than 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)	-	308
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	-	27

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	-	7
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	-	28

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	23

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	36
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	24

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.4
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	16	22	38

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	15	16	16
	Girls	20	22	22
	Total	35	38	38
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92 (82)	100 (84)	100 (93)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	15	16	16
	Girls	20	21	22
	Total	35	37	38
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92 (87)	97 (93)	100 (93)
	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	16	21	37

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	12	14
	Girls	20	17	20
	Total	30	29	34
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	81 (88)	78 (79)	92 (98)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	10	12
	Girls	18	16	19
	Total	28	26	31
Percentage of pupils	School	76 (79)	70 (71)	84 (90)

at NC level 4 or above	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)
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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	263		
White – Irish	5		
White – any other White background	7		
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	1		
Mixed – White and Black African			
Mixed – White and Asian	5		
Mixed – any other mixed background			
Asian or Asian British - Indian			
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	15		
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	1		
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	3		
Black or Black British – Caribbean			
Black or Black British – African			
Black or Black British – any other Black background			
Chinese			
Any other ethnic group			
No ethnic group recorded	8		

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)	13
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24
Average class size	27

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	20
Total aggregate hours worked per week	370

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	-
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	-
Total number of education support staff	-
Total aggregate hours worked per week	-
Number of pupils per FTE adult	-

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	1.7
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2.7

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
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	2001/02
	£
Total income	620,640
Total expenditure	623,075
Expenditure per pupil	2,112
Balance brought forward from previous year	24,408
Balance carried forward to next year	-2,434

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out

308

Number of questionnaires returned

245

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	75	23	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	71	27	1	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	67	31	1	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	46	47	6	1	0
The teaching is good.	77	22	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	58	37	3	1	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	79	20	1	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	74	24	0	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	59	37	2	0	2
The school is well led and managed.	78	20	0	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	71	27	0	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	71	22	2	0	3

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision in the Foundation Stage of learning is good.

Strengths

- The effective team work.
- The quality of support from the learning support assistants.
- The inclusion of pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language.

Areas for improvement

- Improved library reading books and library area.
- More opportunities for children to make decisions for themselves.

60 There have been several improvements since the previous inspection. These are having a positive impact on the quality of learning. The new curriculum has been successfully implemented, and provision for creative development reviewed. There are also more opportunities for learning through structured play as well as the increased use of the outside area. The school has also improved the quality and quantity of the equipment for physical development.

61 Children enter the Reception classes in the year they are four and move into Year 1 when they are five. Standards of attainment on entry to the school are in line with national expectation. Most children have had pre-school provision. The two full time teachers, class assistant, two full time and two part time learning support assistants have improved their knowledge through attending appropriate courses to bring them up to date with recent changes. They all work together in a very effective team to enable children to make good progress.

62 A secure and safe environment has been established. Planning of work in the Foundation Stage is good and covers all the recommended areas of learning. Children with special educational needs and those learning in English as an additional language, are very well provided for and are fully included in every aspect of learning. The co-ordinator, who provides effective leadership of the team, is knowledgeable about the way children of this age learn.

63 A well planned programme helps children to settle into school with ease. Parents and carers of children are invited into the school to learn about how children are taught. They are made to feel very welcome. Teachers are pleased to be able to share information to ensure that individual needs are met and discuss any concerns as well as the progress that children make.

64 Attainment of children on entry to the Reception classes varies from year to year. Pupils' attainment is assessed in order to assist teachers in planning work to match individual needs. These show, that on entry to the school, the present children were of average levels of attainment with a small minority below and above average. The well maintained records, as well as scrutiny of their earlier work, clearly demonstrate that by the end of the Foundation Stage children, including those with special educational needs and those learning in English as an additional language, make good progress in each of the recommended areas of learning. They are well prepared to begin work in the National Curriculum in Year 1. This is because of the

good quality teaching, and the learning support, which has a significant impact on children's learning.

Personal and social development

- 65 Very good provision is made in this area of learning. Children have made good progress. The majority are on course to achieve the early learning goals. Children have very good relationships with other children and adults and have a growing understanding of the difference between right and wrong. They are eager to try new activities, play and work together well, share equipment and patiently await their turn. When greeted, most children respond politely and do as they are told. When given the opportunity, they show increasing independence in selecting resources and show pleasure when given praise for successfully collecting and returning equipment as well as tidying up after themselves. A good example of this being during a games lesson, when the children change quickly and place their clothes tidily. Only a small number require some adult assistance to ensure clothes are the correct way out and shoes are on the correct feet. Most pupils show a strong sense of belonging to the class community. However, in some lessons, when another child or teacher is talking, several pupils find it difficult to sit still and do not pay sufficient attention. This was seen when children were learning how to write a picnic invitation. In another lesson, when discussing how to help their chosen friend, some children were not yet at the stage of development to contribute to the discussion.
- 66 The quality of teaching in this area is of a good standard. High emphasis is placed on the spiritual and moral development of the children. Relationships between adults and children are friendly. Children are expected to behave well, to wait their turn and not interrupt. There are well planned times to encourage children to discuss a wide range of feelings. Confidence and independence is developed as staff help children to understand the rules of the classroom and everyday routines. Teachers teach skills of cooperation, as they introduce games and activities. There are well-planned opportunities for children to work alone in small groups and large groups. The equipment and displays challenge children's thinking and help them embrace differences in gender and ethnicity.

Communication, language and literacy

- 67 The detailed records and previous work, clearly show, that the children have made good progress since they first entered the Reception class, in the development of their communication language and literacy skills. Nearly all children have achieved the levels expected by the end of the Reception year and a significant number have begun to work in the early stages of the National Curriculum programme of study.
- 68 Children listen well and respond to what others say. Higher attaining children listen attentively for sustained periods, speak clearly and actively participate in discussion with their friends and adults. They are able to read simple books with confidence. The average attaining children are able to recognise letter sounds, simple words and write their name. All children enjoy sharing books. They hold their books correctly, take good notice of the pictures and use these, and their knowledge of letter sounds, to assist them in reading and answering questions about the story, for example what may happen next, and who are the main characters in the story. They also show a growing knowledge of the difference between an author and an illustrator. The small number of children who are not yet at this level, require and receive more adult help in reading, and the correct formation of letters, to enable them to achieve well.
- 69 Teaching in this area is good. Every opportunity is exploited to extend children's listening; speaking, reading and writing skills. Carefully prepared activities are used to encourage children to listen, communicate their thoughts and feelings, share books,

and develop writing skills. When sharing stories the particularly skilful questioning challenges children to think hard and respond. Care is taken by staff, when directing their questions, to ensure that all children, including those learning in English as an additional language, and children with special educational needs, are fully involved. Children therefore make good progress in their communication skills. Library resources need to be further developed.

Mathematical development

- 70 Children make good progress in their mathematical development. Most children are on course to achieve the early learning goals in this area by the end of the Foundation Stage. A small number are working in the early stage of the National Curriculum.
- 71 Children's attainment is good because they are actively involved in the wealth of opportunities provided to use mathematics in practical ways. Through these practical activities, and discussion, children show a developing understanding of how to read the time. When in the pretend bicycle shop they discuss time sheets and cost of repairs. They know the names of shapes; that different shapes have a different number of faces, and are also beginning to recognise the value of some coins. When lining up, they use words to describe position. Many children are able to use number names to 20 and beyond. The higher attaining children show awareness of simple addition and subtraction and are able to solve problems.
- 72 This area is well taught. Because there are well planned opportunities for children to count, sort, match and sequence, they make good increases in mathematical language and development of their mathematical skills. Mathematical understanding is developed through very well chosen stories, songs, games and imaginative play. The quality of special needs support is very good. In all the provided activities, staff intervene to develop children's thinking through appropriate questions such as 'how many?'; 'what do we do first?'; 'who used the most?', and 'how did you work out that missing number?' However, occasionally, in their eagerness to make sure children know what to do, insufficient opportunity is given for pupils to make decisions for themselves.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

- 73 The majority of children are on course to achieve the early learning goals. Children make good progress in this area of learning. In the Reception classes, children experiment with a wide range of equipment. They also learn about festivals and other peoples' customs. Children have growing confidence in using the computers, demonstrating good control of the mouse and an ability to investigate the on screen prompts. They talk about families and the work people do, and enjoy learning about features of living things, including the life cycle of the butterfly, and enjoy experimenting and discovering what works, what doesn't and why.
- 74 Teaching is good. A wide range of exciting experiences such as a nature walk to look for signs of spring, as well as a visit from the vet, extend children's knowledge and understanding well. The opportunities to taste healthy food, as well as how to look after their teeth, increase children's knowledge of their senses and how to keep healthy. Interesting and attractive resources such as a snail tray, stimulate children's curiosity. There are carefully planned opportunities for children to be involved in making, baking and learning about change. Good opportunities have been provided to bring understanding of other people's culture and beliefs. Teaching supports children's spiritual development well, through celebration of the Christian faith.

Physical development

- 75 Children make good progress in physical development and many are already achieving the early learning goals, and almost all are on course to do so. Children use a good range of small apparatus and are growing in confidence in handling tools and objects. Their skills in building with construction toys and modelling materials are developing well. Children move with confidence. They are growing in understanding of why they need to change for physical activities. Higher and average attaining children run, and control a ball with their hands and feet with good agility, demonstrating sensible use of the space and awareness of others. Children with particular physical needs are very well supported to enable them to confidently participate and improve their physical skills.
- 76 Teaching in this area is good. The teachers, classroom assistants and learning support assistants encourage children to try new experiences. Children are taught to move and play safely. Teachers place high emphasis on ensuring children know how to use equipment safely. They provide planned opportunities for children to work individually; in pairs; small groups, and teams and to learn to have consideration for others. Questioning challenges and extends children's knowledge and teacher demonstration effectively models good practice. Children's learning is further supported by the provision of good quality resources, which are maintained to a good standard to ensure children's safety. The improvement to the outside area, which has been financially supported so generously by the parents, is having a significant impact on children's physical development.

Creative development

- 77 Children make good progress in their creative skills and are likely to achieve the levels expected nationally by the end of Reception. Children join in singing nursery rhymes and songs from memory and also move with a growing sense of rhythm when accompanying their singing with actions. They respond well to the challenge of remembering the words, and sing in tune showing pride and enjoyment in their achievements. They experiment with mixing colours and apply paint carefully when painting. When interpreting the Hungry Caterpillar story, they dance imaginatively as caterpillars and butterflies.
- 78 Teaching is very good. A wide variety of activities are provided for children to develop their imaginative skills including art, music, dance and imaginative role play. The displays of work and teachers planning, as well as earlier work, show that there are carefully planned opportunities for children to explore, experience through their senses and respond to these, for example, through feeling textures, and listening to sounds. Cheery songs provide a sense of fun, and as a consequence, children are eager to join in. Constant praise makes children aware that their efforts are valued and they therefore rise to the high expectations.

ENGLISH

Overall, the quality of provision in English is very good.

Strengths

- Standards are well above national expectations.
- Teaching is very good.
- Pupils achieve very well.
- On-going assessments of pupils' written work are very good.
- Pupils show very good attitudes to work and behave very well in lessons.
- The subject is led and managed very well.

Areas for improvement

- Guided reading sessions need to be further developed.
- The school libraries are inadequate.
- Pupils have insufficient opportunities to become independent learners.

- 79 Standards seen in reading and writing are well above national expectations for pupils at the end of Year 2. Speaking skills are well above expectations. By the end of Year 6 standards in reading and writing are well above expectations. This is a slightly different picture to that shown in the most recent national tests. The test results show, that pupil attainment in Year 2 and Year 6 is broadly in line with national averages in English but pupils in Year 2, attain a very high standard in writing and the number of pupils in Year 6 who attain a Level 5 in English is above the national average. These differences in attainment, between the national tests and the standards seen during the inspection, are due to high pupil mobility at the school. There is no significant difference between the attainment of girls and boys. Over time, standards have exceeded the national trend gaining the school a national 'School Achievement Award'.
- 80 The strategies for teaching early reading skills, are having a positive impact on standards in Years 1 and 2. Most pupils make good progress from first starting in Reception to achieve the good standards expected of them by the end of Year 2. They are enthusiastic readers who enjoy talking about their favourite book and stories. They read confidently and use their knowledge of letter sounds well to work out the meaning of unfamiliar words. Pupils show an increasing knowledge of words and understanding of what they read. They know the difference between fiction and non-fiction books and understand the use of contents and index in order to find information. For example, one pupil in Year 2 was reading a book about animals and described enthusiastically how hedgehogs, badgers and foxes lived in the area around their home. They had watched foxes come out at night and knew that they lived in a lair and that a badger lived in a sett. Both the reading and the experiences had enhanced their understanding of animals. The class libraries are well used but the library that serves Years 1 and 2 does little to support pupils' learning.
- 81 Pupils continue to make good progress in Years 3 and 4 and this is in part, due to the support that parents give to their children, listening to them read and encouraging them to use the public libraries. In Years 5 and 6, pupils have become more independent readers. Most pupils can read text and their levels of understanding and knowledge of words is good and sometimes very good. Pupils pronounce words correctly and use context clues if they are unable to work out the meaning of words or parts of texts. More able readers can talk about favourite authors such as Jacqueline Wilson and J. R. R. Tolkien and are able to give a very good explanation of why they enjoy the books. A pupil reading 'Lord of the Rings' enjoyed the language, 'it was kind of old fashioned'. All pupils gain some enjoyment from reading books and most pupils supplement their school reading with a selection of books at home or from the local library. Attitudes towards reading are enthusiastic. All pupils would benefit from a more extensive library at school, to support their learning and enjoyment of books.
- 82 Most pupils in Year 2 express their ideas very clearly in writing. Sentences are sequenced logically and pupils make very good use of their knowledge of letter sounds to attempt spelling unfamiliar words. Most pupils use capital letters and full stops correctly. Higher attaining writers use additional punctuation such as speech marks. Handwriting shows satisfactory control and consistency in size of letters and spacing between words. Pupils are given a very good range of writing experiences, which include narrative and descriptive poems in class books. These are modelled on specific books read in class. Report writing is evidenced-based and well planned,

such as pupils planning a report on looking after live hens' eggs. This links writing well to other subjects. Homework is used very well to extend learning.

- 83 By the end of Year 6, most pupils communicate ideas clearly in a variety of styles. Most writers use paragraphs consistently, to organise their ideas, and spelling and punctuation are generally correct. Pupils use evocative language in their writing to gain a richer effect, and the spelling of common words is accurate. Handwriting is taught well so that most pupils develop a very clear, legible style. There is a very good range of writing to be seen in other subjects such as history, science and music. There are some good historical diaries centred around the second world war, and some good lyrics with social and cultural meanings for example, by pupils in Year 5, and some clearly written descriptions of the properties of rocks in Year 3 science.
- 84 Most pupils are very confident when speaking informally about the things of interest to them and readily engage in conversation. In more formal situations, such as class discussions, speaking skills throughout the school are very well developed. Pupils are able to express ideas very clearly because they are encouraged to use the precise language they need. In Years 1 and 2, pupils know that a book is set in Kenya and that Kenya is in Africa because of the dedication at the beginning of the book. Precise technical language is also used very well in lessons where the foundation subjects are being taught. Opportunities to encourage speaking skills, such as: open-ended questions which require an explanation; reading aloud; drama, and role play situations, feature strongly in teachers' planning.
- 85 There is good emphasis on the teaching of basic skills. In Years 1 and 2, letter sounds are taught consistently so that pupils develop very good skill levels in early reading and writing. The development of adjectival phrases in Year 1, also leads to standards of writing well above national expectations. The national literacy strategy is firmly embedded in the school's curriculum, consequently punctuation, grammar and spelling are taught systematically throughout the school.
- 86 The quality of teaching is very good and learning is very good. This results in the very good progress and achievement seen. During guided reading lessons, the pupils who are not working in a small group with the teacher need to be given a sharper focus to direct their learning. Pupils who are on the school's register for special educational needs make very good progress overall against the reading and writing targets set for them because of the level of support they receive. The very good learning is underpinned by the very good relationships established between teachers, support staff and pupils. Teachers value the contribution to lessons made by all pupils, regardless of gender, ethnicity, special educational need, or level of prior attainment. Teachers are sensitive to all pupils' needs, including those learning in English as an additional language. Lower attaining pupils are given time to share their work and ideas with others, and there is a high expectation that all pupils behave respectfully. As a result, attitudes to work, and behaviour are very good and this contributes significantly to pupils' overall progress.
- 87 Teachers use their very good knowledge and understanding of the subject to plan their work well. They are clear about the skills pupils are expected to learn so teaching is brisk and made interesting by teachers' good choice of resources. For example, pupils in Year 6 were asked to manipulate narrative perspective by writing an ending to a story in the voice and the style of the text. They wrote some exciting, descriptive narrative interwoven with dialogue because of the clear example shown to them. Pupils also recognised qualities of leadership in the child who led the search for the dog and included these features when writing their own endings to the story. Homework is set regularly, which supports pupils' learning of basic skills such as

spelling and grammar. On occasion, the extent of guidance given to pupils restricts the opportunities for them to develop a more independent approach to learning.

- 88 Teachers mark pupils' work carefully and comments generally help them to evaluate what they have done. Most teachers plan work very effectively, providing appropriate challenge because of their very good knowledge and understanding of their pupils' ability. Teachers set clear learning objectives, usually reviewing them at the end of the lesson, thus ensuring a focused assessment of achievement. All pupils are motivated very well because of the teachers' enthusiasm for the subject and clear outcomes are seen in pupils' writing; a variety of genre are displayed in classrooms and around the school.
- 89 Very good leadership by the co-ordinator and her support co-ordinator has established very good teamwork and a commitment to improve standards. Consequently there have been improvements since the last inspection in the standards of reading, writing, the quality of teaching; staff development, the organisation of the curriculum and resources for literacy. There is also an improvement in standards. Developments in the subject are managed very well. The Literacy Staff Handbook produced by the co-ordinator, provides the staff with a comprehensive guide, leading to continuity and progression throughout the school. The co-ordinators have a very clear overview of strengths and areas for development and have set realistic priorities clearly linked to the school improvement plan. Progress and standards are monitored very effectively. The range and quality of books for English is satisfactory but needs to be developed further if they are to support literacy skills effectively.

MATHEMATICS

Overall, the quality of provision in mathematics is very good.

Strengths

- Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the national numeracy strategy contributes considerably to the standards attained by pupils.
- Teaching is very good and this ensures that learning is very good.
- The assessment; tracking of progress, and target setting for groups and individuals is very good.
- Attitudes and behaviour of the pupils are very good and enable all pupils to learn very well.
- The use of homework to support learning is very good.
- Leadership and management of the subject is very good.

Area for improvement

- The marking of pupils' work is inconsistent and does not match fully the school policy.

- 90 Performance by pupils by the end of Year 2 in the 2002 national tests was very high compared with the national average, and when compared with the performance of similar schools. Improvement in this performance over the past few years has been above the national trend. There is no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls.
- 91 The performance of pupils by the end of Year 6 in the 2002 national tests was broadly in line with the national average and below the performance of similar schools. The trend over the last few years is broadly similar to the national trend. There was no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls. When compared with the performance from the beginning of Year 3 progress is below that for pupils in

similar schools. However, there is very high pupil mobility at the school and a very significant proportion of pupils who took the tests in 2002 were not attending the school during Year 2. Also, some pupils just failed to attain the higher Level 5 in the tests, although, their work in class indicated that they were capable of attaining this level.

- 92 By the end of Year 2 standards are above those expected for pupils of this age. All pupils, including those who have special educational needs and those learning in English as an additional language, make very good progress in lessons. All pupils count in tens to 300 and count back in tens from 100. Higher attaining pupils use a range of efficient strategies when adding and subtracting to 100 and know that subtraction is the inverse of addition. For example, a pupil explained that when calculating the answer to $9 + \square = 19$ she used her knowledge and understanding of 'near doubles' – $(9 \times 2) + 1$ to arrive at the answer 10. These pupils also calculate mentally what needs to be added to 56 to make the answer 92 and check by subtracting 56 from 92. They also add accurately three digit numbers. Average attaining pupils use efficient strategies when adding and subtracting to 30 while lower attaining pupils work accurately to 20 with support. All pupils recognise and name simple 2D and 3D shapes. Higher and average attaining pupils construct bar charts, for example about vehicles, and interpret these to solve problems such as 'How many more cars than lorries?' They also use standard as well as non-standard measures to measure the length of lines in centimetres and calculate the mass of an object in kilograms.
- 93 By the end of Year 6, standards of attainment are above those expected of pupils of this age. All pupils, including those who have special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, make very good progress in lessons. All pupils understand the term 'equivalent' in the context of vulgar and decimal fractions, and percentages. All pupils calculate mentally 50 per cent of £25, and record $1/10$ as a decimal fraction. Higher and average attaining pupils, when calculating 20 per cent of £35, use strategies such as '10 per cent is £3.50, and double to find 20 per cent.' These pupils also know that an alternative strategy is to recognise 20 per cent as $1/5$ and then divide £35 by 5 to find the answer. Lower attaining pupils understand vulgar and decimal fraction equivalents, but are less secure and need support when working with percentages. Higher and average attaining pupils understand the terms 'mean', 'median', 'mode', 'range' and 'scale'. They accurately interpret the data in bar charts relating to temperature and hours of sunshine in two different locations, for example that the median temperature in the series 19, 23, 24, 24, 25, 26, 27 is 24. They also know that if the temperature varies between 25 and 31 degrees centigrade then the range is six degrees. Higher attaining pupils also interpret accurately information contained in pie charts. Lower attaining pupils need support when interpreting data contained in bar charts.
- 94 Since the previous inspection there has been a very good improvement in the provision of mathematics. Standards are rising because the teachers have a very good knowledge and understanding of the national numeracy strategy and the quality of teaching has improved across the school. The school implements the strategy very effectively. The school's assessment procedures have also improved significantly. The performance of pupils in the national and optional tests is very carefully analysed and the information is used to monitor the progress of all pupils very well and to set targets for individual pupils. However, the marking of work in pupils' books is inconsistent and not fully in line with school policy on marking. Almost all work is marked up-to-date and often there are encouraging comments. There are very few comments, however, that help pupils understand what they must do to

improve. Also, teachers often do not correct spellings such as 'hexgon' (hexagon) and 'quadrillateral' (quadrilateral). This is an area for improvement.

- 95 Teaching and learning are very good throughout the school. Teaching is never less than good and more than half the teaching seen was very good or excellent. All teachers plan very well for the different levels of prior attainment within the classes. Teachers make sure at the beginning of the lesson that pupils know what it is that they will know, or be able to do by the end of the lesson. In the concluding part of the lesson, teachers give pupils an opportunity to reflect on what they have achieved in the lesson. This promotes confidence and self-esteem very well, as well as knowledge of their progress. The pace of the best lessons is very brisk and pupils are constantly challenged to explain how they arrived at their answers and to use the most efficient way for them to calculate their answers. This also promotes confidence effectively as well as knowledge and understanding. Teachers make sure that pupils use, for example, their number skills to solve problems. In Year 2 the teacher promotes confidence by showing the pupils how they can write number stories and to write their own to illustrate $18 - 6 = 12$, such as 'There were 18 children on a bus. 6 got off. That left 12 children on the bus.'
- 96 Learning support assistants make a very significant contribution to the progress of pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. Learning support assistants are very adept at ensuring pupils understand the questions, for example in the mental/oral part of the lesson, and encouraging them to suggest answers. Teachers are also skilful at ensuring questions are matched well to the different levels of prior attainment of pupils, and of giving all pupils, regardless of prior attainment, gender, special educational need, or additional language speakers, the opportunity to answer and have their contributions valued. Homework is set regularly and is used to consolidate learning very effectively. The high quality of the teaching, including the high expectations of all teachers, ensures all pupils have very positive attitudes to the subject. They are very enthusiastic and concentrate very well. This contributes significantly to the very good progress they make.
- 97 The school makes good use of the recently improved information and communication technology resources to support learning well in mathematics. In a good Year 6 lesson, pupils used calculators with confidence to check their answers. In an excellent Year 6 lesson, pupils consolidated their learning about spreadsheets by devising a formula to calculate the area of a shape and entering this on a spreadsheet. In an earlier information and communication technology lesson, the pupils had learned how to devise and enter the formula for calculating the perimeter of a shape on a spreadsheet. In other subjects, teachers plan well to consolidate learning in mathematics. For example, work in geography on scale; co-ordinates in map work, and when studying time zones.
- 98 The subject is led and managed very well. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. The joint subject leaders are very clear about their roles and responsibilities. They have a very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the subject and this leads to a well considered action plan that informs the school improvement plan. They monitor teaching very effectively through the planning and the work of pupils. Additionally they observe lessons and provide both oral and written feedback to teachers that leads to better teaching. They manage a budget well and as a result resources are now good overall. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. The school is in a good position to raise standards further.

SCIENCE

Overall, the provision in science is very good.

Strengths

- Subject leadership is excellent and development planning is very effectively informed by the outcomes of monitoring.
- Teaching is very good and ensures pupils make very good progress.
- Pupil behaviour and attitudes are excellent.
- Assessment is excellent and is used very effectively to inform teachers' planning and to set targets for individual pupils.

Areas for improvement

- Standards in the experimental aspects of the subject need to be raised.
- More opportunities need to be created for pupils to work with greater independence.

99 By the end of the Year 2 in 2002, standards in science, as measured by teacher assessment, were very high and in the top five per cent of schools nationally. By the end of Year 6 in 2002, in national tests, standards in science were above the national average, and above the average for similar schools. There is no significant difference in the relative performance of boys and girls throughout the school. Over the last five years, the trend in improving performance in science has been faster than the national trend.

100 By the end of Year 2, standards overall in work seen are above national expectation. Higher attaining pupils are able to describe differences between materials in great detail such as plastercene being bendy, dull and rough to the touch, and can sort materials into groups. Pupils can give examples of how health is affected by diet, for example the influence of fat on cholesterol and subsequently blood circulation. These pupils are working well above national expectation. Middle attaining pupils are able to describe features of various animals, such as their way of moving, and common features such as feeding leading to growth. They are able to describe similarities and differences between materials and where they came from. These pupils are operating above national expectation. In the experimental aspects of science, pupils are beginning to be able to say if a test is fair, they are encouraged to predict and say if what happens was what they expected. Lower attaining pupils are generally working around national expectation.

101 By the end of Year 6, standards overall in work seen are well above national expectation. By the end of Year 6, higher attaining pupils are able to confidently explain in great detail why a particular experiment is fair. Work is presented very neatly and with significant detail given when describing parts of the human body. Pupils are very clear concerning the health implications associated with their work. These pupils are beginning to be able to explain the important contribution a particular organ makes to the animal. For example they can explain the effect of a weak heart on blood circulation. These pupils are working well above national expectation. Middle attaining pupils are able to identify parts of a flower such as petal, stamen and ovary. They know the position and function of some of the main organs of the human body, such as the heart. They are beginning to understand that objects that are stationary have balanced forces acting on them. These pupils are working well above national expectation.

102 In a Year 3 lesson, lower attaining pupils could describe the qualities of the rocks by colour, texture, and whether crystals were present. Middle attaining pupils were able to use a flow diagram to decide which the rocks might be. Higher attaining pupils

understood that some rocks could repel water while others could absorb it. In a Year 6 lesson, most pupils were able to use their knowledge of sound to suggest changes in loudness and pitch, higher attaining pupils were beginning to be able to take a number of different factors into account, such as the length and thickness of guitar strings, and their effect on pitch. Overall, standards were well above national expectation.

- 103 In some lessons, highly structured frameworks provide much guidance for pupils when they are carrying out practical work. However, this inhibits pupils' access to develop the higher level skills of experimental work. As a consequence, pupils' standards in the practical aspects of science are lower than in the other parts of the subject.
- 104 Since the last inspection very good improvements have been made in the subject. The progress made by pupils with special educational need has been significantly raised; group work is now a common feature of lessons; assessment now informs teachers' planning extremely well; teachers have a clear idea of what constitutes the different levels of pupils' attainment in the subject; the scheme of work has been improved, and resources are now extremely good.
- 105 Teaching in science is very good. Relationships between teachers and pupils are very good and contribute to the very good progress pupils make. Lessons move at a lively pace which ensures pupils remain interested and engaged. Teachers' subject knowledge is confident and ensures they tackle all aspects of the programme of study. The contributions of all pupils are highly valued and as a consequence, all pupils, regardless of special educational need, learning in English as an additional language, level of prior attainment, ethnicity or gender, have very good levels of self-esteem and make very good progress. Many resources to support learning in science are of a high quality, such as the models of parts of the human body, and this contributes to pupils' high level of interest in the subject. In some lessons, teachers provide such a high level of guidance that pupils' opportunities to work with independence are restricted. In lessons focused on the practical aspects of science, this leads to pupils having reduced experience of the higher level skills of experimental work. The co-ordinators recognise this issue and have clear plans to introduce new guidance for teachers designed to encourage a higher level of independent work by the pupils.
- 106 In a good Year 3 lesson about rocks, the teacher's good knowledge and understanding of the subject led to pupils making good progress. Health and safety issues were appropriately covered, and the teacher made good links to recent work in literacy. Planning was good which ensured a good structure and pace to the lesson. The teacher provided much support and direction during the lesson, and this reduced the opportunities pupils had to take responsibility for their own learning.
- 107 In an excellent Year 6 lesson on sound, the introduction to the lesson was delivered at a cracking pace and ensured that pupils were quickly engaged and interested. Excellent use of the teacher's voice maintained their interest and ensured their approach to work was unrelenting. A wonderful range of artefacts in very good condition led to pupils demonstrating awe and wonder as they explored some of the musical instruments. Detailed planning included specific attention to pupils of different levels of prior attainment. This led to all the tasks being well matched to pupils' individual needs. As a result of this, and the teacher's sensitive handling of the class, all pupils, regardless of gender, ethnicity, special educational need, and different prior attainment were effectively helped to make excellent progress. The management of small group discussion was very skillfully executed and led to pupils

recognising that their contributions were highly valued. An excellent summary to the lesson gave pupils a very thorough opportunity to review their learning and included a purposeful game which encouraged pupils to see the subject as fun.

- 108 Pupils' behaviour and attitudes are excellent. They concentrate for protracted periods of time and generally work without pause. Any conversation is related to the work in hand. Pupils work extremely well individually as well as in small groups. They demonstrate high levels of enthusiasm and are demonstrably motivated to do well in the subject. Relationships between the pupils and between the pupils and adults are extremely good and pupils demonstrate empathy, and offer help to others.
- 109 The range of experiences which the school offers pupils within science is broad and ensures that the elements of the National Curriculum are extremely thoroughly dealt with. Wherever it is appropriate, the implications for human health are woven into the pupils' work and as a consequence this is dealt with very thoroughly. The enthusiasm with which teachers introduce pupils to live animals, or to models of human organs, engenders excitement and a sense of awe in the pupils. Opportunities are created frequently to draw pupils' attention to the impact of their actions on others. As a consequence of these features, the subject makes a very good contribution to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- 110 The tracking of individual pupils' progress is extremely detailed and thorough. This information is used extremely well to set short-term targets for improvement for individual pupils. This provides pupils with a clear picture of how well they are doing and gives them attainable goals which encourage them to strive to improve. An analysis of this information is used to inform teachers' planning and as a consequence future lessons respond effectively to the specific needs of pupils.
- 111 There are two co-ordinators for science who work together extremely well through frequent informal and formal meetings. They provide excellent management for subject. They are extremely clear that the most important aspect of their job description is to manage science in such a way as to raise standards. This clarity of vision ensures that development priorities are tightly linked to helping pupils achieve their best. The co-ordinators monitor the subject thoroughly through analysis of teachers' planning and by observing lessons. The information from this monitoring, along with their detailed analysis of pupils' performance in national tests, is used to identify the priorities for the subject development plan. The current priorities of developing target setting still further, and of improving the school's approach to experimental science, are very well matched to the current needs.
- 112 A good example of where the co-ordinators have carried out detailed and effective evaluation is when they analysed the pupils' performance in national tests; recognised that standards were too low; visited examples of schools where standards in science were higher; carried out an audit of the amount of time science was taught, and increased this in line with schools demonstrating higher standards in science. Library resources for science need to be further developed to promote greater opportunities for independent learning.

ART AND DESIGN

Overall, the provision in art is very good.

Strengths

- Standards in the subject are good.
- The leadership of the subject manager is very good.
- The quality of teaching is very good.
- Pupils' behaviour during lessons is excellent.

Areas for development

- More opportunities need to be created for pupils to make their own decisions and have increased responsibility.

- 113 By the end of Year 2 and Year 6 standards of work are above the levels expected nationally. Pupils make very good progress in art and the work displayed is of a good standard. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are able to record from first hand observation and experience. They are able to use pencils in different ways to make hard and soft shades. Lower attaining pupils have used printing techniques to communicate ideas. Pupils with poor motor skills have successfully completed leaf rubbings. All pupils have explored the work of other artists, and in particular self-portraits, and have discussed how to represent themselves. Pupils have evaluated their own and others' work. Their most recent project involves challenging work in the use of viewfinders to frame pictures, they take photos and extend these pictures to produce their own art. The photographs of pupils' sculptures based on leaves is impressive. Pupils have good knowledge of: the work of other artists; famous sculptures like The Angel of the North, and work made out of metal and stone.
- 114 Pupils in Years 3 and 4, have built on their previous knowledge. They show good progress in understanding of form and texture. This is seen in their sculptures in the style of Andy Goldsworthy. Pupils also explore ways of making and creating their own patterns and describe how patterns are made. They know what is meant by the terms 'translation' 'reflection' and 'rotation'. Year 4 pupils have also experimented successfully with computer generated art. Pupils use art well in many other areas of the curriculum, particularly in their work about the Egyptians and Ancient Greece, pupils having intricately decorated their illustrations of masks, head gear and pottery. Detailed observational drawings of shoes; repeat black and white patterns; silhouettes; still life paintings, and the Year 6 paintings using water colours, are very carefully displayed in the school's art gallery. All these artefacts are of a good standard and reflect pupils' well-developed art skills. Good use is made of sketch books where pupils refine their artistic skills and techniques.
- 115 Since the last inspection there have been several improvements. There has been a greater emphasis on textiles, and on 2- and 3- dimensional work. Standards have improved from being satisfactory to good in the lower school. Changes in the management of the subject, and observation of teaching and learning in the school to identify areas for development, have had a significant impact. A new scheme of work has been introduced. This is assisting teachers well, in their planning of work and in the teaching of skills. There has been a major investment in good quality resources. The quality of work has been recognised with a national arts award.
- 116 Teaching throughout the school is very good and sometimes excellent. In the excellent lesson, the level of challenge and teaching of skills enabled the class to make excellent progress. Lessons are carefully planned and pupils know exactly what is expected of them. Teachers have a secure knowledge of the subject and

effectively extend the pupils' knowledge and understanding. Pupils are encouraged to evaluate their own work and that of their classmates. Very good opportunities are provided for pupils to experiment using a very good range of tools; media, and techniques. In the lessons observed, teachers used questioning very effectively to encourage pupils to review and improve their work. Pupils for whom English is an additional language are well supported to enable them to take part in lessons. Pupils with special educational needs also receive very good quality learning support to enable them to make very good progress alongside their peers. There is good attention given to ensuring that work reflects the diversity of the school community. At times, although pupils are given responsibilities and encouraged to work independently, these opportunities could be further extended.

- 117 The quality of learning is very good - because of the good quality teaching and the happy learning environment pupils achieve very well. Pupils show very good attitudes to their work. They are enthusiastic; help each other complete their work carefully, and evaluate and improve their work as it progresses.
- 118 The programme of work stimulates creativity and imagination, supports work across the curriculum as well as promoting the cultural spiritual and social development of the pupils. The provision for pupils with special educational needs and those pupils with English as a second language is very good. The subject manager provides very effective leadership. She has made a significant impact on the development of art through helping staff to understand; plan, and implement the recently introduced scheme of work. The contribution made by visiting artists, as well as the very good use of art in other subject areas, also have a good impact on the quality of teaching and learning. The high quality displays demonstrate how much the staff value the pupils' work and make time and effort to celebrate their achievements.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

Overall, the provision for design and technology is good.

Strengths

- The leadership and management of the subject leader.
- The attitudes and behaviour of the pupils.
- Teaching and learning.
- Health and safety.

Areas for improvement

- To link the much improved system for assessment to National Curriculum levels of attainment.
- Extend the use of control technology by providing staff training in this aspect of the subject.

- 119 By the end of Year 2, standards are broadly in line with national expectation. All pupils make good progress in lessons. When designing a hand puppet in Year 2, all pupils are able to explain how they can show different facial expressions on the puppet to match a character from a traditional tale. They also have good ideas about different materials that would be effective for the eyes, mouth and hair. Higher-attaining pupils use scissors well to cut out very neatly. Lower-attaining pupils have more difficulty in cutting out with the same degree of accuracy and need support and encouragement. All pupils show that they enjoy the subject very much, behave very well and concentrate very well on tasks.

- 120 By the end of Year 6, standards are also broadly similar to the national expectation with some pupils slightly above this level and some just below. Pupils continue to make good progress in lessons. When designing and making cocktails in food technology and when following the musical instrument topic, all pupils extend their ability to design, make and evaluate the finished product. However, the evaluations of higher-attaining pupils are more detailed and more often incorporate ideas about how the design might be improved. Displays and folios of containers – purses and shoulder bags – in Year 3 and Year 4 reflect a similar high level of interest in the subject. One pupil had used her imagination well to make a shoulder bag from the top of a pair of jeans. In discussion, Year 6 pupils were very enthusiastic about the challenges they faced in different topics, for example when designing and making bridges and fairground rides. The latter required pupils to apply knowledge and skills learned in science because they had to add switches and motors to their designs.
- 121 Teaching throughout the school is good overall, one lesson was very good. This is because teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of the requirements of the subject and use the latest national guidance to plan a curriculum that covers all areas of the subject very well. Lesson plans are very good. Plans incorporate tasks that are matched well to the prior attainment of all pupils. Where pupils need help this is identified in the planning and is provided effectively by learning support assistants and teachers. Teachers share with pupils at the beginning of the lesson what they should know, or be able to do, by the end of the lesson. This is reviewed well at the end of the lesson so pupils know the progress they have made in their learning. Skills are carefully taught. For example, when a teacher in a Year 2 class was explaining to pupils how to use scissors carefully, accurately and safely all pupils observed closely, and higher and average attaining pupils were able to apply this well when undertaking the task. Lower attaining pupils still needed, and received, help and encouragement.
- 122 Teachers ensure that left-handed pupils are provided with left-handed scissors. Teachers also ensure that all groups of pupils are included in question and answer sessions. Teachers use praise and encouragement to boost the confidence of all pupils. As a result, all pupils feel valued and want to participate. This was shown in a Year 1-2 lesson where a pupil, learning in English as an additional language, made a good contribution when pupils were challenged to think of words that would describe characters in Little Red Riding Hood which could be applied to the designs for the hand puppets. The questioning also illustrates how teachers make good use of learning in literacy to promote learning in design and technology. At the end of each unit of study teachers assess the learning of all pupils well in relation to the criteria identified for that unit. However, as yet this assessment does not extend to the levels of attainment described in the national guidance.
- 123 Health and safety is a significant feature of the teaching. In all lessons it is very evident that all staff demonstrate, and emphasise, the safe use of tools and equipment, and for high standards of hygiene in food technology lessons. For example, Year 1 pupils were reminded about how to carry scissors safely when returning them to where they are stored in the classroom. Year 6 pupils have a very good understanding of how to use a saw safely. As a result pupils are very aware of dangers, and handle tools safely, either on their own, or under close supervision.
- 124 The subject is led and managed very well. The role of the subject leader is clearly defined and includes: monitoring of teachers' work and planning, and maintaining a portfolio of pupils' work. The subject leader also observes teaching and provides detailed and helpful feedback. He manages his budget well to ensure that the quality and quantity of resources facilitates teaching, and enables pupils to attain the standards described above. As a result, the subject leader has a very good

understanding of the strengths and areas for development of the subject. This knowledge is used to produce a good action plan for the subject that feeds into the school improvement plan. Information and communication technology is used satisfactorily to foster learning, for example, the use of digital cameras to record completed tasks. However, the subject leader is aware that more use should be made of control technology, and this is to be fostered by in-service training for staff. He also recognises the need to extend the assessment procedures to the levels of attainment described in the national guidance. These improvements will put the school in a good position to further raise standards of attainment.

GEOGRAPHY

Overall, the quality of provision in geography is good.

Strengths

- Geographical language is supported well.
- Map skills are developed well across the school.
- There are good links made with other subjects.
- The school's locality and field trips are used well to enhance pupils' experiences.

Areas for development

- Assessment of the subject needs to be further developed.
- The portfolio of pupils' work needs to be updated.

125 Standards are above average across the school, and this is an improvement since the time of the last inspection. All pupils are achieving well regardless of gender; ethnicity; learning in English as an additional language, or special educational need. Pupils in Year 2 have a good knowledge of their own locality and can describe physical and man-made features such as houses, shops, parks and trees. Through their shared reading activities they are learning about life in Kenya and know that the climate is hot; trees are 'different'; that certain types of animals live there, and that it is located in the continent of Africa. They know what they like and dislike, for example, they were invited to taste tropical fruits and readily offered opinions about the taste and texture. Higher and average attaining pupils know what a map is and they recognise the shape and position of the British Isles on the globe and in an atlas. They know the countries of the United Kingdom and that they live in Halifax. These pupils attain a good standard because of the links highlighted by very good teaching in all subjects.

126 In Year 6, pupils have a good knowledge of the elements of geography. They can use atlases to find information, and have used maps with four figure grid numbers. In Year 5, most pupils have a good knowledge of the effect of humans on the environment and can recognise ways in which it could be improved, for example by careful planning for the future needs of the town of Halifax. They have a good understanding of the differences between settlements, and can compare the town of Halifax in terms of position, and physical and human features, to the surrounding farming area, and the cities of Leeds and Manchester. They understand that in Halifax, employment might revolve around local business, industry and tourism because of museums and in particular, the 'Eureka' museum for children. Most pupils have a very good knowledge of place and are able to position cities in the correct continent. Pupils' progress over time in acquiring knowledge and skills is good.

127 Teaching is good overall. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and understanding of the subject and explain clearly to pupils what they are going to do

and what they are going to find out. Activities provide challenge for all pupils, and well-chosen resources enable pupils to be fully involved in their own learning. In a Year 3 class, very good use was made of a video and the internet to look at different climatic zones across the world. Important vocabulary is understood and all pupils make effective contributions to class discussions. A pupil understands that they live in a 'temperate' climatic zone. Good, and often very good class management, and very good relationships between pupils and teachers, lead to calm and purposeful working environments with pupils usually fully on task. In a Year 3/4 class, co-operative skills were developed as pupils worked together to locate climatic zones on a map. Pupils work with enjoyment, concentrate hard and take pride in their work and this has a positive effect on their learning. Good use is made of different areas for fieldwork. It is recognised that geography has an important part to play in the personal development of pupils. For example, some Year 5 pupils were part of a local initiative to examine the future needs of the town of Halifax. Pupils worked with architects and town planners to create a town they wanted to live in, in the future. However, they did have to consider certain restrictions, such as listed buildings.

- 128 The leadership and management of geography are good. Standards have improved since the last inspection and careful thought is given to links with other subjects, thus making best use of the available time. There have been good improvements in provision, and the subject is well placed to continue to raise standards. There are limited assessment systems in place to judge and record what pupils know and can do. Lessons are evaluated in order to influence future planning. The monitoring role of the co-ordinator is being developed and they have a clear view of standards. A portfolio of work is kept as an aid to teachers when assessing pupils' work, although, this needs to be updated. Planning is checked and feedback given to staff. The co-ordinator has begun to monitor teaching and learning. An action plan linked to the school improvement plan, outlines the need for resources to support teaching and learning. Good use of the new atlases bought last year is evident in lessons. The plan also provides for a smooth transition from the present co-ordinator to a new one in the next academic year.

HISTORY

Overall, the provision for history is good.

Strengths

- The quality of teaching and learning is very good.
- The wide range of opportunities for first hand historical enquiry.

Areas for improvement

- Improve the quantity and access to books in the school library.

- 129 By the end of Year 2, pupils attain standards above national expectation. Pupils' sense of time is developing well. They recognise some characteristics of toys in the past. Their work also shows a growing knowledge of the life and times of famous people of the past, including Florence Nightingale. Through their studies, pupils recognise that life was different in those times when compared with life today and through the sequencing of events and objects pupils develop a sound sense of chronology. Work on the great fire of London also supports their writing development. In this work, pupils use a good vocabulary for talking about the past. When answering questions such as, 'why did the fire spread so quickly?' they confidently use words such as 'old', 'new', 'past', and 'present'. They show good knowledge of the relevant facts and record information relevant to the topic.

130 By the end of Year 6, standards in history are above national expectation. In Years 3 and 4, pupils show good knowledge about the homes, clothes and lifestyles of the Vikings. They make brooches; design combs; weave; cook oatmeal biscuits, and sing Viking tunes. They are growing in knowledge about life in Ancient Egypt, including information about pyramids; the evidence found in tombs, and mummification. In Year 5, pupils devised questions about World War 2 and put these to two visitors who had experienced it. They had researched information well using a wide range of sources. Year 6 pupils demonstrate good knowledge and understanding of the sequence of major events and key figures. They know what the Blitz was; how it affected people, and how people tried to protect themselves. They use the internet to find out information. The higher attaining and average attaining pupils quickly locate cities and ports on the map. Lower attaining pupils require more adult intervention in their recording, but demonstrate good historical knowledge of events and their consequences.

131 Since the last inspection there has been very good improvement. The school has introduced a new scheme of work. This has assisted teachers plan work that builds on previous learning. An increased range of visitors and visits, and greater use of the internet have broadened pupils' knowledge, and an increased range of artefacts and resources have made learning more meaningful.

132 The quality of teaching is very good overall. There was also some excellent teaching where pupils are given the opportunity to meet with people who experienced life in the war years. The contribution of these visitors had a significant impact on pupils' understanding and knowledge. In all lessons, the teachers' enthusiasm for the subject, and the good pace of teaching, keeps pupils interested and motivates them to respond. The challenging questions are cleverly targeted to pupils of differing levels of prior attainment. This ensures that all pupils are fully included in debate. The very good relationships that exist between the pupils and the teachers have a very good impact on pupils' achievements.

133 The subject manager provides very effective leadership. There have been increased opportunities for her to evaluate teaching and learning and identify areas for development. There are some good resource boxes to support teaching and learning. However, the range of books in the school library needs extending.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Overall, provision in information and communication technology is very good.

Strengths

- Subject leadership is very good and well focused on raising standards in the subject.
- Teaching is very good and leads to pupils making very good progress.
- Pupil behaviour and attitudes are excellent.
- Pupils are given a wide range of experiences in the subject.

Areas for improvement

- Further development of control and the use of sensors.
- Further develop opportunities for pupils to work with greater independence.

134 By the end of Year 2, lower attaining pupils are able to explain that day-to-day devices such as fridges and central heating, respond to commands. Middle attaining pupils can enter, save and retrieve work and share ideas in a variety of forms, including text and tables. Higher attaining pupils are beginning to be able to organise and amend ideas. All pupils are able to word process a Christmas list using important parts of a

computer keyboard, they are also able to log on to the network and print work off. Pupils are able to use subject specialist words and can use information and communication technology to create sentences using the keyboard. Overall, pupils' standards are above national expectation.

- 135 By the end of Year 6, lower attaining pupils can control equipment by a series of instructions to achieve particular results such as a sequence of flashing lights on a toy clown, or making a fairground wheel move. Middle attaining pupils can use information and communication technology to present information in a variety of forms. For example, using publishing software to produce a newsletter, or presentation software to produce a series of slides about a school visit, augmented with sound and digital pictures. Higher attaining pupils are aware of the need for precision in sequencing instructions and are beginning to present information for specific purposes and audiences. Pupils are confident in using the interactive white boards. Overall, pupils' standards are above national expectation.
- 136 Standards in lessons seen matched that in the samples of pupils' work. In a Year 3 lesson pupils were able to enter, save and retrieve work, and use information and communication technology to record work. Middle attaining pupils could save data and use a database to search for information and retrieve it. Higher attaining pupils were able to do this with more confidence. These pupils overall, were working above national expectation. In a very good Year 5 lesson, where pupils were asked to set up commands to make things happen, all pupils were able to use information and communication technology to investigate both real and imaginary situations. Most pupils could control equipment by a series of instructions in order to achieve particular results. Overall, pupils' standards were above national expectation.
- 137 Since the last inspection report the subject has made very good improvements. Attainment was in line with national expectations and has now been raised so that it is above expectation. Teaching was satisfactory and has been improved very significantly and is now very good, as is subject leadership. The control aspects of the subject have been developed although there are plans to take this further.
- 138 Teaching in information and communication technology is very good. In the best cases, the learning objective for the lesson is developed and discussed with pupils at the outset of the lesson and ensures that they are completely clear as to the purpose of the work they are about to undertake. A very good pace is maintained throughout the lessons and pupils are involved actively in the lesson even when not working at the networked computers. Class management is skilful and ensures that no time is lost in the lesson and that pupils are working productively throughout. In many lessons, the pupils are given extensive guidance and support concerning the detailed nature of the tasks they are asked to perform. In some lessons, opportunities for pupils to work with greater independence should be created. The information and communication technology teaching assistant makes an excellent contribution to the teaching and learning in the subject through her knowledgeable support for staff and her skilful interactions with pupils.
- 139 In a very good Year 3 lesson on the use of the internet, the teacher started the lesson very well with the learning objective very effectively shared with pupils. The way to use the software to access the internet, and copy text and pictures into a word processor, was very effectively modeled for the pupils. As a consequence, they were very clear on what to do. While pupils were working at the computers, the teacher, and teaching assistant, provided very well focused support which ensured the pupils made very good progress. The individual pupils getting access to the key boards was sensitively and actively managed. This ensured all pupils, regardless of gender, had

an equal opportunity to work with the computers. Pupils were very well engaged in the task and found the use of the interactive white board highly motivating.

- 140 In a good Year 6 lesson, small groups of pupils were withdrawn from their mathematics lesson in order to create a spreadsheet to calculate the area and perimeter of a rectangle. A good pace was maintained throughout the lesson, with pupils being asked frequent questions and encouraged to work both at the interactive white board and its controlling laptop computer. As a consequence, the pupils were very at ease with the technology, and took part with enthusiasm. Pupils were highly attentive, very keen and enthusiastic and volunteered answers readily.
- 141 All pupils are effectively supported to make very good progress, regardless of their special educational need; ethnicity; prior attainment; whether they are learning in English as an additional language, or gender. An Asian heritage boy's verbal contribution was clearly highly valued, and as a consequence his confidence grew. Higher attaining pupils are effectively challenged when they were given an appropriate additional task.
- 142 The school offers pupils a particularly broad range of experiences in information and communication technology including developing pupils' understanding from the experiences of day-to-day equipment which they have had. The use of information and communication technology is well integrated into many subjects. For example when groups of Year 6 pupils used the information and communication technology suite to develop spreadsheets in mathematics, or Year 3 pupils used the internet to research weather in geography. While the school has effectively based their scheme of work on the national guidelines, further development is needed of the control aspects of the subject, particularly the use of sensors. The school has clear plans to address this. Teachers make good use of national guidelines to help them to assess pupils' levels of attainment. Much pupils' work has been assembled into a very helpful portfolio which is available for teachers to use.
- 143 There are two subject co-ordinators for information and communication technology. They work together very well and provide very good subject leadership. The co-ordinators carried out an audit of staff confidence in at the subject and this detailed analysis was used to provide well-focused training to support staff. This very well planned programme of support has insured a higher level of confidence by staff and a greater use of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning.
- 144 Co-ordinators are given time to monitor teaching and as a consequence are able to identify clearly priorities for development in the subject. A coherent and very well planned programme of hardware improvement has been instituted. The school is funding this appropriately and co-ordinators receive additional money which ensures good quality software is being provided. The information and communication technology suite is a very pleasant and very well laid out facility which maximises pupils opportunities to work at the computers as well as the interactive white board for whole-class work. The library resources for the subject could be further developed in order to support pupils working independently.

MUSIC

Overall, the quality of provision in music is good.

Strengths

- Teaching is very good.
- Management of the subject leader is very good.
- The wealth of opportunities for pupils to appreciate and participate in music representing a wide range of cultures.

Areas for improvement

- To provide increased opportunities for pupils to take responsibility.
- To make better use of the singing session for the Reception year and Years 1 and 2, in order to extend musical skills further.

145 By the end of Year 2 and Year 6 standards are above levels expected nationally. By the end of Year 2, pupils have made very good progress in their musical knowledge and skills. Pupils are able to sing a good range of songs from memory; keep good time, and are developing a good awareness of patterns in music. They demonstrate confidence in performance, and they clearly understand the role of a conductor. When listening to recorded nursery rhymes, pupils respond well to long and short sounds. Using hand signals to indicate the differences. All pupils respond well to the challenge to perform their rhyme and actions. Because pupils with special educational needs receive additional support, they are able to successfully participate alongside their friends and achieve very well.

146 By the end of Year 6, pupils make very good progress. They are able to create rhythms and identify structure and their singing is of a good standard. Year 3 pupils, make very good progress in their knowledge of intonation and pitch. Pupils create percussion parts and compose simple melodies to accompany text. During the upper school community singing lesson, singing was of a good standard. Pupils show good knowledge of ostinato. They place appropriate emphasis and accents to create intended effects and demonstrate a very good understanding of dynamics. In Year 4, when exploring rhythmic patterns, pupils have successfully chosen instruments to represent sandstone; coal, and leaf fossils. Pupils are also able to use words; rhythm, and tempo to create their own compositions. In performance they are able to maintain their own rhythmic patterns in time with other parts, and make effective use of the silent beat. Older pupils successfully compose lyrics that have social and cultural meaning and evaluate their own and others' work, performing with confidence. A good number of pupils who wish to learn to play an instrument have additional instrumental tuition, and they show growing musical and technical skills. The school choir and orchestra rehearse regularly to improve their performance. The standard of their musicianship is good.

147 Since the last inspection there has been very good improvement in music. The curriculum has been reviewed and the new scheme assists teachers well in their planning. Good arrangements have been made to increase staff confidence in teaching the subject. Standards have improved in the lower school. The co-ordinator has had more opportunity to observe the quality of teaching and learning. There has been a high emphasis on listening and appraising music. The increased assessment and recording of progress assists teachers in checking pupils' development of skills, but has yet to be refined to take account of pupils' individual progress. The quality; quantity, and range of instruments have also been increased, and there is now greater use of information and communication technology.

- 148 Teaching is very good overall. Teachers plan very carefully, choosing music and activities that are interesting, therefore pupils are eager to participate. A high emphasis is placed on the appreciation of a wide range of music. Teachers lead by example, singing individually, and also with the pupils. The good pace of lessons maintains pupils' interest and the very good practical opportunities ensure pupils' involvement. Skilful questioning is used to check understanding and to extend skills. Very good use of resources, and the use of appropriate musical language, increase pupils' knowledge. Because teachers provide encouragement and praise, pupils with special educational needs, and those learning in English as an additional language, gain the confidence to perform individually. The lower school singing session supports a sense of community, and pupils enjoy the action songs. However, there were missed opportunities to further develop singing skills. Often, music is played before school; during breaktimes; in other lessons and class assemblies, and this effectively supports pupils' musical, spiritual, and cultural development.
- 149 Pupils' acquisition of knowledge; skills, and understanding is very good. They work hard and show good interest and concentration. Pupils with special educational needs and those learning in English as an additional language, are fully included and therefore learn well. There is a strong emphasis on ensuring all are included. Pupils enjoy music lessons and their behaviour is exemplary. Pupils are provided with a wide range of musical experience both in lessons and extra-curricular activities. More opportunities need to be created for pupils to make their own decisions and have increased responsibility.
- 150 The co-ordinator, who is knowledgeable, provides very good leadership, and gives generously of her time to ensure pupils participate in community and liturgical events. She has introduced a structured approach to raising standards. There has been a high emphasis on musical appreciation. The policy and scheme of work fully meet requirements. These are used well to assist teachers in their planning. Visiting musicians and school productions, as well as the wealth of opportunities to learn about music from other cultures, are having a significant impact on the pupils' knowledge and skills. Music is also used well in other subject areas, an example being where Year 6 pupils had designed and evaluated the musical instruments they had made in design and technology. The opportunities for pupils to participate in: assemblies; concerts; religious celebrations and services, such as First Communions, further promote pupils' musical experiences.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Overall, provision for physical education is very good.

Strengths

- The standards attained by pupils are above expectation.
- Teaching and learning are good.
- The quality and range of learning opportunities, including extra-curricular provision is good.
- The leadership and management in the subject is very good.
- The contribution of the subject to personal development is very good.

Areas for improvement

- To link the much improved system for assessment to National Curriculum levels of attainment.

- 151 By the end of Year 2, standards in games and gymnastics are above national expectation. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. In games, pupils

demonstrate very good hand and eye co-ordination when catching a ball with two hands, and again when bouncing a ball and catching with one hand. Higher attaining pupils throw a ball to a greater height and still catch it cleanly in two hands. All pupils bowl underarm accurately and average and higher attaining pupils regularly catch the return. In gymnastics, all pupils hold a balance well on different parts of the body, and then move slowly with good control, to a different balance and hold this. They also observe the work of other pupils and offer constructive criticism such as 'She really stretched her fingers'. This enables pupils to improve the quality of their own work.

- 152 By the end of Year 6, standards in dance are above national expectations. This is similar to the previous inspection. Standards in swimming, including water safety, are broadly in line with national expectations. This is lower than the standards reported in the previous inspection. This is because of the differences between the groups of pupils and the very high mobility of pupils. In Year 6, pupils demonstrate well their understanding of the purpose of the warm-up activities and the effect of exercise on their bodies. Working in groups of five, pupils plan and execute dance sequences to music with good rhythm and control. Within the group they share ideas and agree on compromises where necessary. The varied sequences, though not the quality of the sequences, between each group, demonstrate how effectively pupils are able to build on previous learning. Year 6 pupils observe and constructively criticise the performance of their own and other groups in a more detailed way than the Year 2 pupils. One pupil reminded the others that when offering criticism 'We must remember to be kind'.
- 153 The quality of teaching and learning are good overall and accounts for the good progress and achievement in games and gymnastics. In some lessons, teaching and learning are very good. In a Year 6 dance lesson, teaching and learning were very good and all pupils made very good progress in the lesson. Teaching and learning are enhanced because, for some teaching, the school draws very well on expertise from outside the school. This makes a good contribution to the standards attained by all pupils.
- 154 Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the subject and this leads to lessons that are planned well. Planning shows how teachers build in opportunities for assessment, not only by themselves, but by pupils assessing their own performance as well as that of others. Planning also reflects the high expectations that teachers have of pupils and these, combined with very good management strategies, are key factors in the good standards attained by pupils. A significant outcome of the teaching is the very positive effect it has on the attitudes of all pupils to the subject.
- 155 Sometimes a digital camera is used effectively to record what pupils do and this, too, enables teachers and pupils to review work and improve on it. The school is planning to extend this use of information and communication technology to improve standards by using a recently purchased digital camcorder to record sequences, particularly in dance and gymnastics, for teachers and pupils to analyse and improve on their performance.
- 156 The requirements of the National Curriculum are met well and this is reflected in the detailed scheme of work that covers all aspects of physical education. A very significant factor in the standards attained by pupils is the extensive range of lunchtime and after-school activities that are available to pupils. Activities provided include: soccer; cricket; netball; rugby; mini-tennis; dance, including sword dancing, and gymnastics. These are run by teachers and outside agencies and offer both younger and older pupils excellent opportunities to consolidate and extend skills learned in lessons. Teams also compete against other schools in a range of

competitions. Within lessons, and via the lunch-time and after-school clubs, all pupils regardless of ethnicity; gender; level of prior attainment; learning in English as an additional language, or special educational need, have very good opportunities to enjoy what the school offers and to attain standards above the national expectation.

- 157 The opportunity for Year 6 pupils to undertake adventurous activities, including orienteering, during a residential education experience also enriches the curriculum provision. Year 6 pupils spoke with great enthusiasm of these activities, notably the team competition to get a bucket of water from one end of an assault course to the other. The team building that such challenges offer make a very good contribution to personal development.
- 158 Subject leadership and management are very good. The subject leader is very clear about her role. She manages her budget very well. She maintains a file that is organised well, has built up very good links with external agencies and monitors the quality of teaching effectively through checking planning and through observation of lessons. She has played a significant role in the school achieving the Active Mark Award and is collaborating with a local Sports College and feeder primary schools to improve the quality of the assessment procedures so that the school will meet the requirements for the Active Mark Gold Award. Improving assessment procedures will include linking assessment to National Curriculum levels of attainment. The school is in a good position to raise standards further.