

INSPECTION REPORT

BANKSIDE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Leeds

LEA area: Leeds

Unique reference number: 107901

Headteacher: Mrs J Horton

Reporting inspector: Mr P H Cole
2616

Dates of inspection: 13th – 17th January 2003

Inspection number: 246731

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 to 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Markham Avenue
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Appropriate authority: Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr J Clare

Date of previous inspection: November 1997

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19365	Mr G Stockley	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
2615	Mrs E Parry	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage Art Music	How good are curricular and other opportunities?
20950	Mr R Burgess	Team inspector	Mathematics Design and technology Special educational needs	
6282	Mrs Parveen Raja	Team inspector	English as an additional language Geography History Religious education	
27545	Mr Andrew Scott	Team inspector	Educational inclusion English	
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Bankside Primary is a very large school. It has 587 pupils on its roll, including 100 children who attend part-time in the nursery. Almost all of the pupils' families have come from Bangladesh and Pakistan to settle in this country. Very few pupils speak English as their first language and many are only just beginning to learn English when they start school. Many children come into the nursery with skills, knowledge and understanding well below those that are usually found. The number of pupils who have free school meals is well above average and the community suffers from considerable economic hardship. More pupils come into, and leave, the school during each year than is usually the case. The level of special educational needs is similar to that found in most schools and many of the difficulties that pupils face are to do with speech and language. The school is part of an Education Action Zone that was set up to improve pupils' learning, attendance and social and personal skills. The school has decided not to use the nationally recommended approaches to teaching literacy and numeracy.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very good school. The excellent leadership of the headteacher, who is well supported by her colleagues, ensures that teaching is consistently good and pupils are very well cared for. This enables them to achieve well. The school makes very good use of the generous funding it receives and provides very good value for money.

What the school does well

- Overall, pupils achieve well and those who have special educational needs make very good progress.
- Teaching is good across the school.
- The school works very successfully to ensure that pupils are very well behaved, get on extremely well with each other and develop very positive attitudes and values.
- The high quality leadership and management ensure that innovative approaches are successfully developed and refined to meet the needs of the pupils and to improve the education the school provides.

What could be improved

- There are no aspects of the school's life that need to be significantly improved.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in November 1997. The key issues have mainly been tackled well. The governing body has set up committees to make its work easier. The school has not only developed an appropriate policy for extended holidays, but has reduced the impact these have on pupils' learning and dramatically improved pupils' attendance overall. Pupils are still not given enough opportunities, however, to strengthen their research and enquiry skills in subjects such as history and geography. Better progress has been made in providing chances for them to develop their ability to investigate in science.

The school has not sat back on its laurels following the last inspection. It has introduced new approaches to teaching mathematics and English that are different from those used in almost all other schools in the country. These have been introduced very thoughtfully and have been supported by the purchase of plenty of good quality resources and staff training. These initiatives are checked carefully to see how well they are working. Recent results in mathematics suggest that the Barking and Dagenham programme is making a good impact on pupils' learning. There are positive signs that the more recently introduced 'Success for All' programme in English is meeting most pupils' learning needs effectively. It is contributing very well to the school's excellent ethos that supports pupils' personal and social development, behaviour and learning so well. Overall, the school has made good progress since its last inspection.

STANDARDS

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

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

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

The table above shows that although the results achieved last year by pupils in Year 6 were below the national average for English, mathematics and science, they were much better than those achieved in similar schools. This comparison is based on the numbers of pupils who are entitled to have free school meals. These results were particularly good when account is taken of the high number of pupils who started school with little spoken English. Pupils from Bangladeshi backgrounds often did less well in the tests than other pupils, but more of them came into school with weaker English and lower starting points.

The tests for Year 2 pupils show that they achieved below national averages in reading and writing and well below usual levels in mathematics. They did better than pupils in similar schools in English but less well in mathematics. When the Year 2 and Year 6 pupils' individual results in the national tests are compared with what they knew when they started school, almost all achieved at least what was expected of them and many did better than this. The school achieved the realistic targets it set itself for the 2002 Year 6 tests.

The inspectors found that pupils achieve well overall. In English, they are achieving below national expectations, but they make good progress with reading and satisfactory progress in writing. Pupils listen well but could give more detail when explaining their ideas during discussions. Standards are in line with the national expectations in mathematics and science, which is a good achievement, given their starting points. Their achievement in information and communication technology (ICT) is below average, but pupils are now making good progress as a result of regular and effective teaching. Standards in other subjects are in line with national expectations and pupils are mostly achieving well. Pupils who speak English as an additional language make good progress, and those who have

special educational needs make very good progress because of the very good support they are given. The children in the nursery and reception classes achieve well, but are unlikely to achieve all of the learning goals identified for them by the time they start Year 1, due to their very low starting points.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very positive; pupils are keen, interested and work hard in lessons.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good both in class and around the school.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils show respect for each other's beliefs, enjoy each other's successes, take on responsibilities enthusiastically and show initiative. Relationships are excellent.
Attendance	Good and greatly improved since the last inspection.

The school's success in promoting such positive attitudes, good attendance, very good behaviour and the very effective personal development is one of its greatest strengths. It not only provides a very strong base on which pupils' learning is built but also makes a considerable and valued contribution to the community the school serves. Pupils are learning to become responsible citizens very well, through, for example, their involvement in the school council and their growing understanding and tolerance of each other's beliefs and customs.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is strong across all subjects and classes in the school and reflects the consistent use of agreed programmes and approaches. These were initially introduced to teach English and mathematics. As many of the strategies have proved effective, they are now used widely by teachers in other subjects as well. Resulting strengths that were found in almost all lessons include: managing pupils' behaviour very well, mainly by the use of visual signs, and encouraging and valuing pupils' contributions and efforts; and, having clear goals for lessons, working purposefully towards them and making very good use of helpers in the class. These strengths ensure that pupils are almost always fully involved and keen to learn, very well behaved and work hard to achieve what has been planned for each lesson. The helpers in class work thoughtfully and sensitively with pupils who have special educational needs and with those who need extra support because they have limited understanding or skills in English. These pupils are, therefore, able to take a full part in lessons and usually

make very good progress. Teachers use the school's literacy and numeracy strategies to teach the basic skills in English and mathematics systematically and well. Overall, the strengths found in teaching in almost all lessons ensure that a high proportion of all pupils make consistently good progress in their learning.

A downside to the systematic approaches that have been adopted is that sometimes teachers stick to them too rigidly. Opportunities can then be lost to extend more able pupils. Occasionally, too much direction by the teacher limits the development of pupils' skills to learn independently. In the best lessons, teachers are more flexible and take the opportunities that arise to extend and enrich pupils' learning. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and conscientiously and provide many encouraging comments, but could give more guidance to pupils on what they need to do to make their work better.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. This is well matched to the needs of the pupils in this school and underpins the good teaching and effective learning that takes place.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good and ensures that these pupils make very good progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	This is another strength of the school, and supports the good progress made by pupils.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Very good, overall, with excellent provision for pupils' moral and social development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares for its pupils very well.

The school works well with parents; they are kept well informed and have good opportunities to help their children with work at home from nursery onwards. The school has taken the bold step of using alternative approaches to those usually used for pupils in the nursery and reception classes and for the teaching of literacy and numeracy in Years 2 to 6. The approaches for children in the nursery and reception and for literacy are based on programmes originally developed in the United States of America. They have been adapted for the United Kingdom and cover the same learning as the national guidelines used in other schools. For numeracy, the school follows a proven programme developed by another local education authority. These initiatives provide effective programmes that are mostly well suited to the pupils' needs and support the good progress that is made overall. The school is particularly successful in promoting pupils' personal development and welfare through the excellent provision made for their personal, social, health and citizenship education and pastoral support systems, including the Family Support Team.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides excellent leadership and management and is well supported by her senior colleagues.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors carry out their responsibilities satisfactorily and have a sound understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good account is taken of the school's performance when planning developments.
The strategic use of resources	Very good use is made of the school's budget and other grants to promote pupils' learning.

The headteacher takes bold and imaginative action to improve the education the school provides. She has created a particularly strong ethos that values all pupils and their backgrounds and continually strives to raise their achievement. Senior members of staff and teachers are given significant responsibilities that they fulfil well. Developments are thoughtfully and carefully implemented and are modified when necessary to bring about further improvements. The school makes good use of the limited space available and lessons are well resourced. The pupils with special educational needs and those at an early stage of learning English benefit from the generous levels of well-trained support staff. The school strives to get the best value it can when making spending decisions and takes good account of the views of pupils when planning developments.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children work hard and enjoy school. • Teaching is good and enables their children to make good progress. • The school cares for their children very well. • The school is approachable and well led and managed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There were no significant areas for improvement identified by parents.

The inspectors agree with the many strengths that parents identified in the very positive survey and at the meeting held before the inspection.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1 Pupils in Year 6 achieved below the national average for English, mathematics and science in the national tests in 2002, but did better than pupils in similar schools in science and much better in English and mathematics. When account is taken of the high number of pupils who began school with little spoken English, the results were particularly impressive. The school's analysis of test information shows that pupils from Bangladeshi backgrounds often did less well in the tests than other pupils. A higher proportion of them, however, enter school with little or no spoken English and with less well developed knowledge, skills and understanding, than other more well-established ethnic groups in the community. Although results dipped in 2000, they have shown strong improvement in English and mathematics since then. Overall, the differences in the performance of boys and girls has been less marked than in other schools, with girls outperforming boys in English, but boys achieving slightly better than girls in mathematics and science. The school met the targets it had set itself for the 2002 tests.

2 In the 2002 Year 2 national tests, pupils achieved below national averages in both reading and writing and well below in mathematics. When the results are compared to those in similar schools, they were above average in English but below the average in mathematics, mainly due to the weaker performance of Bangladeshi girls. Results over time have shown more variation than is usually the case and this reflects the differences in proportions of pupils with special educational needs in the different cohorts and teachers adapting to the curriculum initiatives that have been introduced.

3 When pupils' progress in the national tests is tracked from their entry into nursery to Year 2 and from Year 2 to Year 6, a very high proportion of them achieved at least their expected levels and many exceeded predictions. Overall, pupils achieve very well in the national tests by the time they leave the school.

4 The inspectors found that pupils are currently achieving well. Although standards overall in English are below national expectations, pupils make good progress with their reading and listening skills and achieve in line with expectations. Their progress in writing and speaking skills is sound but less strong and standards are below expectations. The pupils develop secure basic writing skills but are not provided with sufficient opportunities to develop their own ideas; similarly, they are given many opportunities to talk in lessons but are infrequently encouraged to provide extended answers and explanations. This inhibits the ability of some of the higher attaining pupils from achieving higher levels. Standards are broadly in line with the national expectations in both mathematics and science, which is a good achievement, given the pupils' starting points. Pupils' strengths in mathematics are broadly based, and weaknesses identified by the last inspection in carrying out investigations in science have been tackled.

5 Pupils' achievement in ICT is below expectations. This is because it is only recently that the school has had the resources to teach ICT effectively. In the areas that pupils have been taught, such as word processing and producing pictures, they are achieving in line with expectations but the pupils currently in Year 6 have little knowledge of databases or of monitoring and control technology. The school is taking appropriate action to tackle these deficiencies.

6 Standards in other subjects, where there was sufficient evidence to make judgements, are in line with national expectations and pupils are mostly achieving well. The children in the nursery and reception classes make good progress and are achieving well, although many are unlikely to achieve all of the learning goals identified for them in communication and early reading, writing and number skills. This is because of the very limited knowledge, understanding and skills that many have when they first come into nursery. They are likely to reach the expected levels or close to them in other areas, including their personal development.

7 Pupils who speak English as an additional language are given effective support and make the same good progress that other pupils make. Those who have special educational needs make very good progress because of the well-planned and very effective help they are given.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

8 Pupils have very good attitudes to the school and this contributes well towards the good progress they make in their learning. They settle down to their tasks quickly and work at a good pace, helping each other and working very well in pairs and small groups. This was demonstrated well in a science lesson in Year 6 where pupils were conducting tests on liquids. They adopted a mature attitude, co-operated very well and often supported each other. Behaviour during this lesson was excellent.

9 In lessons and around the school, pupils' behaviour is good overall and in a small number of lessons seen, particularly in Years 3 to 6, it was excellent. Pupils understand the need for rules and generally behave very well. The small number who find it difficult to behave as well as the majority are very well supported by the school as they try to improve their behaviour. No examples of bullying or other oppressive behaviour were seen during the inspection and over the last ten years there has only been one fixed term exclusion.

10 The school makes excellent provision for pupils' personal and social education and this ensures that pupils' personal development is very good. They understand the difference between right and wrong and they show great respect for the feelings, values and beliefs of others. They often applaud and celebrate other pupils' successes in class. Pupils have opportunities to carry out a range of jobs around the school, including looking after the office, operating as playground friends, and working as librarians. These experiences, together with taking part in the class council and school council meetings, ensure that pupils develop initiative and personal responsibility. There are fewer opportunities for pupils to take initiative and personal responsibility in their learning, however, because of the very structured programme followed in some lessons and the fact that pupils in the early years are very directed in their work. Relationships between pupils and between staff and pupils are excellent.

11 Attendance has improved significantly since the time of the previous inspection when it was well below the national average. Even accounting for extended holidays it is around the national average and if the absences for extended holidays during term time are excluded, the attendance is very high in comparison with other schools. Registration is completed quickly and efficiently and pupils are often working productively during the marking of registers.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

12 Overall, teaching is good across the school and in most subjects. There is more consistency in the quality of teaching than is often found in schools, which reflects the effective implementation of the different strategies, particularly from the 'Success for All' approach, that the school has adopted. These strategies were initially introduced to improve teaching in English and mathematics and are now used in lessons in other subjects. Their impact is particularly evident in the very effective management of pupils' behaviour. Teachers use visual cues to gain pupils' attention and to request that particular things are done in the class. The effect of this is to ensure that pupils pay very close attention to the teacher and noise levels are very low, even when pupils are asked to share their ideas with partners and their group. Teachers use praise and positive encouragement whenever possible and this successfully raises pupils' self-esteem and self-confidence. Pupils are, therefore, fully involved in lessons and work hard because they are eager to please their teachers. This in turn supports the good progress that is consistently made in lessons.

13 Teaching is mostly appropriately matched to what pupils need to learn; teachers are clear about what they want to achieve in the lesson and are confident about what they teach. As a result, lessons are purposeful and learning is supported by careful explanations, and questioning of pupils that checks on their understanding. Teachers are careful to explain and check on pupils' understanding of words and provide regular opportunities for pupils to share ideas with each other so that they can make useful contributions to class discussions. This works well in enabling pupils to refine their understanding of words and aspects of the mainstream culture. It also helps to ensure that all pupils are included and involved. On occasions, teachers talk too much and this reduces the opportunities for pupils to extend their thinking or develop greater independence as learners; this can sometimes limit the progress made by higher attaining pupils.

14 Although the precise content and the tightly structured lessons in English provide very good consistency in the quality of teaching and learning, they can sometimes limit the opportunities for the higher attaining pupils in a group to move beyond the programme's objectives for a particular lesson. The scheme is still new to teachers and not all are sufficiently confident to modify lesson plans based on what they know about pupils. In the best lessons, in English and other subjects, teachers add flair and dynamism to their work which capture the pupils' interest and enhance their learning.

15 A particularly strong feature of teaching is the very effective use of helpers in each class. They provide sensitive and skilful support and work unobtrusively with identified pupils who have either special educational needs or are at an early stage in acquiring English. These pupils are able to take a full part in lessons and are successfully encouraged to make confident contributions in discussions and almost always achieve the lessons objectives.

16 Pupils' work is marked conscientiously and regularly and the frequently made comments are encouraging and highlight achievement. More could be done, however, to help pupils know what they need to do to make their work better. Pupils are not provided with individual targets based on their own strengths and weaknesses that would help them to improve.

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

17 The curriculum for children in the nursery and reception is good overall. It is not based on the national guidelines for early years' education but on an American scheme. Although

there are differences in the terms that are used, it delivers the same learning as the English system. Provision for physical development in the reception class is satisfactory. As they have no dedicated outdoor play area, the children have some time in the hall and some time in the nursery outdoor play area but this is less than ideal.

18 The school provides a good curriculum that meets statutory requirements. It is broad and balanced, all subjects being taught including religious education. The school has not been afraid to be innovative in its search for the most suitable approach for its pupils. For example, it uses an alternative approach to the National Literacy Strategy because it is felt to have greater relevance for the school's pupils and uses flexible grouping systems in order to meet individual learning needs. Strategies for teaching both literacy and numeracy skills are good overall, although there are missed opportunities in both for extending them into other subjects. Pupils do not have enough chances to write in an extended way in subjects such as geography and religious education.

19 The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and they make very good progress because of the high quality, well-structured support they receive. The special educational needs policy promotes inclusion and is supported well by the very positive ethos in the school. Pupils with learning difficulties, behavioural difficulties or physical difficulties are all included sensitively through good lesson planning and daylong support through the very good teamwork of staff. Appropriate worksheets, reading materials and other resources are readily available for pupils.

20 A particular strength of the curriculum is the way that it is planned to be relevant to the multi-ethnic intake. . For example, children study the Benin culture in history, and work in art and music draws well on black cultures, such as making masks based on African art. The extra-curricular music includes dance based on Indian pop music, and pupils learn to play steel pans, and tabla (Indian drums) as well as violins.

21 Time for the subjects other than English, mathematics and science is relatively limited but provision is well thought out so that very good links are made between subjects and the learning in one reinforces learning in others. For example, in Year 5, pupils sing and play spirituals and consider the morality of slavery, learn about the work of Harriet Tubman and make prints based on the work of women in Nigeria. However, occasionally, the gap between subject teaching is too long, for example in history in Year 6, and this affects the continuity in pupils' learning. Pupils' learning in religious education lacks depth because the focus of lessons is not sufficiently based on developing their conceptual understanding.

22 Provision for pupils' personal development through the personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE) programme is excellent. It is so good because it covers all of the areas that the school needs to address in order to reduce possible barriers to pupils' learning. Everything is linked together, for example, so that skills and knowledge are taught in specific lessons, through subjects, assemblies and 'circle time' when pupils consider moral questions and social values. Good attention is given to ensuring that what is taught is acceptable to parents and the community. For instance, sex education has been considered and the approach is being modified to take account of its acceptability to those of the Muslim faith. Very good provision is made for pupils who have various degrees of special educational need through the flexibility that the school offers in grouping and through arrangements, such as those between nursery and reception classes, so that children access what is most suitable for them at different times of the day.

23 Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good overall with the moral and social elements being excellent. The ethos of the school, its approach to the curriculum and the thoughtfulness about meeting pupils' needs create a

harmonious working place. The racial diversity of the pupils and the staff are valued and celebrated so that issues of moral and social consequence, such as slavery and its subsequent effects, can be raised and discussed sensitively.

24 Teaching styles encourage pupils to work together, to value each other and to respect each other's opinion. Although pupils are encouraged to appreciate beauty in many ways through art, music and literature, there are occasions when opportunities to appreciate the intangible are not developed as fully as they might be, because the teaching approach is very tightly structured.

25 Staff have high expectations of pupils and consistently celebrate pupils' successes which builds up pupils' confidence and self-esteem. This confidence is evident in the pupils' willingness to take on responsibilities. The school council, for example, gives them an opportunity to make a real impact on their own lives by making suggestions about how things can be improved. The process helps them to learn to present information, argue a case, and negotiate and accept agreed decisions that will equip them well for their future life.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

26 The school takes very good care of its pupils. There are robust procedures in place to ensure that health, safety and child protection are given a high priority. All staff – including mid-day support staff – are well briefed on their responsibilities and all necessary routine safety checks are carried out regularly in accordance with the requirements of the health and safety policy. There is an appropriate number of staff qualified in first aid and parents are informed when their child has received a bump to the head. Very good attention is paid to health and safety in lessons, such as science and physical education. Two incidents seen during the inspection exemplify the care that the school takes. A child's sudden illness was dealt with promptly by staff with minimum disturbance to the lesson or other pupils. The absence of a child taken home by a parent at lunchtime was quickly spotted by staff and a 'phone call was made to the child's home, which confirmed that the child was safe.

27 The school's arrangements for monitoring and improving attendance are excellent. The very good arrangements noted at the previous inspection have been improved even further and this has had a very positive effect on the level of pupils' attendance and consequently on their learning. These arrangements also extend to punctuality, which is monitored daily, and support is given to those pupils and families where lateness is an issue. The introduction of a breakfast club for pupils whose punctuality was a problem has had some success in reducing the amount of lateness, as well as ensuring that pupils have something to eat before they begin their lessons.

28 The school has excellent procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour and for eliminating oppressive behaviour such as bullying and racism. The policy emphasises a positive approach to discipline and pupils are helped to understand the need for good behaviour and that, as in life generally, there are consequences attached to the choices that they make. Pupils have been given the opportunity through the class and school councils to contribute to the behaviour policy, thus giving them a stake in the process. Pupils who misbehave at lunchtimes are directed to the 'Think it through Club' where staff are on hand to help them to reflect on their behaviour and to take positive action to improve. Where fighting has been at the heart of the problem, pupils have the opportunity to walk along the 'Peace Path' in order to resolve their differences and hopefully emerge as friends. All adults in the school use the discipline procedures consistently and the behaviour of those causing concern is monitored regularly and discussed with them. This is a significant strength of the procedures.

29 Pupils' progress is carefully monitored. They are tested regularly in English, mathematics and science. The information from these assessments is used well to place and move pupils in their English sets and to group pupils in mathematics lessons. It is also used to target pupils for support. In Year 6, the information from tests is used to identify targets based on common weaknesses that pupils need to work on before they are formally tested. Other forms of target setting are less well developed. Targets for the year are being identified in English, mathematics, science and ICT but these are very general and do not really help individual pupils know what they need to do to tackle their own weaknesses. Teachers keep informative records of how well pupils learn key elements of knowledge, understanding and skills in the foundation subjects.

30 Pupils with special educational needs and those who are at an early stage of learning English are regularly assessed and the information is used very well to ensure that they are given support that is well matched to their particular needs.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

31 Parents are very pleased indeed with the school and the education provided for their children. Comments made at the parents' meeting and in the questionnaires were all very positive and there were no areas of significant concern. The parents' views are supported by the inspection findings.

32 The school has created very effective links with all parents. The staff are very welcoming and parents feel that they are very much a key partner in the education process. Because the school serves an area where several languages are spoken – some of which have no written form – much of the school's communication with parents is by word of mouth. The compactness of the catchment area and the fact that a number of the school staff are multilingual help to make this effective. Important documents, such as the prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents, are produced in several languages and staff are available to translate if required. The annual reports on pupils' progress are produced in English, but these are discussed in detail with parents at the parent consultation meetings with the help of bilingual staff if necessary. The reports themselves are generally of good quality, showing parents clearly how well their child is doing in relation to national expectations and indicating the next steps in their learning. However, the quality and format of the reports vary across the school and some are not so informative. The school is aware of the need to introduce more consistency into reporting to parents.

33 The school provides parents with a range of written information, such as a detailed prospectus and a guide to helping their children at home. Some of these documents would be more useful to parents if they were written in simpler language. The school does not issue advance written information to parents about the work that their children will be doing during the next term or half term. Some parents spoken to during the inspection said they would welcome this as it would help them to be more effective in supporting their children at home.

34 Parents are very interested in their children's education and give them good support at home by listening to them read and ensuring that homework is done. A small number of parents help out in school, especially in the Foundation Stage. There is not currently a friends' group or parent-teacher association, but parents are very supportive at any events organised by the school and there is a very high attendance at the two parent consultation meetings held during the year. Overall, parents make a good contribution to their children's education.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

35 The headteacher provides excellent leadership and management. She is prepared to break out of the mould of conformity and take bold initiatives to improve the education the school provides by making it more appropriate to the needs of the pupils in the school. This has led to the decisions, for example, to teach literacy, numeracy and the nursery and reception curriculum differently from how almost all other schools do. These alternative approaches have been adopted following careful research and discussions with staff and governors. They are carefully monitored to judge their impact and modified to make them more effective when this is necessary. The headteacher has also been a driving force in establishing the local Education Action Zone and in developing a programme for PSHCE that is being adopted by many other schools. She has high expectations for pupils and staff and has created an ethos that strongly promotes success and values individuals and their contributions and which places the school at the heart of the local community. Other senior members of staff have considerable responsibilities, for example overseeing the new initiatives and ensuring effective educational inclusion. They fulfil these effectively. Teachers lead and manage their subject areas well and are given time and professional support to do this.

36 Governors have more effective working practices than at the time of the last inspection. They have a sound understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and are fully involved in agreeing the direction the school will take and how it will spend its budget. They fulfil their responsibilities soundly and ensure that the school meets its legal responsibilities, for example for appraising the performance of teachers.

37 The school has well-established procedures to judge how well it is performing. Results are analysed and compared to those in other schools, both nationally and locally. Regular analysis is undertaken of how well different groups in the schools are performing, for example boys and girls, the different ethnic groups and classes in the same year group. Senior staff and subject co-ordinators check on the quality and effectiveness of teaching and on the effectiveness with which new initiatives are being put into practice. Information from these exercises is used to help plan what the school needs to do to improve further. The feedback given to teachers when they have been observed usually provides clear evaluations of what is working well but is less helpful in identifying what teachers need to do to improve.

38 The school's has implemented staff appraisal effectively and links this well with school priorities and opportunities for staff development.

39 Senior members of staff take full account of teachers' reviews and action plans for subjects, evaluations of progress in meeting targets from the previous development plan, the outcomes from monitoring and pupils' views of the school when drawing up the school's development plan. This is a useful working document that identifies appropriate priorities for action and informs how its budget should be spent. There are a few relative weaknesses. These include variation in the clarity of subject action plans, not always making clear how standards can be improved, and limiting plans to one year, rather than looking further into future. Good purposeful progress is made in implementing identified targets.

40 The school's budget, including the grants for special educational needs, English as an additional language and to support priorities identified in the Education Action Zone plan, is used well. Care is taken to gain the best value possible when funds are being spent. There are effective systems that ensure the smooth running of the school and the careful overseeing of finances.

41 The school has good arrangements for staff development. These are well matched to the school's priorities for development and individual staff needs, including support staff as well as teachers. Newly qualified teachers are given very good support.

42 Subjects are well resourced and there is an excellent match of teachers and support staff to the needs of the curriculum. The school's accommodation is barely adequate for the number of pupils on roll and although there is a good area for outdoor games the surface is breaking up and the school has no playing field, which limits opportunities for competitive team games. There is no separate outdoor area for children in the reception class. Currently the room available for the ICT suite is suitable for only half a class at a time. This limits the time that individual pupils have to develop their skills. This problem is being tackled by the school by enlarging the space available so that it can accommodate whole classes.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

43 There are no significant weaknesses that the governors, headteacher and staff need to address. However, in order to further improve the quality of the school's provision the following relative weaknesses could be tackled:

1. Ensuring that in all lessons the higher attaining pupils are fully stretched.
2. Giving more guidance to pupils on what they need to do to improve. This could be tackled through the marking of pupils' work and setting individual learning targets for them to work towards.
3. Providing more opportunities for pupils to develop their skills of enquiry and to practise and refine writing skills purposefully in subjects, such as science and geography.

ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE

44 The provision is good and a strength of the school. The percentage of pupils with English as an additional language has increased from 77 per cent at the time of the last inspection to over 90 per cent, with a significant increase in the number of pupils from Bangladeshi backgrounds. The headteacher and key staff have very good knowledge and understanding of pupils' linguistic and cultural backgrounds and have subsequently taken steps which effectively contribute to meeting their needs. The school has achieved well in ensuring that the main home languages are represented in the school by the bilingual staff. It applies their skills well to build strong links with the parents and the community, develop knowledge and understanding of cultural diversity and support children who have little or no English. The headteacher and key staff provide excellent leadership in ensuring that the school environment is reflective of pupils' cultural and linguistic backgrounds and set high expectations of pupils and staff.

45 The school has used its grant allocation to appoint four full-time posts, which include three nursery nurses and a classroom teaching assistant. A full-time teaching post is funded by another government grant aimed at raising achievement. The staff are well deployed to support children in the nursery and reception who are new to English and lower attaining children. One of the support staff works with the lower attaining pupils in the infants. Good monitoring and assessment procedures are in place and the headteacher checks the effectiveness of the additional support on a termly basis. The staff make a valuable contribution to the language and literacy development of the children they work with. They also maintain close links with the parents and ensure that children are further supported through regular homework. The school makes very effective use of the strong links that the bilingual staff have with parents and the community to support pupils both in and out of school.

46 Overall, most children in the early years and pupils in the rest of the school make good progress in language development, although many higher attaining pupils are capable of achieving better standards. Most pupils quickly develop self-confidence and high self-esteem, which helps them to use their developing second language without inhibition. The school uses assessment information to form ability groups for English lessons. In these lessons, most pupils work collaboratively in vertical groupings with pupils from different classes and form very good relationships with teachers and pupils. Teachers and support staff present good models of spoken and written English but provide fewer planned opportunities for pupils to use their developing spoken language for a range of purposes and a variety of audiences. Support in the home language is used effectively to help children who are new to English and those at an early stage of second language acquisition. The headteacher and key staff have good understanding of the different stages of second language acquisition and are well aware of the issues involved. For example, the development of higher order reading skills presents a particular challenge for most pupils. The school has addressed this issue by adopting a commercial scheme and an innovative approach.

47 The school uses its cultural and linguistic knowledge and its bilingual resources well to promote pupils' personal, social and moral development. Teachers generally make good effort to provide activities that are culturally relevant and link these with pupils' day-to-day experiences. For example, Year 6 pupils located countries such as Bangladesh, Cuba, Pakistan and India on a world map because they have either recently visited these or they have close family ties with them. Pupils became highly motivated and worked at a brisk pace. The school staff share their cultural heritage and linguistic expertise well with colleagues and pupils, which contributes effectively to a very positive ethos in which pupils thrive and demonstrate high self-expectations.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	86
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	48

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	12	50	20	1	0	0
Percentage	0	14	60	24	1	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)	100	487
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	212

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	9
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	6	84

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	458

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	66
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	75

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.2
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2
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 Years 1 and 2 (Year 2)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Years 1 and 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	47	34	81

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	38	38	40
	Girls	29	29	29
	Total	67	67	69
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	83 (86)	83 (84)	85 (87)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	38	41	43
	Girls	30	31	32
	Total	68	72	75
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	84 (87)	89 (87)	93 (96)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

Attainment at the end of Years 3 to 6 (Year 6)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Years 3 to 6 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	31	27	58

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	23	25	29
	Girls	20	21	24
	Total	43	46	53
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	74 (75)	78 (69)	90 (95)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	23	26	28
	Girls	21	21	24
	Total	44	47	53
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	75 (85)	81 (88)	91 (88)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

Ethnic background of pupils**Exclusions in the last school year**

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	8	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	9	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	179	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	217	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	23	0	0
Black or Black British – African	1	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	6	0	0
Chinese	2	0	0
Any other ethnic group	13	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	0	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	29
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	18
Average class size	20.3

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	33
Total aggregate hours worked per week	1,012

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	50
Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	125
Number of pupils per FTE adult	8.3

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	3
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	8

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
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	2002
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	£
Total income	1,491,084
Total expenditure	1,462,629
Expenditure per pupil	2,553
Balance brought forward from previous year	98,740
Balance carried forward to next year	127,195

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	587
Number of questionnaires returned	191

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	82	14	2	1	1
My child is making good progress in school.	65	31	2	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	66	30	2	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	64	27	4	2	4
The teaching is good.	73	25	2	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	63	30	5	2	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	65	26	2	1	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	71	26	2	1	1
The school works closely with parents.	57	32	4	1	6
The school is well led and managed.	66	25	3	1	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	68	26	3	1	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	49	34	5	4	9

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

48 Attainment when children start at the nursery is low overall, and very low in English. This is because many of the children do not speak English as the first language in their homes. By the end of the nursery, they have made good progress even though standards are still low. They continue to make good progress in the reception classes even though standards are below the national expectations. Teaching has remained good, as it was at the previous inspection. The curriculum is being changed with new initiatives that match what is happening in the rest of the school and there are some areas that still need further work to bring them up to an equal quality of provision across all the areas of learning.

49 Teaching in the nursery and reception is good. All of the adults show care and concern for the children in their care and sensitivity to their particular needs. Learning is well planned to give children a balance of time to choose their own activities and time when they are given direction. When there is an 'apple break' in the afternoon, activities do not flow as well as they might and children sometimes have to stop in the middle of what they are doing. There are good procedures for assessing how well children are doing, including those who have special educational needs and those who speak English as their second language. There is a strong sense of teamwork in all of the classes which is strengthened by the fact that the co-ordinator for this stage of learning teaches in both nursery and reception classes and is able to keep a good daily overview of what is happening. Children who do not speak English when they start at the nursery are very well supported and make good progress, as do those who have special educational needs.

50 The curriculum for the nursery and reception is planned using an American model rather than the English one. However, in practice it delivers the same learning goals with some differences in teaching styles or slightly different emphases. For example, teachers do not work within the guidelines for the literacy strategy but use American 'Curiosity Corner'. In reception classes, this involves group work which is highly structured and works because the groups are around six in size and every group is led by an adult. There is also very good provision for children who find learning difficult. For example, children in reception classes can move into the nursery during the more formal English sessions when they would struggle to keep up with others.

Personal, social and emotional development

51 Good teaching and provision in the nursery encourage children to have good attitudes, to become more independent and to play purposefully. The range of children's personal and social skills is very wide when they first start, but overall they are below what is usually found in three year olds. Some, during their first weeks in school, settled down quickly and positively; others were tearful at leaving their parents. Nursery staff deal with these situations skilfully. Parents and carers are encouraged to stay as long as they like but the staff sometimes advise them to leave quickly if it helps the child to settle down better. Some children in the nursery exude confidence in their relationships with adults and with each other; others are reticent. Some children quickly choose what they want to do whilst others need to be invited. By reception, all are more confident and their personal, social and emotional development is more closely in line with expectations. Children behave well because the staff's expectations for this are high and because there are a good number of adults to support children in activities. Should there be any disagreements, these are quickly spotted and dealt with. As well as through the daily life of the reception class, there are also specific sessions that aim to develop children's awareness of each other. This good mixture of formal

and informal learning helps children to become more confident. They are keen to learn and almost all are able to concentrate for very long times for such young children.

Communication, language and literature

52 The standards that children reach by the time they are at the end of reception are below those expected in the national guidance for this stage of education but children achieve well. Teaching and provision are good and ensure that children make good progress.

53 When children start in the nursery, there is a very wide range of skill in spoken English but overall it is very low compared to what is expected for three year olds. Some speak no other language than English and chatter happily to adults and to each other. Some children lack confidence in some situations; for example, they do not like to talk when there are children around but will talk freely to adults. Others come from families who speak a different mother tongue and they do not yet talk in English. There is very good support for these children so that they move quickly through the process of being surrounded by the sounds of the language, to listening and following but not replying, to using English happily although sometimes with support by the time they reach the reception classes. In all classes, all of the adults encourage children to talk as they play and help them to develop better speech by modelling answers effectively, correcting children if they speak inaccurately and praising them when they answer well.

54 Children listen to stories with enjoyment. Even in the nursery, they are beginning to recognise features of a book, such as the author. Children who do not speak English at all, or not well enough for full understanding, benefit from hearing stories in their mother tongue at the same time as others listen to them in English. All follow stories with interest, keeping good attention on the pictures. By reception, children are moving more quickly towards the early learning goals for reading. They read the title with the teacher, answer questions about the story which show that they have understood it and participate by saying the rhymes at the end of sentences.

55 'Curiosity Corner', the American approach to early learning, gives strong emphasis to the early stages of reading and writing skills through both whole class work and group tasks in reception. Each group has an adult so that children are very closely supported. This works well for almost all groups. Children are kept on task for considerable lengths of time and the majority of them work hard and learn a lot. However, for the slowest learners, the work rate is too intense and they begin to lose interest despite the efforts of their adult helper to keep them going. Sometimes the most able children work together in a group at more demanding tasks. They show a good knowledge of the letters and sounds of the alphabet and are beginning to read and write simple words such as fox, fix and fax. In reading, writing and spelling this group have exceeded the targets for their age. They read the text with the teacher well but are over-challenged by the task of reading to a partner.

56 Many of the children who start at the nursery have not held pencils or crayons before, so that when they start their hand control is at much earlier stages than is usual. This lack of experience continues to be evident in reception when children are tackling some of the more formal writing activities and many lack the fine control that is needed for letter formation. This aspect of physical development affects the confidence with which some children tackle writing and shows in attainment that is below what is typically found.

Mathematical development

57 The children are making good progress although the standards are below what is usual. Teaching is good and results in children making good progress. Staff in the nursery encourage mathematical language effectively in play, for example getting children to compare the lengths of plastic snakes in the small world play, counting, measuring in the sand and water or talking to them about shapes.

58 In reception, mathematics lessons follow a numeracy format with introductory activities and group work. Children respond enthusiastically and with great enjoyment to the physical activity of stamping and counting at the same time. Teachers help children to learn more about numbers by asking sensible questions, such as what comes before or after. Most groups are supervised by an adult so that the work is kept at a good pace. However, when the highest attainers are working by themselves, the work is not sufficiently demanding. Children's knowledge of numbers is broadly satisfactory by the end of reception. They can count up to 10 and some go well beyond that. The highest attainers are coping well with simple addition and subtraction. A general weakness is children's ability to record their mathematics. Some write numbers neatly and legibly but many are still at early stages of writing skill and it is difficult for them to form small and clear numbers. This holds them back from showing how much they know and can do.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

59 Overall, there is good teaching and provision in this area so that children's limited knowledge and understanding of the world when they start in the nursery are on course to reach expected levels by the time they leave the reception class. In the nursery the children play with magnets and get great enjoyment from seeing what they can attract. Bags of ice caused great excitement as children described how it felt. Some very good initial teaching captured children's interest through lively and entertaining use of the voice. Children explore wet and dry sand with interest and learn about aspects of the world as they play with the various small toys. This kind of play often reveals a lack of vocabulary; for example, children know aeroplane but not helicopter. Staff are very good at supporting play and developing language whenever the opportunity arises. Bilingual assistants use the opportunities that arise in these situations to talk to children often in a mixture of mother tongue and English that allows the children to become increasingly confident in responding. By reception, scientific learning has a more formal element with groups of children being taught to sort objects into sets by the material they are made of. By the end of the lesson, they are able to do this competently.

60 Children in all classes have a good confidence and level of skill in using computers. By reception, they handle the mouse skilfully, for example to drag and drop pieces of a jigsaw puzzle on a screen or to rotate them so that they will fit together. They also happily use tape recorders and headphones to listen to stories, rhymes and music.

Physical development

61 Provision and teaching in this area are satisfactory with children reaching satisfactory standards overall. The range of learning activities gives plenty of scope for children to improve their hand-eye co-ordination, for example through manipulating jigsaw puzzles or construction toys, and they show typical skills for their ages in building and joining materials. Their ability to control very fine movements, such as those needed for writing and drawing, are poorer than usual. The nursery has a small but pleasant outdoor area immediately outside the door with a satisfactory range of equipment. The children ride bikes capably although they do not always keep an eye on those around them and sometimes bump into each other. They enjoy using the climbing equipment. Some need the steady hand of an

adult, whilst others balance and climb with confidence. Reception classes have limited access to this provision, but also have some time in the hall. This is quite short and after children have put mats out and away, what is left does not provide sufficient time for the teacher or the children to work on and improve skills. For instance, the children do not use space well, tending to work closely together and the lesson time and structure is too short to develop this. However, they run around and roll over the mats well.

Creative development

62 Children's learning in this area is well taught through a good range of activities. Their attainment varies across the strands, but is below average overall. For example, children sing and play instruments with average skills. They mould and create shapes from play dough satisfactorily. They work together well in role-play and their imagination is stimulated effectively when there is an adult supporting them. In aspects that involve art skills, children's attainment is much lower. Many start in the nursery with limited experience of holding drawing and painting tools. This shows in their first attempts to paint when they hold brushes like daggers and use a scrubbing action to apply paint. However, the children are obviously fascinated by paint and love to explore the colours and textures that they can create on the paper. They make steady progress, but even so, by reception, this part of their creative development shows skills that are below the average. For example, although drawings of people are clearly more sophisticated and some children have started to put in features such as fingers and feet, eyes and noses, many have not yet got the level of control for such detail.

ENGLISH

63 Throughout the school standards in English are below average. This is particularly true of pupils' skills in speaking and writing and this represents a slightly weaker picture than at the time of the last inspection. However, skills in listening and reading are stronger and pupils achieve expected levels of attainment. These standards have been maintained since the last inspection. Pupils with English as a second language make the same good progress as other pupils, while pupils with special educational needs make very good progress, because of the high level and quality of personal support. The school has recently taken the bold decision to introduce a new method of teaching English. This course has provided a valuable structure to learning, and both staff and pupils appreciate the system. It is already giving a boost to slower learners, but it is not yet having a real impact on standards.

64 Pupils have satisfactory listening skills by the end of Year 2. They concentrate hard in class because teachers create a warm and purposeful atmosphere. Pupils are, therefore, keen to understand new learning and sustain their attention for long periods. Pupils readily know what is expected of them. In a Year 1 lesson, for example, a clear explanation by the teacher helped pupils to appreciate quickly that they needed to supply their own feelings about wet weather. Most pupils who have English as their second language cope as well as other pupils. The few pupils who still lack confidence in English receive very good support from bilingual assistants. Pupils are not so confident when speaking. Many pupils respond keenly to questions in lessons but many are also reluctant to volunteer information. When they do speak, they have a tendency to rush words and so become indistinct. Teachers do not always correct pupils enough so that they know what they should do to improve.

65 By the end of Year 6, pupils maintain satisfactory listening skills. They are keen to learn and so they know it is important to concentrate at all times. They succeed in this because teachers use devices like overhead projectors well to focus pupils' attention on texts and emphasise key vocabulary to clarify understanding. This was especially evident when one Year 6 class had to think through ideas for a chapter written in the style of Harry Potter.

Many pupils speak confidently and participate comfortably in discussions. In another Year 6 lesson, pupils could retell a story accurately in their words from an earlier lesson. However, a significant number of pupils are not so confident and do not speak out willingly in lessons. As with younger pupils, diction is not as good as it should be and they do not have a wide enough vocabulary for effective expression.

66 Pupils have satisfactory reading skills throughout the school. By the end of Year 2, pupils enjoy reading stories and nursery rhymes. They recognise and read familiar words with some fluency. They can sound out words letter by letter but they do not yet have the skills to break new words into syllables. They also rely on pictures to help them put words in context. Pupils have a sound understanding of what they read. Lower attaining pupils have a more limited vocabulary and therefore lack fluency. Higher attaining pupils are more confident because they can work out new words with increasing skill and understand the text better. By the end of Year 6, pupils have a healthy interest in reading good books, although they rarely read reference books for pleasure. They read fluently, often with good expression, and they can talk clearly about the plot and the characters. They have few problems untangling new words and this boosts their confidence, although some pupils falter over words like 'corpse' and 'sacrifice'. Lower attaining pupils lack the word skills that help them to tackle new words smoothly and so they lack fluency and expression. Higher attaining pupils are swift readers with sensitive expression.

67 By the end of Year 2, pupils' writing skills are below average. Pupils know how to structure sentences to make a sensible sequence of events, like a holiday trip. They write simple descriptions accurately. Year 2 pupils in one lesson wrote sentences like, "My toy is blue and white." Sentences tend to be short and mostly punctuated correctly with full stops and capital letters. Spelling is satisfactory but handwriting is too inconsistent, because letter sizes are often of different sizes. Many lower attaining pupils struggle to write proper sentences; their spelling is weak and handwriting haphazard. Therefore, few of them are likely to reach the expected standards for their age. There are very few pupils who are likely to achieve higher standards in the national tests.

68 By the end of Year 6, pupils' writing is still below average. Pupils are now able to write in a variety of styles. They can write about features of rainforests and produce an evaluation of a website, for example. On a daily basis, teachers insist that all pupils write brief thoughts about the book they are reading. The structure of their writing is sound because teachers encourage pupils to think hard about what they write through a drafting, editing and re-drafting process. This does not always eliminate grammatical weaknesses. One Year 6 pupils wrote about a holiday, "When I got into the caravan, the door had fell off." Pupils do not write well creatively. This is mainly because the new course gives pupils very precise guidelines and teachers do not provide enough opportunities for pupils to produce their own original ideas. In one Year 5 lesson, pupils were asked to write about a bird, the details of which were given to them. They had no chance to select their own choice of bird, find out information for themselves and write the details in their own style. The same is true of story writing. Lower attaining pupils do not write sentences well enough and their handwriting is weak. The few higher attaining pupils use increasingly complex sentences with more imaginative vocabulary.

69 The quality of teaching is good. It is good particularly for pupils in Years 1 and 2 and for older pupils in Years 5 and 6, because teachers are more dynamic in their approach and do not stick so rigidly to the new course. However, there are common strengths throughout the teaching which impress. Teachers are very good at creating a disciplined yet positive and happy atmosphere in lessons. This produces keen and well-motivated pupils. Relationships between teachers and pupils are very strong, because teachers value and know their pupils very well, and the pupils respect that. The behaviour of pupils is often excellent. The

enthusiasm of some teachers can be infectious. One teacher's keenness for a text on Vikings galvanised pupils in a Year 6 lesson and fired their imagination. Teachers use praise liberally for good effort in discussion or writing. This boosts pupils' self-esteem and encourages them to work harder. However, teachers do not point out errors enough so that pupils can quickly learn from their mistakes.

70 Teachers use resources skilfully to capture pupils' attention and interest. In a lesson on poetry writing, one teacher sang 'Mud, mud, glorious mud' on his guitar. The pupils found the poem more exciting as a lyric and they appreciated the rhythm of the words better. Teachers explain new learning very clearly and so pupils understand the concept and know what they have to do to consolidate it. This also provides good learning of basic skills. Teachers consistently stress the meanings and spellings of new vocabulary, for example, to encourage writing that is more interesting and accurate. Teachers often make good use of time in lessons to promote pupils' speaking. This is not always the case and, sometimes, teachers talk too much and limit the time available for pupils to gain confidence. Teachers make very good use of support staff to help pupils, especially lower attaining pupils, pupils with special educational needs and pupils whose first language is not English. Support staff guide and encourage pupils with sensitivity and warmth, so that pupils are reassured and motivated to try hard in their work.

71 The new course has had a positive impact on many aspects of teaching. The structure of the learning is highly organised so that pupils progress smoothly over time. The grouping of pupils according to ability and not age is, for the most part, very sensible because it allows teachers to concentrate on very specific areas of learning. The structure of the groupings and the blurring of year groups by using a colour code are very successful in breaking down any possible barriers. Therefore, pupils get on together extremely well, even if there are pupils from as far apart as Year 2 and Year 6. The co-operative learning promoted through group and paired work also ensures that all pupils are wholly included and no one feels left out. The regular testing of pupils every eight weeks is effective in determining exactly how well pupils are performing. Pupils can easily change groups, if necessary, but usually pupils receive focused support to help them catch up. This system is not so effective for more able pupils who have to go through the course systematically and not necessarily proceed at their own speed. This helps to explain why comparatively few pupils achieve at the higher standards in national tests. In addition, the system of setting individual targets for pupils is not effective enough. Pupils do not know specifically what they have to do to improve, and this is also a weakness.

72 The course provides some very good strategies for learning but there are also shortcomings. There is constant reinforcement of areas of learning so that pupils consolidate knowledge and skills. Pupils are encouraged to reflect before answering a question which helps them think more carefully. The constant interaction between pupils gives them confidence in debating issues with each other but this is only really successful with older pupils. Younger pupils do not have the language skills to be very effective. Too often, teachers stick far too closely to the lesson planning provided by the new course. This can mean that they are reluctant to develop points that arise in lessons and deny pupils valuable opportunities to contribute. There is not enough emphasis on pupils' learning for themselves and developing their own creativity. This is especially so in writing because pupils have to follow rigid frameworks, rather than letting their ideas flow.

73 The school has been very efficient in introducing a new system of teaching English. It has been very thorough in its appraisal of the new ideas and has been careful to assess its suitability for the pupils. The heavy emphasis on staff training and high expenditure on resources have ensured that teachers have been consistent in their initial approach. Furthermore, teachers have embraced the new concepts enthusiastically. The whole

process is managed very efficiently within the school by the co-ordinator. There is constant support and guidance for all staff. The co-ordinator is very active, visiting all teachers throughout the week to demonstrate teaching points and to assess, along with the headteacher, how well the course is being taught. Feedback to teachers is very supportive but not rigorous enough to specify what teachers need to do to improve. By contrast, the analysis of how well pupils do in their national and course tests is very thorough and pinpoints weaknesses in learning that the school needs to address, such as the quality of writing. The school has done well since the last inspection to establish a proper library, although its stock of books is still relatively small. However, other resources to support the new course and classroom libraries are very good and a great bonus for teachers and pupils.

MATHEMATICS

74 Improvement since the last inspection has been good. Pupils are making greater progress, particularly in Years 1 and 2. Work for pupils in Years 5 and to 6 is more carefully matched to pupils' needs, as a result of the introduction of teaching groups based on pupils' prior attainment. The improvement since the last inspection is the result of better quality and more consistent standards of teaching, good co-ordination of the subject, effective implementation of the school's numeracy strategy and increased emphasis on the monitoring and evaluation of provision and standards.

75 Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well and those where English is an additional language achieve well. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve well, attaining standards that are close to the average from a below average start when they first enter the school. Pupils also achieve well in Years 5 and 6. Achievement is greatest in these classes because of the good and usually very good quality of teaching, particularly the very effective classroom management, lessons that have a very good pace and the pupils' very good attitudes and behaviour. Achievement is good overall because of the school's numeracy strategy and systematic procedures for assessing and analysing pupils' attainment and progress, the organisation of groups of pupils within the classroom, based on their prior attainment and current needs, and the good attitudes towards mathematics displayed by most pupils.

76 By the end of Year 2, pupils recognise that addition is the inverse of subtraction and use this knowledge to solve number problems. They can find solutions to problems expressed in words and figures. Pupils discuss the features of shapes and higher attaining pupils know that a pyramid has triangular sloping faces which meet at the top. Pupils in Year 1 are familiar with a range of mathematical language; for example, they confidently use 'count on', 'more than' and 'total' in relation to addition, and 'minus', 'less than', 'count back' and 'difference' in relation to subtraction. By the end of Year 2, pupils use mental recall with confidence. Most recognise that multiplication is the inverse of division and apply this relationship simply, without the need for pencil and paper. Higher attaining pupils understand the meaning of words such as 'estimate'. By the end of Year 2 lower attaining pupils can read and write times of the day with confidence, using terms such as 'quarter to' and 'quarter past' accurately. Pupils can interpret data and draw conclusions from the results. Pupils can explain the characteristics of even numbers and multiples of five. Higher attaining pupils apply their knowledge and understanding of mathematics confidently to solve everyday problems. For example, they can calculate mentally the total cost of three items that each cost 30p and know that they would receive 10p change from £1.

77 By the end of Year 6, pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding are developed effectively. Most pupils are confident with using number. They calculate accurately using large numbers, have a very good sense of place value and recognise equivalent fractions and percentages. Pupils have a clear understanding of different mathematical operations and are

able confidently to explain the principles of ratios and inverse operations. Higher attaining pupils collect and collate data and use mathematical language such as 'mode' and 'median'. This group of pupils has a clear understanding of different mathematical shapes and is able to explain confidently the properties of various regular and irregular shapes. They recognise that a parallelogram has two pairs of parallel sides and two pairs of opposite angles that are equal. Pupils are able to construct triangles with a protractor and a compass confidently and accurately. They use previous knowledge well and apply this confidently to areas of new work. Pupils work well together to look for and try out new ideas.

78 Pupils develop speaking and listening skills effectively in mathematics, through the successful implementation of the school's numeracy strategy. There is appropriate emphasis on the development of specific subject vocabulary and there are good opportunities for pupils to learn through investigations in mathematics lessons. This provides the opportunity for pupils to tease out their thoughts and develop their mathematical ideas. Whilst pupils are familiar with, and confident in, the use of ICT, there are currently few opportunities to develop their skills in this area in mathematics. The school is aware of this and the purchase and implementation of appropriate software are a priority for improvement. Pupils who need extra support to reach the expected levels are supported through 'catch-up' groups, which help them to progress more quickly.

79 Attitudes and behaviour are very good, fostered by high teacher expectations of good behaviour and attention to work. Pupils' enthusiasm towards mathematics is good. Pupils' attitudes towards mathematics are good. Most pupils work at a good pace and most are attentive and well behaved. They work effectively both individually and in small groups. Pupils' relationships with teachers and with each other are very good. Pupils from different religious and ethnic backgrounds work very well together.

80 The quality of teaching is good overall. It is good or very good in Years 1 and 2, but is inconsistent in Years 3 to 6. Lessons have a clear structure, giving pupils a good balance between mental work, direct instruction from the teacher and practical exercises. Pupils are told what they are expected to learn and do in each lesson. In the satisfactory lessons seen, the task set was not appropriately differentiated for the range of abilities in the class. Where the teaching is very good, lessons are very well planned and structured. Examples include a Year 5 lesson where pupils learnt about the relationship between doubling and halving when calculating and a Year 6 lesson on work on ratios and inverse operations. In these lessons, pupils are set clear objectives, which they understand. There are very clear expectations for behaviour, which are shared with pupils. Lessons take place at a very good pace, starting with brisk sessions of mental arithmetic, which encourage and motivate pupils. Teachers group pupils effectively and adapt work to provide appropriate challenge. This happened, for example, in a Year 1 lesson on subtraction where the task was refined for different groups and extension work was given to more able pupils. Learning is particularly good in lessons when the teacher provides pupils with instant feedback on their progress. It is also good when teachers use praise effectively to motivate pupils and boost their confidence and self-esteem. Homework is used well to consolidate and reinforce what is learned at school.

81 Pupils' written work is usually marked and sometimes supported by positive remarks. There are very few constructive comments to indicate to pupils what they need to do to improve. Teachers assess and record pupil progress well. This information is used to group pupils and to set group targets for improvement, although these are quite general in nature.

82 Support staff play a significant role in helping pupils to focus closely on their work and sort out their mathematical ideas. The school wisely makes the greatest use of support staff with the younger pupils. This is particularly beneficial for pupils who have special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. This approach makes a

significant contribution to the good progress made by this group of pupils in Years 1 and 2. Teachers ensure that the staff who support pupils are clear about what is to be learned.

83 The co-ordinator provides good leadership of the subject. He has ensured that all the issues identified at the time of the last inspection have been addressed and he has led the successful implementation of the school's numeracy strategy. There is an effective subject policy and curriculum plan. Monitoring and evaluation of the subject are satisfactory. He has worked closely with the headteacher and members of staff from the local education authority to analyse and evaluate the results of national tests to identify areas for development. The co-ordinator regularly monitors teachers' planning and reviews pupils' work, providing feedback and agreeing targets for improvement with staff. The observation of teaching has taken place and has been beneficial in securing improvements. The school encourages the involvement of parents through the provision of resources for homework.

84 There is a good level of resources for mathematics, including helpful materials for pupils and resources to support the preparation for the national tests in Year 6 for use at home. Resources are accessible to both staff and pupils. The resource priority is to provide a good range of software to support the teaching and learning of mathematics through ICT.

SCIENCE

85 Pupils achieve well in science, given their starting points. The observations of lessons, discussion with pupils and their completed work indicate average standards.

86 By the end of Year 2, pupils, for example, know that a bulb needs a battery to light up in a circuit and that magnets "stick together" and attract metals. They know that light comes from the sun but are unable to recall parts of the eye. When growing cress, they know that plants need water and light to grow. When investigating materials, pupils in Year 2 sort them into different groups such as metal, fabric, plastic and wood. They describe clearly why certain materials are best for their use, for example metal for toy cars and not glass.

87 By the end of Year 6, pupils show appropriate understanding, for example the difference between veins and arteries in the body and that arteries carry blood from the heart. They explain clearly that a habitat is an animal home and they liken a food chain to the water cycle. They understand why a second bulb placed in a simple electricity circuit is dim and that the circuit has to be complete. They know magnets have two poles and that like poles repel and unlike ones attract. Although many cannot describe the planetary system they know that the sun is the centre of the universe and that the moon takes 28 days to orbit the earth and some pupils understand the difference between a solar and lunar eclipse. All pupils are enthusiastic about science and enjoy investigative work. The opportunities for investigation have improved since the previous inspection and are now strong features in the school, particularly in Years 5 and 6. During an investigation on the flow of liquids, pupils in Year 6 predicted that honey would flow slower than water. They have a secure understanding of the need to make their tests fair test when conducting an investigation.

88 The quality of teaching is good, with examples of very good teaching throughout the school. Teachers plan lessons with clear learning objectives and follow them well, ensuring that all pupils achieve what has been planned. They now provide sufficient opportunities for investigative work, which has tackled the weaknesses in pupils' learning identified in the last inspection. Positive relationships with pupils are strengths of the teaching and underpin teachers' very good management of pupils' behaviour. Little time is wasted and pupils work hard. Subject knowledge is secure but planning for the full ability range, particularly the more able pupils, is sometimes a weakness. Lower ability pupils are well supported and make

good and sometimes very good progress but occasionally more able pupils could be given greater challenge, for example by being asked to extend their ideas more fully when writing up their findings. Pupils are encouraged to record their observations in tabulated form but are given few opportunities to present and interpret data in graphs. Presentation and quality of written work are below average in the lower school but improve thereafter. Marking of pupils' work is regular and positively encourages pupils but comments do not always help pupils to improve. Assessment is undertaken regularly and is being refined to ensure that progress is more easily identified, especially for the more able pupils. Targets for individual pupils to work towards in order to make their work better are not consistently used with all pupils and are mostly too general to help individual pupils improve. .

89 Pupils' attitudes are positive and they report that they enjoy practical work. They cooperate well with a partner and in groups and many support each other in a range of ways. They listen with enthusiasm and concentrate on tasks set. Behaviour is often very good, sometimes excellent and pupils, in Year 6 particularly, demonstrate a mature attitude to their work.

90 The leadership and management of science are good and a new co-ordinator has recently been appointed. She is enthusiastic and has good knowledge of the standards achieved by pupils throughout the school. Test results are analysed but information gained has made little impact on raising standards of the more able pupils. Schemes of work are comprehensive but do not yet fully reflect the recommendations of national subject guidance. They do provide teachers with useful guidance and clear progress in the learning that is planned for pupils. Monitoring of teaching has been a regular feature but the emphasis has been only on the quality of teaching and not on what pupils learn. Resources are good but some are in need of updating. ICT is rarely used and there little evidence of it in pupils' work.

ART AND DESIGN

91 Less time is given to art than is usually found. Teaching is good and the curriculum is planned carefully, however, and these ensure that pupils make satisfactory progress and reach standards that are in line with those expected nationally by Years 2 and 6. These judgements are similar to those of the previous inspection.

92 No lessons were seen in Year 6, but the portrait work in pencil on the entrance display boards was of a good standard. The careful way that pupils had been introduced to facial proportions enabled them to draw realistic faces and the shading techniques produced faces of real character and quality. Other work, such as paintings and illustrations linked to other subjects, demonstrates skills that are more typical for Year 6 pupils.

93 Examples of work on walls and in the art co-ordinator's portfolio suggest that the art curriculum is broad and balanced and that standards in other year groups are also about average. Pupils use computers capably in art. For instance in Year 2, they created colourful pictures with titles such as 'Grey Cliffs' using a painting and drawing package and, in Year 5, they based their computer pictures on a painting by Matisse.

94 In the small sample of lessons seen, teaching was good. Time is well balanced between necessary introduction, so that the pupils know what they are going to do, and time to work on the tasks. Teachers explain the purpose of the lessons clearly, encouraging pupils to remember their previous work. They introduce techniques carefully, using correct terminology, and provide good support whilst pupils are working. As a result, pupils work diligently and develop their skills. Good reference is made to other aspects of learning,

wherever possible, as in a Year 1 lesson when pupils were making observational drawings of fruit and vegetables and also learning about healthy eating.

95 Art makes a good contribution to pupils' cultural development and topics are thoughtfully chosen for their links to other subjects and for their relevance to the pupils. For example, Year 5 pupils develop their awareness of pattern by creating their own based on the Adire Aleko prints made by women in Nigeria. In doing this, they also learn to value the art of a particular culture. Sometimes they are encouraged to consider quite contrasting cultures, as in a Year 2 lesson when they looked at paintings by Picasso and Japanese landscapes.

96 Co-ordination of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator keeps an eye on what is happening in the subject through reviewing planning, displays and observing some lessons with the agreement of the teacher. Assessment is not fully in place although different approaches are being trialled.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

97 Standards in design and technology are satisfactory and have been maintained by the end of Years 2 and 6 since the last inspection. The school provides a range of activities and experiences for pupils to acquire appropriate skills in choosing and using a variety of tools and materials. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those speaking English as an additional language, make good progress and reach the standards expected of them by the end of Years 2 and 6.

98 By the end of Year 2, pupils are developing good skills and techniques. They measure and cut accurately and assemble and join materials, incorporating a moving part, for example when making a card using levers and sliders linked to the story of the Gingerbread Man. All pupils show very sensible attitudes to their work and support assistants are very well employed helping the slower workers. Pupils practise the basic skills of scoring, cutting and joining materials together. Pupils in Year 2 follow carefully the step-by-step stages involved in making a wheeled vehicle linked to their topic on 'Toys and Games'.

99 By the end of Year 6, pupils are able to work with much more independence. Pupils are planning well, applying their good knowledge and understanding, and working confidently and safely with tools and materials. In their planning they identify suitable materials and research the process of making a mask linked to their study of life in Benin. They are interested and industrious and their ability to assemble materials is much improved. Pupils use their knowledge and skills in food technology. They design and make healthy fillings for sandwiches, considering the kinds of ingredients carefully. By the end of Year 6, pupils have learnt to plan and sketch what they want to make and evaluate their work, but do not always follow the process systematically from initial design to final evaluation.

100 Pupils' attitudes are very good. From discussions with pupils, it is evident that they enjoy design and technology lessons and are proud of their work. They like to explain what they have done. In Year 4, for example, they described how a back stitch would be better than a running stitch when testing different stitches for sewing the seams of felt purses.

101 Teaching is good. Teachers use their improved knowledge to teach and develop skills and usually provide interesting and challenging activities. The teachers' own increased confidence leads to higher expectations of what their pupils will achieve. All these factors have made significant contributions to the improved standards being achieved. Teachers' questioning and leading of discussion are effective in drawing productive responses from the pupils. They use the school's resources well, prepare materials and demonstrate techniques that promote pupils' learning and progress. Planning mainly follows nationally agreed

guidelines. Assessments of pupils' attainment and progress are made informally within lessons. More formal assessment has yet to be developed.

102 The subject is led effectively and resourced adequately. The co-ordinator offers good advice and guidance to her colleagues. She demonstrates a good grasp of the strengths in the subject and has identified priorities, such as the use of ICT, for development. Opportunities for cross-curricular links have not always been used to best advantage to compensate for the limited time available for the subject.

GEOGRAPHY

103 By the end of Years 2 and 6, standards of attainment are in line with expectations. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. Pupils with special educational needs, and those with English as an additional language, are well provided for to enable them to participate in all lessons. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection; mapping skills are developed systematically and pupils now have regular opportunities to carry out geographical enquiry. For example, Year 6 pupils report on 'What's in the news' which raises their political awareness of places, people and current affairs in different parts of the world.

104 In Year 1, younger pupils become aware of their own address, and identify features of their house, school and immediate locality. As they move through Year 2, they use the knowledge of their own locality to identify significant landmarks and other special features of the landscape and draw comparisons with places such as the Isle of Struay. Pupils experience locating major cities of the British Isles on a map of Britain. By the end of the Year 6, pupils show a satisfactory understanding of the technical terms for describing the features of a wide range of environments. They effectively use research skills to learn about different countries of the world. For example, they describe Iraq as a country in the northern hemisphere and in the Middle Eastern region of Asia. They show good awareness of the environmental issues related to the rainforests in the Amazon Basin. However, very few examples of recorded work in books were seen or of pupils writing about geographical issues at length, nor of recording information in different forms.

105 Pupils' attitudes to geography are good. Pupils show that they had considered the location of the countries they had visited or had planned to visit on the world map and responded to the teachers' questions with enthusiasm. Pupils with special educational needs contribute enthusiastically to discussions.

106 The quality of teaching is good. The school has successfully maintained the good and very good teaching seen in the previous inspection. Teachers have sound subject knowledge. Teachers generally set objectives that are challenging, yet close to pupils' capabilities. However, on occasions, the balance in the lesson is inappropriate and the higher attaining pupils' learning is not sufficiently extended. Well-planned and imaginative activities are provided. For example, 'Barnaby Bear' helps Year 2 pupils to locate major cities on the British Isles map. A very good variation in methods and organisation keeps pupils motivated, which results in a brisk pace in lessons. Teachers use effective questioning techniques and timely interventions to extend pupils' understanding and help them to improve their work. However, very occasionally, teachers take too long in giving explanations and pupils spend long periods in listening. Teachers make satisfactory use of the local area for field-work and of visits to places of interest.

107 Overall, the co-ordination of the subject is good. The co-ordinator has good subject knowledge and is very enthusiastic about the subject. She has shared her subject expertise

with other teachers. She has a clear idea as to how the school should proceed and prioritise according to need and finances available. There is a structured approach to the subject through a policy and a detailed scheme of work. It is well linked to other subjects. Some formal assessments are made of pupils' skills. The school has planned to develop a portfolio of pupils' work, which will be moderated and annotated to show different levels of work and progression in skills through the school. Plans are monitored and opportunities for the co-ordinator to monitor classroom practice have recently been introduced. Overall, resources for the subject are good.

HISTORY

108 During the inspection only two lessons were seen in Years 3 to 6 due to timetable constraints and the timing of the inspection. Judgements are made, therefore, on evidence from discussions with the co-ordinator and pupils, examination of planning and samples of pupils' work. The standards of attainment by the end of Years 2 and 6 are in line with expectations. This reflects the judgements made in the previous inspection. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and those at an early stage of English acquisition, make satisfactory progress, although some higher attaining pupils are capable of achieving more.

109 Planning shows that pupils have opportunities to develop key skills and gain an understanding of chronology but have fewer opportunities to use their developing literacy skills to record their evidence in Years 3 to 6. Pupils develop understanding of the passage of time by discussing differences between the past and the present relevant to their own lives, relatives and famous people. They compare old and new household objects in Year 1, for example, and study Louis Braille in Year 2. Links with other subjects are good. Year 4 pupils, for example, studied the symbols used by the ancient Greeks and Egyptians in their religious beliefs. Years 5 and 6 pupils explored race issues through the study of the work of Harriet Tubman, as part of their personal and social development. In discussion, Year 6 pupils explained the key events that took place during Henry VIII's reign, showing good understanding of the cause and effect on the lives of people in those days. However, pupils are less confident in the use of subject specific vocabulary.

110 Visits and visitors are used satisfactorily to enhance the history curriculum, such as visits to Oakwell Hall to extend the work on the Tudors. Year 4 visit the Archaeological Resource Centre in York to find out how archaeologists use raw evidence from the ground to interpret the past, and to take part in hands-on activities. The school uses the subject well to enhance pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, for example through incorporating work of Rosa Parks.

111 The quality of teaching in the two lessons seen was unsatisfactory in the Year 5 lesson and good in the Year 3 lesson. In Year 3, the teacher planned a challenging activity as an introduction to the forthcoming topic on 'The Egyptians'. The use of talk, the range and quality of questioning and use of a variety of resources helped to sustain pupils' interest and concentration. The lesson moved at a brisk pace and pupils made good progress. In the unsatisfactory lesson, there was an inappropriate balance between the teacher talking and pupils doing. The purpose of the follow-up activity was unclear and lacked sufficient challenge for most of the pupils, which resulted in many pupils being off task and wasting time. There were missed opportunities to ensure clear and deep understanding. Consequently, progress was unsatisfactory.

112 The subject co-ordination has been allocated recently to a teacher who is working closely with the previous co-ordinator. The previous co-ordinator has managed the subject well. She has good subject knowledge, keeps other staff up to date with current developments and has ensured that there is a good range of quality resources to support the

teaching of the subject. The school organises the curriculum by alternating the history topics with geography every other term. However, in Year 6, history is not taught until the summer term. This is a long gap, which has an adverse effect on pupils' learning such as consolidating their understanding of the terms used in history. The time allocated to the subject is below the recommended level and subsequently pupils are given less time to record their findings. No recorded evidence of work for Year 6 pupils was available for analysis during the inspection period. Satisfactory assessment procedures are in place at the end of a history unit. Sound arrangements are in place for the co-ordinator to monitor the quality of teaching and learning in the subject. There is a good range of history books for reference in the library. Resources for teaching the subject are good and well organised for ease of access.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

113 Pupils achieve below national expectations by Year 6. This is because they have not covered all of aspects of the subject and until recently they did not have regularly taught ICT lessons. Currently the pupils in Years 3 to 6 have one lesson a week. This is limited to about half an hour because each class has to be taught in two halves as the computer suite is too small for whole class groups. Pupils are well taught by confident teachers who follow a clear programme and make good use of the time they have with each group. Lessons are well planned, and teachers demonstrate and explain clearly what they want pupils to learn. They are careful to questions pupils to check their understanding and to encourage them to work out for themselves how to solve problems and overcome difficulties. As a result, pupils make good progress in lessons and are achieving in line with the national expectations for their age in the topics that they have been taught.

114 The progress made over time and the breadth of pupils' learning are limited by the constraints described above. By Year 6, pupils show sound skills when using word-processing programs and can employ a range of formatting and editing tools to produce attractive documents well matched to their purpose. They are also able to produce effective pictures using a wide range of graphical tools. Pupils can find information on the Internet and are developing a secure understanding of how to create their own website pages. Their knowledge and understanding of databases are weak, because the current Year 6 pupils have not yet covered this aspect of data handling. However, they understand how to model with spreadsheets effectively, using formulae to perform calculations. Pupils have very little understanding of using computers to control devices or to monitor events, such as changes in the temperature outside across a day. Currently, the school does not have suitable equipment for this aspect of ICT. Pupils across Year 3 to 6 are confident using the school's network, saving and printing their work and launching programs.

115 Little ICT was seen in Years 1 and 2. Year 1 pupils were observed entering data into a graphing program confidently, were able to print out bar charts and pictograms and were able to compare their effectiveness in presenting information. Year 2 pupils are able to log on to the network and can save and print their work. They are developing secure skills in using drawing and painting tools in art packages and produce good effects through their thoughtful use of these tools. As in Years 3 to 6, standards are below expectations overall but pupils are making steady progress in lessons. At the present time, the school relies too heavily on the skills of one of the teachers in Years 1 to 2 to undertake the teaching of Year 2 pupils. Other teachers lack confidence. However, they are now having training matched to their needs and this should help to ease this particular problem.

116 The co-ordinator has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the provision made for the subject and is given time each week to support colleagues and to

monitor what happens. There is an appropriate curriculum plan and good arrangements for assessing and recording the progress that pupils make. The co-ordinator is not distracted from the educational aspects of his responsibilities by having to maintain hardware. The school has very sensibly employed an expert to look after the good quality resources. Action is being taken to extend the ICT suite to accommodate whole class groups and to purchase equipment for control and monitoring. The school is now well placed to accelerate and broaden pupils' learning in this important subject.

MUSIC

117 Only two lessons were seen. Other evidence considered included planning, a recording of the school's involvement in a local music project, instrumental groups and a video of a school performance. This is not enough to make judgements about the standards that pupils reach or the quality of teaching by Year 6.

118 Planning suggests that the pupils experience a broad musical curriculum over time. Teaching in the two lessons seen was satisfactory and in both lessons pupils' skills were at appropriate levels for their ages. In Year 5, singing was developed well and pupils responded by learning a new song quite quickly. Good links were made between the content of the song 'Go down Moses' and work in history and that in PSHCE which considers moral and social issues. The theoretical part of the lesson was not as successful. The pupils were not sufficiently well settled and did not listen as well as they did during the singing. With support, they were able to describe a chord. Some played chord accompaniments on tuned percussion instruments but were not very skilful in keeping a steady rhythm. In Year 2, pupils' work on percussion instruments was satisfactory. They were able to keep a steady beat although sometimes their enthusiasm got the better of them and they played too loudly to hear the CD accompaniment. Material from the recorded programme was used effectively by the teacher, who gave sufficient time for pupils to practise skills between items. Pupils learned about the term 'tempo' and were taken carefully through some exercises to demonstrate this on instruments. Most followed the different speeds well, but some found it difficult to sustain a regular rhythm, especially when it was a slow one.

119 There is a good range of extra musical activities that gives pupils experience of music from different cultures. They can learn to play tabla (Indian drums), steel pans, violins and recorders or join a choir. All have the opportunity to display their skills and talents in the regular plays and performances that the school puts on for parents. The pupils in these groups were all enthusiastic and happy to display their skills.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

120 Only three lessons were observed; these were in Years 2, 5 and 6. The standards in these lessons were in line with those expected, but there is not enough evidence to judge overall standards by the end of Years 2 and 6. In a gymnastics lesson, pupils in Year 2 understood the need for a warm up before exercise and knew that their heart beat faster after exercise. They travelled confidently along the floor in a range of different ways and were aware of safety when doing so. They linked these movements together to form a simple sequence and their quality of movement was controlled. In Year 5, pupils extended their sequences to include balances and a range of shapes. They worked co-operatively with a partner and successfully evaluate each other's work to identify areas for improvement. Most pupils showed good control in their balances and when transferring their work on to apparatus. A games lesson demonstrated that pupils have a good knowledge of the

technique of a chest pass. They were able to pass to a partner with accuracy and most controlled the ball successfully when moving and passing. In all lessons, pupils worked with enthusiasm, and partner and group work was a strong feature of all the lessons. Pupils listened intently to instructions, concentrated on the tasks set by the teacher and their behaviour was very good and sometimes excellent.

121 The teaching seen was consistently good with teachers demonstrating confidence and knowledge in the subject. Planning is good and all teachers make positive use of demonstration to help pupils to improve. The curriculum taught includes swimming but the amount of time devoted to the subject is low and pupils do not always have a weekly lesson. Accommodation is limited indoors and although there is no playing field, the outdoor play area provides opportunities for a range of games skills to be taught. The surface is beginning to break up and is in need of attention.

122 The school makes positive use of support from within the community. The Streetwise football group and the Phoenix Dance have made valuable contributions to pupils' learning and provided additional experiences in the school. Schemes of work are in place and some useful monitoring of teaching is undertaken by the enthusiastic coordinator. Assessment procedures are in need of updating to reflect the recommendations of the latest national guidance. Extra-curricular activities are limited and none were taking place during the inspection.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

123 During the inspection it was only possible see two religious education lessons, both in Year 2. Judgements are made therefore on evidence from discussions with the subject co-ordinator and pupils, examination of planning and samples of pupils' work. However, no recorded work was available for analysis for Years 5 and 6 classes. Due to insufficient evidence, no judgements are made about the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 and the quality of teaching of the subject overall.

124 Inspection evidence shows that by the end of Year 2 most pupils attain standards that are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Most pupils in Years 1 and 2, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress.

125 Assemblies make a contribution to religious education, as do the 'circle time' related activities which foster personal and social development. Pupils' work in religious education makes a valuable contribution to the overall development of their speaking and listening skills and in reading. However, the extent of their written work is limited, with the exception of one of the Year 2 classes where pupils record their findings at length such as 'Why Guru Nanak is special to Sikhs' and about their visit to a Gurdawara. In teachers' planning and in most of the work seen, there was more emphasis on the development of moral issues and some missed opportunities to raise awareness of the spiritual aspect of religious education.

126 In Years 1 and 2 , pupils understand the idea of new beginnings, such as starting a new year. They know that religions have major religious festivals, such as that Muslims celebrate Eid and Christians celebrate Christmas. In Year 4, pupils study the symbols used by the ancient Greeks and Egyptians. In discussions, Year 6 pupils show a basic knowledge of Christianity and Judaism. They have some understanding of the similarities and differences between Christianity and Islam. However, pupils demonstrate a lack of appropriate depth and breadth in their knowledge of the religions they study and a lack of confidence in using subject specific vocabulary when talking about their work.

127 The quality of teaching was very good in one lesson and satisfactory in the other. In the most effective lesson, the learning intentions of well-planned work were shared with the pupils. The teacher employed strategies that generated eagerness to learn and find out more. In the satisfactory lesson, there was more emphasis on explanations, which provided less time for pupils to explore their ideas. Examination of planning shows that links are made to other curriculum areas, such as writing, but more emphasis is given to developing writing skills than to teaching religious education. Staff share their religious and cultural traditions with pupils and colleagues which greatly enhances pupils' knowledge and understanding of how religion affects the daily lives of believers.

128 The recently appointed co-ordinator is aware of the need to develop her subject expertise and skill in subject management. Long-term planning is well linked to the locally agreed syllabus. However, too frequently medium and short-term plans are linked to the class topic, which focus on teaching the main content of the topic, rather than on religious education. This results in a lack of continuity and incremental development of pupils' knowledge and understanding through the school. The school is aware of the need to develop assessment practice. Monitoring of teachers' planning is in place and the co-ordinator has had opportunities to monitor classroom practice but in the absence of success criteria, feedback to teachers is more of a general nature. Resources and artefacts for the subject are good.