

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **CASTLETON C E (VC) PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Castleton, Hope Valley

LEA area: Derbyshire

Unique reference number: 112807

Headteacher: Mr. P. Black

Reporting inspector: Mr. K. Williams  
21074

Dates of inspection: 1<sup>st</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2002

Inspection number: 247271

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Back Street Castleton Hope Valley Derbyshire
Postcode:	S33 8WE
Telephone number:	01433620630
Fax number:	
Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr. Alistair Boyd
Date of previous inspection:	8 <sup>th</sup> – 11 <sup>th</sup> May 2000

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21074	Mr. K. Williams	Registered inspector	Foundation Stage Mathematics Information and Communication Technology Design technology Physical Education Educational Inclusion	What sort of school is it? The school's results and achievements. How well are the pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
19342	Mr. T. Heavey	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. Attendance. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
29989	Mrs. P. Goodsell	Team inspector	English Science Art Geography History Music Special Educational Needs	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils? (including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development) Assessment

The inspection contractor was:

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

This is a voluntary controlled Church of England primary school. There are 50 pupils on roll, which is much smaller than other primary schools. There are three classes in the school, containing pupils in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2; Years 3 and 4; and Years 5 and 6. The attainment of pupils when they start school is broadly average, although it varies from year to year due to the very small number of pupils in each year group. All of the pupils are of white ethnic background and none is learning English as an additional language. Less than two per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is well below the national average. About eight per cent of pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs, which is very low, one of whom has a Statement of Special Educational Needs.

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

This is an improving school that provides a sound standard of education. The school has successfully addressed the areas of serious weakness that were identified in its last inspection. The school is well led and managed by the headteacher and very well supported by the staff and governing body, who share his vision for future improvement. The teaching is satisfactory overall and has many strengths. By the time the pupils leave the school, they attain average standards and they achieve well in reading, speaking and listening. The school is well placed to improve further and provides satisfactory value for money.

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

- The pupils have very positive attitudes to school; they behave very well and enjoy very good relationships with each other and the adults in school.
- The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well.
- The pupils make good progress in art and design and attain above average standards.
- The pupils are very well cared for; there are good procedures in place to assess and monitor their progress and the school gives very good support to the pupils with special educational needs.
- There is a good range of activities available to pupils outside of lessons.
- The headteacher provides good leadership and is very well supported by the staff and governors.
- The school enjoys a very good partnership with the parents, who have a high level of confidence in the way the school is managed.

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

- The standards attained by pupils in aspects of English, mathematics and science could be higher.
- The way that the work is marked does not always help the pupils to improve.
- The monitoring of teaching and learning in the foundation subjects.

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

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

The school has made good improvement since its last inspection in 2000, when it was judged to have serious weaknesses. Overall, the quality of teaching has improved: there was no unsatisfactory teaching observed during the inspection and the teaching of children in the Foundation Stage, previously judged to be a weakness, is now satisfactory. Assessment procedures are good, enabling the school to track the pupils' progress and ensure that the work is well-matched to meet their needs. This, together with the improvement in teaching and the good leadership of the headteacher, has had a positive impact on the steady rise in standards. The provision for information and communication technology has improved and the pupils now make satisfactory progress and attain the expected levels. Similarly, there is now a satisfactory, adequately resourced, curriculum in place for children in the Foundation Stage. There are significant improvements in the level of parents' confidence in the school, in the way that the school seeks and responds to parents' views and in the quality of information



provided for them by the school. The school has improved the accommodation by introducing a mezzanine area for administration, storage and teaching and a temporary classroom for the Year 3 and 4 class.

## STANDARDS

No table of results is included. The number of pupils taking the national tests in recent years has been low and, as a result, comparison with national data and the identification of trends in performance over time are unreliable. The school has set appropriately challenging targets for the tests taken at age eleven, which they are likely to achieve.

Pupils enter the school with broadly average levels of attainment and they are very well placed to achieve the early learning goals in all of the areas of learning by the time they start Year 1. Standards are average in English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, but they could be higher. In English, standards are above average in reading, speaking and listening. Standards in writing are average, but could be higher, as there are too few opportunities for the pupils to write at length. In mathematics, the pupils attain average standards and have a secure knowledge and understanding of the work they cover. However, there are too few opportunities for the pupils to use their skills to find their own solutions to problems and more open-ended investigations. The pupils attain average standards in science, but there are only limited opportunities for them to devise their own experiments, explore their ideas or decide how to record their work. The provision for information and communication technology has improved since the last inspection and standards are in line with national expectations. In art and design, the pupils experience a wide range of media and standards are above average. In all other subjects, the pupils attain the standards expected for their age.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. The pupils are very interested in their work and eager to come to school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. The pupils are courteous and kind to each other and to the adults in school and they show respect and consideration on the playground.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. The youngest pupils settle in very quickly and older pupils are keen to take on extra responsibilities.
Attendance	Very good. Attendance is very high when compared to other schools.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

*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 satisfactory in the Foundation Stage and Key Stages 1 and 2. During the inspection, teaching was never less than satisfactory and was good or better in 42 per cent of the lessons seen. This represents an improvement since the last inspection, when the teaching of the youngest pupils was judged to be unsatisfactory. These pupils now benefit from the dedicated support of a teaching assistant, who works closely with the class teacher, and this is having a significant impact on the provision and on the progress they make. Across the school, the pupils are very well managed and literacy and numeracy are taught effectively. The basic skills of reading are taught well across the school. There is generally good development of writing skills across the curriculum, but there are limited opportunities for the pupils to engage in extended writing. In mathematics and science, there are too few opportunities for the pupils to devise their own investigations, carry out more open-ended enquiry and decide how they will record their findings or present their work. The improvements in

the teachers' subject knowledge in information and communication technology have had a significant impact on the rising standards in that subject. In most subjects, lessons are planned carefully to take account of pupils of different ability and experience and this is an improvement since the last inspection. Those pupils with special educational needs are well supported by the teaching assistants who work with them and this contributes to the good progress that they make. Teachers mark the pupils' work conscientiously, but too rarely offer ways in which the work might be improved or set targets for future learning.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage and for information and control technology has improved and there is a good range of extra-curricular activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. The pupils receive very good support from the class teachers and the teaching assistants.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. The provision for pupils' moral and social development is very good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good procedures for child protection and the welfare of pupils. The procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are good and have improved.

The school has improved planning for children in the Foundation Stage and this covers all of the areas of learning. Similarly, the curriculum for information and communication technology now fulfils statutory requirements. A new two-year rolling programme has been introduced to take account of the classes in Key Stage 2. The school needs to monitor its impact to ensure that it meets the needs of all pupils. The school's links with parents have improved significantly. Parents have a high level of confidence in the school and make a very good contribution to their children's learning.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher has a clear view of the school's strengths and weaknesses and what needs to be done to improve. He is very well supported by the staff team and by governors and has had a significant role in securing the improvements since the last inspection.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very good. They have a very effective partnership with the headteacher, providing challenge and support, and have a shared commitment to improving the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. Teaching and learning are monitored effectively in English and mathematics and this needs to be extended to other subjects. The school sets appropriate targets for improvement.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The school has appropriate plans for development that are linked to its budget. Financial planning is good.

The school has an appropriate number of teachers, support staff and resources to deliver the curriculum. The accommodation has been improved and, while it is too early to judge the impact of the changes on the standards attained by the pupils, the new facility is already being used well.

### **PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

<b>What pleases parents most</b>	<b>What parents would like to see improved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children like school, behave well and make good progress.</li> <li>• The teaching is good.</li> <li>• The school is approachable.</li> <li>• They are well informed about their children's progress.</li> <li>• The school has high expectations of the pupils and is helping them to become mature and responsible.</li> <li>• The school is well led and managed and works closely with parents.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some parents feel that the opportunities outside of lessons are limited.</li> </ul>

The school has successfully regained the confidence of parents following the serious weaknesses identified in its last inspection. The inspection team agree with the parents' positive views of the school. Although the quality of teaching is judged to be satisfactory overall, there is a significant proportion of good teaching across the school. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities and visits.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Although their attainment on entry to the school is broadly average, the number of pupils admitted into the Reception Year is very small and it varies significantly from year to year. The pupils make good progress in the development of their early literacy skills and satisfactory progress in their mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development, creative development and personal, social and emotional development. They are very well placed to achieve the early learning goals in all areas of learning.
2. In most years, the number of pupils taking the national tests at ages seven and eleven is very small and, as a result, it is not possible to report on comparisons using national data, as they are unreliable. Inspection evidence indicates that overall standards that are average in English mathematics and science at the end of both key stages.
3. Standards in speaking and listening are above the national average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and the pupils make good progress. Good use is made of the whole class discussions at the beginning of the Literacy Hour and other subjects. The pupils listen carefully and enjoy offering answers. In both key stages, the pupils read fluently and accurately. They make good progress in learning to read and standards in reading at the end of both key stages are above average. Throughout the school, the pupils have very positive attitudes towards reading; they develop good reading habits and are encouraged to tackle challenging texts. The strong home-school reading partnership and the volunteer helpers in school, make a positive contribution to the progress that the pupils make.
4. In writing, standards are average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and the pupils make satisfactory progress. Standards in writing are not as high as they could be. The school has recognised that writing can be improved and has already put some measures in place, including the national 'Additional Literacy Strategy'. Good use is being made of writing skills across the curriculum and there are opportunities for the pupils to write in a variety of styles, including stories, recounts and persuasive writing. By the time they are eleven, most pupils have a good understanding of how to punctuate their sentences. They show some imagination and flair in short pieces of writing but there are too few examples of the pupils' extended writing.
5. In mathematics, most pupils achieve average standards and make satisfactory progress. The pupils in the infants and juniors have secure number skills and knowledge, which is an improvement on the findings of the last inspection and reflects the priority given to this aspect by the school. However, standards could be higher as there are too few opportunities for the pupils to carry out more open-ended investigations and this limits the development of these skills. By the time they leave the school, most pupils can work confidently with numbers and are able to use a range of methods of calculation. They have a good understanding of the value of numbers and a secure knowledge of multiplication tables, two and three-dimensional shapes and measurement.
6. In science, the pupils make satisfactory progress and attain average standards. Although the school has largely addressed the minor issue identified in the last inspection relating to insufficient practical work, there are too few opportunities for the pupils to devise their own

experiments, explore their ideas or decide how to record their work. By the time they are seven, the pupils know about forces, light and heat and can identify the properties of some materials, but they are less experienced in offering suggestions as to why things happen or finding ways of testing their ideas for themselves. By the age of eleven, most pupils are able to explain the features of a fair test. However, too much of the work is directed by teachers and the pupils have too few opportunities to decide what needs to be investigated and which is the most appropriate format for presenting their work.

7. Standards in information and communication technology are in line with those expected nationally and the pupils make satisfactory progress. This is an improvement since the last inspection and is due to the improved knowledge and confidence of the teachers, the improved curriculum and resources. Standards in art and design are above average at age seven and eleven. The pupils experience working with a wide range of media, they work hard to achieve the desired effect. In all other subjects, the pupils attain standards that are in line with national expectations by the time they leave the school. The new curriculum plan for the mixed age classes is supporting teachers in knowing what to teach to each year group and is contributing to the sound standards.
8. Those pupils with special educational needs make good progress in literacy and numeracy. The work is well matched to the pupils' needs and they are well supported by the teaching assistants who make a positive contribution to the quality of education provided for these pupils.

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

9. The pupils have very positive attitudes to their work and their very good behaviour, personal development and relationships make a substantial contribution to their learning. This aspect of school life shows an improvement on the already good standards noted at the previous inspection and is now judged to be a major strength.
10. The pupils are eager to attend school and, as a result, they are well placed to make maximum gains from their education. Most parents indicate that their children like coming to school. This enthusiasm helps the pupils to apply themselves diligently to their work in class and this is supported by the involvement of their parents at home. As a result of these very positive attitudes, the pupils' behaviour and concentration are very good. They respond readily to instructions from staff, work hard and they co-operate very well in groups and pairs in and out of the classroom. The pupils are polite and courteous to each other and visitors during meal times. Many parents report that their children behave well in school and are growing in mutual respect and tolerance, in line with the school's declared values. As they move through the school, the pupils develop a greater sense of personal responsibility. They volunteer eagerly for jobs in the classroom and around the school; they act very sensibly when making their way from one school site to another; they display good citizenship in the sessions of the School Council, and older pupils are proud to talk about their buddying role in the playground or as a 'group leader' in the dining hall. Parents remark upon how well their children conduct themselves in public places when on school trips. The school's curriculum gives due regard to the pursuit of life skills as well as academic achievement.
11. The very good relationships amongst pupils and between the pupils and adults in the school are characterised by mutual respect and politeness. This reflects well on the work carried out by the school to improve this aspect. Parents in their turn support the staff positively and have

great respect for them. They appreciate the 'open-door' approach emphasised by the school and this makes a significant contribution to the quality of education provided.

12. Those pupils with special educational needs are included, and encouraged to take part, in all aspects of the learning activities. They have good very relationships with the adults who support them when they are working individually and in small groups. Other pupils are helpful, kind and supportive to the pupils with special educational needs and include them in their activities when playing and learning.
13. The very good attendance rate of 97.6 per cent, with no unauthorised absence, is well above the national average for similar schools, and sets a firm foundation for learning. The pupils are very punctual and move briskly between activities. This reflects the pupils' enthusiasm for learning. The registration process at the beginning of the morning and afternoon sessions is conducted efficiently.

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

14. The quality of teaching is satisfactory in the Foundation Stage and in the infants and juniors. During the inspection, teaching was never less than satisfactory and was good or better in 42 per cent of the lessons seen. This represents an improvement since the last inspection.
15. The teaching of children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. This is an improvement as, at the time of the last inspection, it was judged to be unsatisfactory. The youngest children benefit from the dedicated support of a teaching assistant, who works closely with the class teacher, and this is having a significant impact on the provision for these children and on the progress they make. The planning covers all of the areas of learning and there are appropriate opportunities for practical, 'hands-on' experience. A high priority is given to developing the children's basic skills of literacy and numeracy.
16. The management of pupils is very good. The teachers have high expectations of what the pupils can achieve and how they should behave and these expectations are shared with the pupils. In all classes, the teachers have successfully created an atmosphere in which the pupils feel secure and are able to work hard. Unacceptable behaviour is extremely rare and is dealt with swiftly and with good humour. Relationships amongst the pupils and between the pupils and the adults in school are very good. The pupils respond well to this positive learning environment.
17. The teachers generally have a sound knowledge of the subjects they teach. The improvements in the teachers' subject knowledge in information and communication technology, through effective training, have had a significant impact on the rising standards in that subject. In most subjects, lessons are planned carefully to take account of pupils of different ability and experience and this is an improvement since the last inspection. The teachers have a sound knowledge of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and these skills are taught effectively. The basic skills of reading are taught well across the school. However, there are significant areas for development in writing. In general good use is being made of writing skills across the curriculum, but there are limited opportunities for the pupils to engage in extended writing. In mathematics and science, there are too few opportunities for the pupils to devise their own investigations, carry out more open-ended enquiry and decide how they will record their findings or present their work.

18. There are examples of good teaching in all of the classes. This usually occurs when the teacher has good subject knowledge and there is a clear focus on improving the pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding. For example, in lessons in art in all three classes, the teachers used their good subject knowledge to help the pupils to improve their techniques. These lessons had a brisk pace and good questioning ensured that pupils of all ages and ability could contribute and extend their understanding. This good teaching leads to above average standards at the end of the infants and juniors in art and design. In the best lessons seen, the objectives of the lesson are shared with the pupils and referred to towards the end. The teachers make good use of resources to support the learning including, for example, the well-chosen texts in the Literacy Hour and the interesting ways that the materials are presented. The pupils' work is marked regularly throughout the school, but the quality of the marking could be better. It recognises work done and the efforts made by the pupils, but marking is rarely annotated with helpful comments and guidance to help the pupils to improve their work.
19. The teachers are well supported by the teaching assistants who work with the youngest pupils and those who have difficulty learning. The individual education plans of pupils with special educational needs are clear, relevant and well matched to the pupils' needs. They are reviewed on a six-monthly basis, and new targets are set. The plans are carried out with close liaison between the class teachers, the teaching assistants and outside support agencies. The pupils enjoy and gain confidence from working with the teaching assistants. This has a significant impact on the good progress that they make, particularly in literacy and numeracy.

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

20. The school provides a satisfactory curriculum for its pupils and meets all statutory requirements. It has made good progress in addressing the key issues from the last inspection, which identified serious weaknesses in the curriculum for information and communication technology and in the Foundation Stage. The school has improved the provision for information and communication technology and the pupils make satisfactory progress in this area of the curriculum. The quality of the curriculum for the youngest children is now satisfactory; the teachers' planning takes account of the six areas of learning and the early learning goals for children of this age. There is a full-time teaching assistant who works in the class giving good quality support enabling the children to participate fully in all of the learning.
21. The school provides a sound quality and range of learning opportunities and activities; these are well enhanced by a good variety of educational visits out of school and visitors to the school. The National Strategies for literacy and numeracy have been implemented consistently and there have been steady improvements in the standards achieved in English, mathematics and science. In English, this has been seen to good effect in reading, although the impact on the progress made by the pupils in writing has been slower. The school recognises that standards in writing are not high enough. The curriculum has placed an increased emphasis on the development of numeracy and this has led to standards rising in mathematics. However, in both mathematics and science there are too few occasions for pupils to develop independence in learning, for example by making choices and decisions about their work. Long and medium-term planning is in place to support the teachers in knowing what to teach to each age group. However, this rolling programme has only recently been implemented to take account of the new class that has been created for the Years 3 and 4 pupils. The previous arrangements meant that in some areas the curriculum was lacking in progression and continuity, for example in science, history and geography. This has now been

addressed, as the school, having recognised this problem, is planning more effectively for the mixed-age classes.

22. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Class teachers and teaching assistants work very well together to meet the pupils' individual needs. Individual education plans are in place and have appropriate targets for improvement set. They are clear about how the outcomes will be achieved. The pupils are taught in a variety of situations, being mainly supported within the classes but also on occasions withdrawn to work individually. These strategies work well to support all of the pupils with special educational needs and have a good impact on the progress they make.
23. The school enhances the curriculum offered to the pupils by a good range of clubs, activities and visits and visitors to the school. After school clubs include football, an occasional art group and 'Scrapyard Challenge'. There are residential visits regularly planned, as when the older pupils stay at Thornbridge Hall and take part in an exciting range of physical and activities. Very good use is made of the local environment to support work in geography and history and there are educational visits further afield such as to the Living History Centre in Sheffield. The curriculum opportunities for all of the pupils are enriched and enhanced by visitors to the school. These include local clergy, friends of the school, governors and artists. Together with the good use of the teachers' talents, and those of other adults who work in the school, they provide learning experiences that contribute to the overall development of pupils as caring individuals and members of the community.
24. The school is giving a good emphasis to pupils' personal, social, and health education and citizenship. These areas are actively promoted as part of a structured programme, which is an important feature of the life of the school. The teachers give praise and encouragement and this enhances the pupils' self-esteem and confidence in their ability to succeed with tasks. The pupils are encouraged to become independent and responsible for example, taking part in the School Council. In all classes, pupils are encouraged to help one another and to do jobs to help in the smooth running of the school. The older pupils help the younger children to settle happily into school life and this fosters the growing maturity of the older pupils. In lessons and assemblies the pupils are given good opportunities to consider issues such as qualities of friendship, and choosing between right and wrong in different situations. Personal safety is given due attention and the pupils learn about the importance of maintaining a healthy life style through exercise, healthy diet and the benefits of medical drugs and dangers of some other drugs. The school nurse helps the school in teaching the older pupils about sex education and related issues of growing up. The community makes a very good contribution to pupils' learning through the school's links with organisations, institutions and individuals as for example with the Church and the Youth Hostel.
25. When the children transfer from Nurseries or playgroups there are good opportunities for them to visit the school before they come in full time. Most of the Year 6 pupils move to the Hope Valley College and there are very good arrangements in place for all of the pupils to transfer smoothly to their new school. There is good liaison between local schools on several levels, with teachers visiting each other's schools and joining together for activities such as the 'Arts in the Valley' project.
26. The provision made for the pupils' moral and social development is very good and for their spiritual and cultural development it is good. This represents an improvement since the last inspection and this provision is a strength of the school. Spiritual development is well promoted throughout the school in lessons, assemblies and other activities. The school makes



good use of the teachings of Christianity, and other world faiths to support its provision. It cares very well for its pupils and as a result they are confident and comfortable in their surroundings. The staff work well to develop and extend the pupils' self-esteem and promote good relationships and all of the pupils enjoy their learning and feel part of the school community. Opportunities for the pupils to reflect on spiritual dimensions of life are given regularly, and dramatic and artistic ways of exploring and considering feelings and emotions are provided. These activities mean the pupils are given opportunities to value and understand their own individuality. They show very good respect for each other's feelings, values and beliefs and the relationships between everyone at the school are very good.

27. The school promotes and fosters values such as honesty and fairness and teaches pupils the difference between right and wrong. All of the adults in the school provide very good role models for the pupils and make the pupils aware of the benefits of positive behaviour and attitudes. The pupils have opportunities in lessons and at other times to work together co-operatively and to compete fairly, and they consistently treat one another with courtesy and respect. The school has developed a good range of opportunities for the pupils to experience social activities including residential and day visits where the pupils learn to rely on each other and work co-operatively. A number of charities are supported, such as Red Nose day, these activities promote the pupils' personal development, enabling them to learn about and support the needs of people in different situations. The pupils are encouraged to undertake responsibilities to help in the running of the school, such as looking after and playing with younger children and involvement in organising their equipment for lessons.
28. The school works well to promote the pupils' knowledge of their own culture and there are improved opportunities for the pupils to learn about living in a multicultural society and to consider aspects of cultures not represented in the school. As part of religious education, the pupils learn about a range of other world faiths including Hinduism, Judaism and Buddhism. In literature sessions, the pupils hear and read excerpts of poetry and prose from varied traditions, and they begin to appreciate the rhythm of language and ways it is used in different cultures. There are opportunities for the pupils to experience, enjoy and participate in events from their own and other cultures, including the Chinese New Year, Shrove Tuesday and the Queen's Golden Jubilee.

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

29. One of the school's strengths lies in the improved effectiveness of its procedures for monitoring and promoting the health, safety and welfare of those in its care. In consequence, the atmosphere of orderliness, security and well-being provides a strong framework to support the pupils' learning. This is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection and reflects the effort and commitment of the staff team.
30. There is very detailed and clear guidance for Child Protection, based on the procedures laid down by the Area Child Protection Committee. The headteacher is the 'designated person' and, as well as passing on the benefits of his training to the adults in school, he also ensures a high level of alertness within the staff team. The school's admissions policy includes good induction arrangements for prospective pupils, including a home visit by the teacher, and half-day sessions in school to ease the introduction of new starters. Similar arrangements are made with local secondary schools to ease the transition for Y6 pupils.
31. The comprehensive range of policies and procedures for health and safety - much improved from the previous inspection - complies fully with legal requirements. Following concerns

expressed in the previous inspection report regarding the safety of children making their way to the village hall for lunch, PE and drama, the school has taken effective action. The level of supervision has increased and the pupils are made keenly aware of the risks from traffic. Similar improvements have been instigated in playground supervision. Regular fire drills and the testing of alarm systems ensure that safe exit procedures are well rehearsed. The procedures for reporting hazards and those for conducting risk assessments of the premises are reviewed and updated regularly. Arrangements for administering first aid are good.

32. The impact of the school's very good procedures for monitoring and improving attendance is reflected in the lack of unauthorised absence. In addition, the very low rate of authorised absence indicates that the school has also secured the support of parents in its efforts to reduce holidays in term time. Attendance levels are keenly monitored and are reported to parents.
33. The pupils respond well to the very good procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour. The school's behaviour code emphasises on the rewarding of good behaviour and parents are kept informed about the good things that their children do as well as any incidences of inappropriate behaviour. The adults in the school work hard to promote good behaviour not only through the positive application of the code of conduct, but also through their consistent modelling of the good behaviour they require from the pupils. This results in a disciplined approach to school work and a growing sense of personal responsibility from the pupils. The pupils develop a sense of citizenship and membership of a wider community through assemblies, the PSHE programme, sex education in Y6 and by raising of money for charities. They respond well to these opportunities.
34. At the time of the last inspection, the school was found to have a serious weakness in the way it assessed and recorded pupils' achievements and tracked their progress. This has been addressed well and the procedures are now good. Good use is made of standardised and national tests and the school has begun to track individual pupils' progress and set targets for the level that the pupils should achieve by the end of each year and key stage. The school is making useful analyses of the national tests papers and using the information to show the areas where improvement is needed. For example, in mathematics the analysis has shown which work has not been previously covered and the teachers plan work to cover these omissions. However, the information that is gathered is not yet being used fully to inform planning in order to raise standards of attainment further, for example in writing and science. A good start has been made in setting individual targets for, and with, pupils and in making parents aware of these targets. The targets are not yet readily available when the pupils are working to remind them what they are aiming for, nor do classroom displays give the pupils information about what they need to do to achieve the next level. In addition, although the pupils' work is marked regularly and positive comments are often made, the marking does not consistently identify what the pupils need to do next to improve.
35. There are good procedures in place for the initial identification and assessment of pupils with special educational needs, and for the assessment of their progress. The school uses a range of methods, including the use of baseline assessments when the children enter the school, together with teachers' assessments. Those pupils with special educational needs receive committed support from the teachers and teaching assistants. All of the adults know the pupils well and work hard to help the pupils achieve their personal targets. Statutory requirements with regard to special educational needs are carried out; the special educational needs register is up-to-date and correctly identifies the pupils who need extra help. There are very effective arrangements in place to make use of support from external agencies such as the local education authority support service and the educational psychology service.

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

36. The school has a very effective partnership with parents that contributes greatly to their children's education and this is one of the school's strengths. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection, when it was felt that the school did not listen to parents concerns and respond appropriately. The parents are now very supportive of the school. A small number indicate that they are not satisfied with the range of activities outside of lessons, but inspection findings indicate that a good range of opportunities is offered. Most parents express a growing confidence in the school's teachers and managers and feel more involved in their children's learning.
37. The quality of information provided for parents is very good, enabling parents to become active partners in their children's education. Very good use is made of the reading diary by the school and parents as a way of monitoring their children's progress in reading. The teachers arrange talks for parents on various topics, such as Literacy and Numeracy, so that they can support their children in their learning. Regular communications from the school about the need for good attendance has resulted in a reduction of term-time holidays and increased opportunities for learning. As well as the twice yearly Parents' Evenings, parents receive information on other matters such as school trips. Parents particularly like the 'open door' policy that gives them ready access to teachers for advice or information. While sometimes unclear about the level at which their children should be working, parents note that information about current projects is posted on the classroom door so that they can support their children in their learning. The Governors' Report to Parents and the school prospectus are of a high quality. As well as complying fully with legal requirements, they are very informative and readable. The pupils' annual reports on their progress are very good. They describe what pupils have learned, identify areas for further improvement and comment on special achievements and contribution to the life of the school.
38. The school builds very good partnerships with the parents and carers of those pupils with special educational needs. The parents are invited to regular meetings to review the progress that their children are making. They are kept informed of the targets set and are given suggestions about how they can help their children at home and work closely with the school. This effective liaison between home and school helps the pupils to make the good progress seen.
39. Across the school, parents are very actively involved through listening to their children read at home and attending meetings. Some now help in the classroom as volunteers, help out on educational visits and organise extra-curricular activities. This greatly improved partnership between home and school redresses the weaknesses identified in the previous inspection and makes a major contribution to the pupils' learning.

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

40. The headteacher provides good leadership and management and he is very well supported by the staff and governors. Together, they provide a clear sense of direction for the school's improvement. They have successfully addressed the areas of serious weakness that were identified in the last inspection and made good improvement. The provision for information and communication technology has improved and the pupils now make satisfactory progress and attain the expected levels. Similarly, the provision for children in the Foundation Stage has improved and there is now a satisfactory curriculum in place with appropriate resources.

Assessment procedures are now good, enabling the school to track the pupils' progress, and the work is well-matched to meet their needs. There are significant improvements in the level of parents' confidence in the school, in the way that the school seeks and responds to parents' views and in the quality of information provided for them by the school. The headteacher, staff and governors have a strong commitment to securing further improvement and they are well placed to do so.

41. The partnership between the headteacher and governors is very effective and provides a good balance of challenge and support. The headteacher ensures that governors receive good information about the school's performance. Many governors are active in school, visit regularly and sometimes help in classrooms. As a result, the governing body fulfils its statutory duties well, has a very clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and knows what needs to be done to improve. They are very well organised and have clear view of their role in providing strategic direction for the school's development. Individual governors have been nominated to oversee developments in subject areas and other aspects of the school's work and this enhances the information available to the governing body.
42. The very small teaching staff shares the responsibility for co-ordinating all subjects. They lead the development of subject documentation, organise resources and keep up-to-date about current developments. The headteacher has focused appropriately on monitoring teaching and learning in English and mathematics – an improvement since the last inspection - and this is supporting the overall raising of standards in these subjects. The school now needs to extend these arrangements to other subjects, taking into account the limited time available to the headteacher, due to his high teaching commitment, and the very small number of staff available to share the responsibilities.
43. The headteacher is currently acting as special educational needs co-ordinator. Special educational needs provision in the school is well organised, all statutory requirements for special educational provision are in place and up-to-date. The governing body is very supportive of the work done with the pupils with special educational needs and is well informed about how it is carried out by the school.
44. Financial planning is good and the school is making good use of the resources at its disposal. The budget is linked closely to the priorities identified in the school's development plan, which is drawn up by the headteacher, supported by the staff and governors. The office administrator is very efficient and the governors, through their nominated representative, monitor the development of resources well and seek to apply the principles of best value when buying resources or services. This is seen to good effect in the work undertaken to improve the school's accommodation, which was criticised in the last inspection. The addition of a mezzanine administration, storage and teaching area has recently been completed and, while it is too early to judge its impact on standards, this area was seen being used effectively during the inspection. The governors have also secured a temporary classroom, close to the village hall, to house the Year 3 and 4 class. Despite the geographical split between the school's sites and the other local facilities used, the accommodation overall is now satisfactory for the education of its pupils. Further improvements are planned, but the long-term vision is to establish the whole school on a single site.
45. The school has a satisfactory range, quality and quantity of learning resources and improvements to the resources available for pupils in the Foundation Stage and to support pupils' learning in information and communication technology have been secured. The deficiencies in staffing identified in the previous inspection have been addressed with the

addition of an effective teaching assistant to support the youngest pupils and a more stable staff team and the Year 3 and 4 class now operates for most of the week. The skills and experience of teachers are fully matched to the needs of the curriculum. The teaching assistants who support those pupils with special educational needs make a good contribution to their progress and learning. Suitable arrangements are in place to support new staff and all staff have access to regular in-service training.

46. This is an improving school in which the headteacher, staff and governors work well together and are committed to securing improvements in the school's performance. The school is well placed to continue to improve and, taking all factors into account, the value for money provided by the school has improved since the last inspection and is now satisfactory.

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

47. In order to improve the quality of education further, the governing body, headteacher and staff should:

- (1) Raise further the standards in English, particularly in writing, and in mathematics and science by:
  - increasing the opportunities for the pupils to write at length;
  - improving the pupils' skills of investigation and enquiry in mathematics and science;
  - improving the pupils' ability to select and record their findings in a variety of ways.(paragraphs 4, 5, 6, 17, 58, 61, 63, 68, 71)
  
- (2) Improve the quality of marking by:
  - ensuring that marking is used consistently to identify the next step for pupils' learning;
  - monitoring the marking across the school to ensure consistency.(paragraphs 18, 59, 61, 66)
  
- (3) Improve teaching and learning by:
  - extending the monitoring arrangement, already in place in English and mathematics, to other subjects;
  - monitoring the impact of the new two-year rolling programme to ensure continuity and progression from year to year;
  - evaluating and implementing the outcomes of the monitoring process.(paragraphs 21, 42, 68, 79, 80, 84)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	24
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	10

### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection*

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	1	9	14	0	0	0
Percentage	0	4	38	58	0	0	0

*The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than four percentage points.*

### *Information about the school's pupils*

<b>Pupils on the school's roll</b>	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	50
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	1
<b>Special educational needs</b>	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	4
<b>English as an additional language</b>	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0
<b>Pupil mobility in the last school year</b>	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	3
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	2

### *Attendance*

#### **Authorised absence**

	%
School data	2.4
National comparative data	5.6

#### **Unauthorised absence**

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

### ***Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2) and Key Stage 2 (Year 6)***

The school's test and teacher assessment results have been omitted because there were fewer than ten pupils in the year groups

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

### ***Exclusions in the last school year***

<b>Categories used in the Annual School Census</b>	<b>No of pupils on roll</b>	<b>Number of fixed period exclusions</b>	<b>Number of permanent exclusions</b>
White – British	50	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	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	0	0	0

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



### ***Teachers and classes***

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	2.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20
Average class size	17

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	52.5

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	2001-02
	£
Total income	197565
Total expenditure	187149
Expenditure per pupil	3599
Balance brought forward from previous year	0

### ***Recruitment of teachers***

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	1
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	1.5
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## ***Results of the survey of parents and carers***

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	52
Number of questionnaires returned	33

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	56	41	3	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	64	33	3	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	58	42	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	53	44	3	0	0
The teaching is good.	73	24	3	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	55	42	3	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	76	18	3	3	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	76	24	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	52	42	6	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	73	21	0	0	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	67	33	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	39	42	18	0	0

## **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. The school admits children into a Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 class at two points during the year. Those with birthdays during the autumn or spring join in September, while summer born children start school in January. The provision for children in the Foundation Stage has improved since the last inspection, when it was identified as a serious weakness, and the children receive a sound start to their education. The class teacher and the teaching assistant work together closely and effectively and most of the children make satisfactory progress in this calm and supportive environment. The curriculum is well planned and covers all of the areas of learning. The children enter the school from a variety of pre-school settings. There are a small number in each year group and their attainment on entry to the school varies from year to year but, overall, it is broadly average. Inspection findings indicate that the children are very well placed to attain the early learning goals in all of the areas of learning. There are good arrangements, including home visits, for ensuring that the children settle quickly into school. At the time of the inspection there were two children in the Reception Year.

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

49. The children make sound progress in their personal, social and emotional development and are well placed to attain the early learning goals in this area. They settle into school quickly and soon learn the routines of the class. They are well supported by the older children in the class and they learn to work together, sharing resources and taking turns. They are interested in everything that goes on in the classroom and are able to concentrate for extended periods of time. The quality of teaching is satisfactory in this area of learning. There is an appropriate range of opportunities for the children to develop their independence and learn to co-operate with others. The children receive good support from the teaching assistant and relationships are warm and supportive.

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

50. The children make good progress in the early stages of reading and writing and they are very well placed to achieve the early learning goals in this area of learning. They enjoy handling books and understand that writing and pictures convey meaning. They learn to recognise letters and their own names and develop a widening vocabulary of familiar words. Their early attempts at writing are encouraged and praised and they practise the correct formation of letters. There are many opportunities for the pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills in class discussions and as they work at their tasks. The children gain in confidence through activities such as role play and listen carefully to instructions. The teaching is satisfactory. The staff create a supportive environment and provide a balanced programme of activities that builds on the skills that the children bring to school.

#### **Mathematical development**

51. The children make satisfactory progress in the mathematical area of learning and they are likely to attain the early learning goals by the time they enter Year 1. The provision for developing this aspect has improved significantly since the last inspection. The children match, count and sort well and recognise many coins. They learn to write numbers correctly and develop an understanding of terms such as 'more' and 'less than'. The children use their

skills to play games such as 'four-in-a-row' and they extend them further when 'shopping' in the home corner. The teaching is satisfactory. Good opportunities are taken to develop number skills through many routine activities, such as registration, and the children are included in whole class sessions with the older pupils. The teaching assistant provides good support during the activities designed specifically for the youngest children.

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

52. Progress is satisfactory in this area of learning. Much of the work is aimed effectively at helping the children make a good start at school. They join the rest of the class for their topic lessons and are curious and eager to find out why things happen. The children find their way confidently around the classroom and identify their favourite parts of Castleton. They find how people change as they get older, investigate how sound can be changed using glass jars and learn the names of parts of a plant. There are planned opportunities to explore the properties of sand and cook using simple ingredients. The teaching is satisfactory and builds upon the varying experiences that the children bring to school. The planning covers all of the early learning goals and the children are well placed to achieve them.

### **Physical development**

53. The children make satisfactory progress in their physical development and are in line to attain the early learning goals. Fine motor skills are developed through opportunities to handle pencils, paint brushes and scissors. The children take part in class physical education lessons, where they listen carefully to instructions and are learning to warm up appropriately before activities. They move confidently and with a growing awareness of space. The children develop their body awareness and control when they join the rest of the class for play-time. Teaching is satisfactory and builds upon the manipulative skills that the children have when they start school.

### **Creative development**

54. The children experience a range of materials, including paint and chalk. They draw pictures with an increasing confidence and attention to detail. The children join in music lessons, learn a variety of songs and actions and join in enthusiastically. The use of role play makes a good contribution to developing the children's imagination and they enjoy these opportunities. Teaching is satisfactory in this area of the children's development and they are likely to attain the early learning goals.

### **ENGLISH**

55. Inspections findings show an improving picture in standards of attainment in English in the infant and junior classes. The pupils enter the school with a broadly average range of attainment and make satisfactory progress in gaining English skills. By the ages of seven and eleven, the overall attainment of pupils in English is in line with national expectations. The pupils make good progress in learning to read and in the expansion of their speaking and listening skills. Progress in writing is satisfactory and the school recognises that this is an area for further development. All the pupils are provided with equal opportunities to participate in the learning activities provided in English; the pupils with special educational needs are particularly well supported in literacy sessions and make good overall progress.

56. In speaking and listening, standards are above national averages by the ages of seven and eleven. Good use is made of the whole class discussions at the beginning of the Literacy Hour and in the introductory sessions to other subjects. The pupils respond very well at these times, listen carefully to the teachers and other pupils and enjoy offering answers. They talk about their work willingly as, for example, when Year 3 and 4 pupils take turns to explain to the class their concerns about the local environment, using photographs they have taken around the village. There are regular opportunities for pupils to develop their spoken language, as in 'show and tell' sessions, drama and assemblies when pupils' ideas and opinions are listened to and valued by the adults working with them. The adults create very good opportunities to extend the pupils' vocabulary and language through questioning and class discussions. In an art lesson, the pupils in Years 1 and 2 were fascinated with portraits from a range of artistic traditions. Their vocabulary was well extended by the teacher and they were able to talk about differences in the pictures and how the various effects had been obtained.
57. In the infant and junior classes, the pupils read fluently and accurately. They make good progress in learning to read and standards in reading at the end of both key stages are above those expected nationally. Throughout the school, the pupils have very positive attitudes towards the books they read and they enjoy reading. They have opportunities to develop good reading habits; each day, time is devoted to practising and developing their skills individually and in groups with the teachers. This is contributing to the improving standards. The pupils are encouraged to tackle challenging texts, including poetry and non-fiction and they are developing a critical appreciation of the books they read. Many of the pupils can discuss characterisation and the way in which authors develop plots and create atmosphere. There is a strong home-school reading partnership in place; the pupils take books home and read regularly to their parents or carers. Good use is made of volunteer helpers who spend time in school, hearing pupils read and discussing the texts. These features make a positive contribution to the progress that the pupils make. Most of the pupils understand how they can find information from different sources, including the Internet, and the older ones know how the non-fiction library books are catalogued. The school has a good range of reading books and 'big books' for use during the literacy sessions.
58. In writing, standards are in line with national expectations by the end Year 2 and Year 6 and the pupils make satisfactory progress. Standards in writing are not as high as they could be. The school has recognised that writing can be improved and has already put some measures in place. Good use is made of structured programmes such as the national 'Additional Literacy Strategy' to improve pupils' progress in learning to spell and to increase skills in developing and using a wider and richer range of words. In Years 5 and 6, a 'Writers' Toolkit' is providing structures and pointers for improving writing. A strength of the writing is the way in which the teachers plan opportunities for pupils to write in a variety of styles across the school, including stories, recounts, persuasive writing and writing that puts forward reasoned and balanced arguments. In general, good use is being made of writing skills across the curriculum, but there are too few examples of the pupils' extended writing.
59. The way in which the pupils' work is marked varies across the school. The work is marked regularly, but teachers do not always make it clear what the pupils have to do to improve. The school has put in place a good number of standardised tests and, from these and the end of key stage tests, the strengths and weaknesses in the pupils' work is being analysed. It has recently begun to track individual pupils' progress and set targets for the level that the pupils should achieve by the end of each year and key stage. However, the information that is gathered is not yet being fully used to plan further work in order to raise standards in writing. Individual targets are set for - and with - pupils but the targets are not always easily available

as a ready reminder to the pupils. There are no classroom displays to give the pupils help in remembering literacy structures and features, to remind them of spelling rules or to extend vocabulary to use in writing. Nor are pupils given clear information about what they need to do to achieve the next level. In addition, standards of handwriting and presentation are variable across the school and in some cases the teachers accept untidy and immature handwriting without giving the pupils pointers for improvement. The pupils are taught a joined script but are not encouraged to use it on a regular basis.

60. By the age of seven, the pupils are beginning to express themselves in their writing. They can form simple sentences and know how to punctuate their writing, using full stops and capital letters. Most pupils spell common words correctly and use their knowledge of spelling rules and letter strings to make good attempts at spelling less familiar words. Good examples of descriptive writing are seen as when pupils write an alternative ending to 'Not Now Bernard' or retell the traditional tale of Red Riding Hood. In Years 3 and 4, the pupils write in the style of newspaper reports and write their own versions of the story of 'The Dog and his Reflection'. They continue to make satisfactory progress in learning to spell and to use correctly an increasing range of punctuation, such as exclamation, question and speech marks. By the time they are eleven only a minority of the pupils use a joined up handwriting style as a matter of course. Most pupils have a good understanding of how to punctuate their sentences and do so appropriately. They show some imagination and flair in short pieces of writing, but the opportunities for more extended writing are limited and fewer than expected pupils reach the higher levels (Level 5 or above). The pupils can write in a variety of styles to suit different genres of writing. For example, they can write a diary set in the future and use dialogue and description when writing a 'River Rescue Report'. They can identify the main features of suspense stories. The pupils are confident in their use of adjectives to help them write more interesting sentences and some understand the use of adverbs. The majority of pupils can use similes and a few have a good understanding of metaphor and personification. The pupils have some opportunities to use word processing programs to plan, draft and edit pieces of work.
61. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. It is never less than satisfactory and there are some significant strengths. The teachers manage the pupils very well and this promotes the high standards of behaviour seen. The pupils try hard in their lessons and work consistently to complete the tasks they are set. The basic skills of reading are being taught systematically and well throughout the school. In the best lessons seen, the pupils are made aware of what it is they are to learn by the end of the lesson. The teachers make good use of resources to support the learning, including well-chosen texts and interesting presentations of the material. The teaching assistants give good quality support, reinforcing and developing the teaching points for the less able pupils. Overall the teachers do not plan sufficient occasions when pupils can construct and complete extended pieces of writing. The pupils' work is marked regularly throughout the school, but the quality of the marking could be better. It recognises work done and the efforts made by the pupils, but marking is rarely annotated with helpful comments and guidance to help the pupils to improve their work. There are few displays about literacy in the classrooms to support teaching and learning.
62. The subject is co-ordinated by the headteacher, who has recently taken over the subject area. The previous post-holder has put in place some useful strategies to improve standards such as the 'Writers' Toolkit'. Good use has been made of national initiatives to raise standards of spelling and grammar and of local education authority support in monitoring the implementation of the literacy strategy. Opportunities to check what is happening in other classes to support the school in raising standards by monitoring teaching and learning are being developed

further. Standards in English overall are rising and the school is well placed to improve the standards of writing to match those of reading and speaking and listening. The governors are enthusiastic and energetic in playing a supportive role in monitoring and evaluating standards in the school.

## MATHEMATICS

63. By the age of seven and eleven, the pupils achieve standards that are in line with the national average for pupils of this age and they make satisfactory progress. This is an improvement since the last inspection when, although attainment was average, there was underachievement in the infants due to extended staff absence; progress in the juniors was unsatisfactory due to weaknesses in assessment and insufficiently challenging work. The school has addressed these areas of weakness successfully. The pupils in both key stages now have secure number skills and knowledge, although there are too few opportunities for the pupils to carry out more open-ended investigations and this limits the development of these skills.
64. By the end of Year 2, most pupils have a secure knowledge of the value of numbers and they use this competently to order numbers to 100 and add two-digit numbers. They can subtract numbers up to 20 in different ways and use a 100 square to cope with larger numbers. These skills are used well to solve simple money problems. For example, in one lesson, a group of pupils were finding ways of making 20p, with the more able pupils working to 50p. They select appropriate coins to pay for an item and can calculate the change required confidently. Most pupils have a sound knowledge of some multiplication tables and can count on in twos, fives and tens. They learn about the properties of two and three-dimensional shapes and tell the time to half past, quarter past and quarter to the hour.
65. This satisfactory progress continues as the pupils move through the juniors. By the time they leave the school, most pupils can work confidently with numbers and are able to use a range of methods of calculation. They have a good knowledge of place value and can explain what a number is worth up to three decimal places. In one lesson, pupils in Year 5 and 6 were able to order five decimal numbers and identify decimal numbers lying between two others. These pupils worked confidently and were able to explain and justify their answers. Most pupils have a secure knowledge of multiplication tables. The pupils extend their knowledge and understanding of two and three-dimensional shapes. For example, in a lesson in the Year 3 and 4 class, the pupils could identify and name a number of shapes. Most of the Year 3 pupils can sort the shapes according to whether they are quadrilaterals or triangles and those in Year 4 use a diagram to record whether they are regular or irregular. The pupils' previous work shows an appropriate range of activities on number, shape and measurement and attainment that is in line with the standards expected of pupils of this age.
66. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and has some good features. Lessons are planned carefully to take account of pupils of different ability and experience and this is an improvement since the last inspection. The teachers have high expectations of what the pupils can achieve and how they should behave and these expectations are shared with the pupils. The lessons take place in a calm and supportive atmosphere, in which the pupils can work hard and make progress. The teachers' knowledge of mathematics is secure, which enables them to ask probing questions and provide clear explanations and the lessons move briskly. The whole class sessions at the end of the daily mathematics lesson are used well to focus on what has been learned. Although the teachers generally ensure that pupils of all abilities are challenged appropriately, there are too few opportunities for more open-ended enquiry and for the pupils to develop their independence, for example, by selecting the most appropriate way of recording a piece of work. The teachers are well supported by the teaching assistants who work with the youngest pupils and those who have special educational needs. As a result, these pupils make good progress. The pupils' work is marked conscientiously, although there are few examples of teachers making comments to indicate how the pupils might improve their work or set targets for their learning.



67. The subject is well led by the headteacher. He has ensured that assessment procedures have improved since the last inspection. Good use is made of the analysis of data from the national tests and from the monitoring of teaching and learning in mathematics to identify areas for development. The use of information and communication technology, to support learning in mathematics, has also improved and is now satisfactory.

## SCIENCE

68. The pupils enter the school with broadly average attainment in science and make satisfactory progress. On the basis of the work seen during the inspection, the attainment at the end of both key stages is in line with national expectations. However, the school has recognised that standards in science could be higher. A minor issue at the time of the previous inspection was that there was insufficient practical work in science; this has largely been addressed. The school has a satisfactory range of equipment to support teaching and learning in science and the pupils have regular opportunities to use it. Long and medium term planning is in place to support the teachers in knowing what to teach to each age group. However, this rolling programme has only recently been implemented to take account of the new class that has been created for the pupils in Year 3 and 4. The previous arrangements meant that in some areas the science curriculum was lacking in progression and continuity. This has now been addressed and the school is planning more effectively for the mixed-age classes. The school has begun to use the analysis of test papers to identify where there are gaps in the pupils' knowledge and understanding of aspects of science but, until recently, the use of this information to inform the teachers' planning has been limited. This means that there has been a lack of challenge for the more able and the work has not always built on the pupils' previous work. The main area for development in science is to ensure that there are more occasions for pupils to develop independence in learning by providing work with choices and opportunities to make decisions. The teachers plan some opportunities for pupils to take part in investigative work but there are few occasions when the pupils are able to devise their own experiments, explore their ideas or decide how to record their work.
69. By the time they are seven, the pupils know that pushes and pulls are different forces. They learn that materials can have different properties; for example rubber is flexible and metals are nearly always attracted to magnets. They understand that the sun is the main source of light and they can sort items into categories of being transparent, translucent or opaque. When they make chocolate crispies they are beginning to understand that heat makes substances change. They learn that ice, water and steam are all forms of water. They can label the parts of the human body and plants and they begin to observe growth as a feature of living organisms. The pupils are less experienced in offering suggestions as to why things happen or finding ways of testing their ideas for themselves.
70. In Year 3 and 4, the pupils learn which foods contain nutrients essential for healthy growth and energy. They investigate the contents of a variety of breakfast cereals and are very interested when this work is extended to animal foods to observe the different nutritional needs that animals have. The pupils complete electrical circuits to light a bulb. This is extended to record how series and parallel circuits work. The older pupils use their knowledge of materials to classify which are magnetic. They predict what will happen when iron filings are moved close to the two poles of a magnet and test their hypothesis. They construct their own force-meters and compare the results they obtain when using commercially produced force-meters. They understand that it is important to have a calibrated scale and most can read from the scales with accuracy. The oldest pupils are able

to explain the features of a fair test. There is a satisfactory use of information technology to support the pupils' learning in science.

71. The teaching in science is satisfactory overall, with some strengths and weaknesses. The teachers have clearly identified learning objectives, which they share with the pupils. Resources are well prepared and the pupils are very well managed and organized. They are all involved in the lessons and teaching assistants provide very good support for those pupils with special educational needs. Overall, the teachers have a sound knowledge of the subject; they place a good emphasis on observational skills and always use correct scientific language with the pupils. However, too much of the work is directed by teachers and, as the same work is usually covered by all of the pupils in the class, this limits the opportunities for higher attaining pupils to further extend their learning. The pupils' investigative skills are limited by too few opportunities to devise their own experiments or decide how they will carry them out to ensure a fair test. The way in which the pupils record their findings is usually given by the teacher and so, although the pupils make some use of the skills they are learning in writing and numeracy, they have few opportunities to decide which is the most appropriate format for presenting their work.
72. The subject manager for science is the headteacher, who also has responsibility for several other key areas of the curriculum. He is enthusiastic about the promotion of teaching and learning in science and has been instrumental in recognising the need to improve the subject further and in putting the new arrangements for the curriculum in place. He is taking opportunities to check how well science is being taught and to decide what needs to be done to improve further.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

73. By the time they are seven and when the pupils leave the school, their attainment in art is above that expected for their age. All of the pupils have good access to the art curriculum. They make good progress in their knowledge and understanding and in developing skills in art and design. There are significant strengths in the teaching and curriculum provided for art. In particular, the subject makes a good contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural education of the pupils and extends and enriches their personal development. The teachers give the pupils opportunities to experience and use a good range of media and materials and this helps the pupils create good quality work throughout the school. The pupils enjoy art activities, work with enthusiasm and concentration and try hard to achieve the effect they want. Use is made of sketchbooks to try out different techniques and media, before starting on a finished piece of work. The pupils have some opportunities to evaluate their own and others' work, and when these are provided they make mature and perceptive comments. The adults in the school value pupils' efforts and help them to develop confidence and self-esteem in working on artistic projects.
74. In Years 1 and 2, the pupils produce interesting black and white self-portraits using mirrors. They consider a range of portraits from different artistic traditions and make perceptive comments about the ways in which the artists have achieved the different effects to portray the personalities and appearance of the sitters. They discuss with interest and sensitivity the skin colours and how they could mix the correct shade, before they try to do this for themselves. They mix a range of skin colours with care and know what the effect will be if they add more of one colour. They make good use of information and technology skills to complement this work, mixing the colours on the screen and printing out their lively pictures of

faces. The pupils learn to use charcoal to draw, shade, and smudge to gain the effect they want and have good opportunities to use other media to explore and create different effects.

75. The pupils' work is sometimes linked to other areas of the curriculum being studied. For example, in Year 3 and 4, the pupils have assembled a colourful and interesting display of features of animal life in Timbevati in Africa using a variety of media. They explore colour through painting large shape patterns using primary colours and splattering them with black paint. This work is extended as they collaborate to produce thick abstract paintings in the style of Jackson Pollock. Using black and white torn paper and paint the pupils explore creatively the effects of shapes and colour in different combinations. In Years 5 and 6, the pupils produce striking images of dreams inspired by the work of Salvador Dali. When they use corrugated card to print landscapes with buildings they work carefully and patiently to produce prints of good quality. The pupils make progress in investigating the use of shading techniques to make effective drawings of castles. Three-dimensional work is represented by paper sculptures and designing and making chairs for broomsticks.
76. The overall quality of teaching is good in art. The school is using the national guidelines for planning and the teachers plan and organize the lessons well. They have high expectations of the pupils to behave well, work independently and use their creativity. The planning makes some use of sketch books on a regular basis to practise and try new techniques. The lessons are lively and engage the pupils' interest, their confidence is boosted and they enjoy trying out new techniques. As a result, they make good progress when learning to use a range of media. The pupils' work is well displayed around the school. The management of the subject is good. The subject manager is enthusiastic and knowledgeable about art. She ensures that the art and design curriculum is interesting and challenging. A particular strength is the collaborative work done with other schools to generate the 'Arts in the Valley' project. This enabled the school to make good use of visitors and visits to stimulate pupils' interest and to teach different techniques and crafts.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

77. It was not possible to observe lessons in design and technology during the inspection. The evidence from a limited amount of the pupils' previous work, including photographs, the teachers' planning and discussions with the co-ordinator and the pupils indicates that there is an appropriate range of projects each year. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, the pupils attain the expected standards and they make satisfactory progress. It is not possible to compare this with the previous inspection, as no judgement on standards was made.
78. Across the school, the pupils develop satisfactory skills of cutting and fastening, which they use to support their learning in other subjects such as art and science. The pupils in Key Stage 1 carry out work linked to topics including vehicles, homes and fruit and vegetables. They create careful collages of faces, using paper plates, to show a variety of expressions. The pupils develop their planning and designing skills as, for example, when they produce neatly labelled drawings of wheeled vehicles. In Year 3 and 4, the pupils make fun bowls, using papier mache and produce thoughtful instructions of how to make them. There are suitable opportunities for developing simple cooking skills. Older pupils investigate and make a range of containers and speak confidently about the opportunities they have for evaluating and improving their work. The work is often linked to science topics and, during the inspection older pupils were observed using their designing and making skills to make a force meter and a 'jack-in-the-box'. Other topics covered include 'moving monsters', storybooks and structures. A good feature is the annual 'Scrap-yard Challenge', an after-school activity,

which enables many pupils to extend the skills they learn during lessons. The pupils have access to a satisfactory range of construction kits.

79. From the evidence available, the quality of teaching is satisfactory. The work is planned according to the national guidelines and there is an appropriate balance between designing, making and evaluating. Recent work has focused on design in the local community, with the pupils observing and comparing the design of the town's litter receptacles. The good links with another local school enabled older pupils to use their facilities to build 'dens'. Visiting contributions also enhance the curriculum as, for example, when the pupils worked with representatives of Shell Education to design and make buggies. There have been no formal opportunities to monitor the teaching and learning in the subject. The school has a satisfactory range of resources to support the pupils' learning.

## **GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY**

80. The standards of attainment by the ages of seven and eleven are in line with those expected nationally in these subjects and all of the pupils make satisfactory progress. The standards are similar to those found at the last inspection. Throughout the school the pupils are interested in, and enjoy learning about, geography and history topics. Strengths of the geography and history curriculum are the very good use made of local resources and the educational visits made further afield to support teaching and learning. The school now has long and medium term planning in place to support the teachers in knowing what to teach to each age group. However, this rolling programme has only recently been implemented to take account of the new class that has been created for the Years 3 and 4 pupils. The previous arrangements meant that in some areas the curriculum was lacking in progression and continuity. This has now been addressed as the school, having recognised this problem, is planning more effectively for the mixed age classes. In both subjects, opportunities to use literacy skills, in the form of extended writing, are missed. The use of information and communication technology skills is in the early stages of development in both subjects. Good use of a computer program to explore issues of recycling was seen in the Year 5 and 6 class and the younger pupils use the Internet to discover facts about the life of Florence Nightingale. Using an instant camera, the Year 3 and 4 pupils take photographs of the local environment to help them identify how improvements could be made.
81. In geography, in the infants, the teachers' planning shows that the pupils learn about the local area, study island homes and learn to identify the differences between their own locality and a contrasting one. They think about how the local area can be made safer and find out about the seaside. In the juniors, the work is planned to include topics on the weather, water, rivers and mountains. The pupils look at ways in which the local environment can be improved and the older pupils consider issues concerned with the management and maintenance of the environment. The pupils learn to read simple maps and to construct their own using keys and symbols for different features. However, little evidence was seen of pupils learning to use grid references using four figures and developing their map reading skills by using more detailed maps.
82. Through their history topics, the pupils develop a sound sense of chronology and of where they fit into it. They understand that over time there have been changes in the ways in which people live. In the infants, the pupils compare homes and seaside holidays of the past with those of the present day. They learn about the role that Florence Nightingale played in developing hospital care and find out how 'living memory' can be used to explore historical events and issues. In Years 3 and 4, the pupils discover who the ancient Greeks were and

why people invaded and settled in Britain in the past. When they study the Tudors, they consider the character of Henry VIII and are taught about why he married six times. They learn about the differences in the lives of the poor and the rich in Tudor times. The older pupils find out what life was like for children at school during the Victorian era. This topic is tackled imaginatively making good use of the school's own Victorian building and a visit to the Living History Centre in Sheffield, where the pupils spend the day dressed as Victorians and experience lessons in a Victorian classroom. The pupils consider how life has changed in Britain since 1948 and study aspects of local history.

83. Overall the teaching of geography and history is satisfactory. The teachers have good subject knowledge and are keen to share this with the pupils. They give the pupils good opportunities to answer questions and to explain their answers. The lessons are planned carefully to use an interesting range of resources. However, over time, the pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to record their work in a variety of forms and some topics are not studied in sufficient depth. The school makes very good use of educational visits and the local area to extend and enhance the curriculum. A good example was the recent visit to the village's Peveril Castle to experience 'living history' in the form of a Norman soldier; he explained his dress and fighting equipment and told the pupils about his life as an invader to Britain.
84. The subject manager for history and geography is enthusiastic and knowledgeable. There is an adequate range and number of resources to support teaching and learning in the subjects and wall displays celebrate and show work being covered. However, there have been few recent opportunities for her to check what is being taught and learnt in other classes. Geography and history lessons make a very good contribution to the pupils' social and cultural education. They extend the pupils' understanding of the complex background to the culture of which they are part, and of how they can play a part in improving their present environment and the society in which they live.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

85. Standards of attainment in information technology (ICT) are in line with those expected nationally and the pupils make satisfactory progress. The teaching is satisfactory and a broad range of activities is planned. This is an improvement since the last inspection when, although no judgement was made about the pupils' standards, teaching was judged to be unsatisfactory and the statutory requirements for the subject were not met.
86. By the end of Year 2, most of the pupils have developed satisfactory skills. There are well-structured opportunities for the pupils to become familiar with computers and other technology and to develop their skills progressively. They gain in confidence as they learn the names of the main features of a computer and what they do. Most of the pupils can load a program from within the computer and close it down when they have finished. They use the key board and mouse with control, for example, when dragging and placing objects in an imaginary room or dressing 'teddy'. The pupils are able to select from a menu to print out their work. They explore adventure activities and use the internet to find out about Florence Nightingale. Teachers' planning indicates that the pupils use computers for a variety of purposes, including finding information and to writing stories and they learn to control a floor robot. The pupils continue to make satisfactory progress as they build on their knowledge and skills in the juniors. They learn how to combine text and pictures and begin to monitor environmental conditions using data-logging software introduced to them by the Hope Valley College, some of which they will be able to use at home. The pupils in Year 6 speak enthusiastically about

their work, particularly when they took part in 'video conferencing' with the local college. There are good links with other subjects, particularly mathematics, art and geography.

87. Overall the quality of teaching is satisfactory. The teachers use whole class sessions effectively to explain and demonstrate new skills or consolidate the pupils' understanding of the programs they use. The national guidelines for ICT are used well to ensure that a broad range of activities is offered that meets statutory requirements. The headteacher provides good leadership for the subject. He has overseen the significant improvements in the provision and in pupils' attainment and he has suitable plans for future developments. Since the last inspection, teachers' knowledge and confidence in the subject have improved by taking part in the national training and this has been supplemented by training provided by the local education authority. The school has invested well in new equipment, including a new suite of computers, and is building up a good collection of programs to support other subjects. The improvements in resources and staff expertise have had a significant impact on raising standards. The good links established with the local technology college have helped to enhance the curriculum and resources on offer and to support for teachers, for example, in monitoring the pupils' attainment and progress by using a 'passport' system of assessment.

## **MUSIC**

88. The standards of attainment by the time the pupils are seven and when they leave the school are in line with those expected nationally. This is similar to the standards found at the time of the last inspection. Overall, the teaching of music is satisfactory and the pupils make satisfactory progress. All of the pupils join in with the music lessons and, when there are opportunities, they sing enthusiastically and tunefully together as, for example, in the assemblies. The school recognises that the extension of musical opportunities is an area for further development. For example, it plans to provide more opportunities for pupils to learn to play musical instruments and to provide more workshops with visiting specialists.
89. The younger pupils can sing in tune and in unison. They accompany a range of songs with actions. The pupils enjoy music. They know how to handle instruments and treat them with care and respect. Throughout school, the pupils have opportunities to play a range of untuned percussion instruments. They listen to a variety of pieces of music and understand that music can depict moods and events. In a class assembly, Year 3 and 4 pupils sang well together and paid good attention to phrasing and expression. The pupils have an opportunity to join recorder classes held at lunchtimes. At times lessons paid for by the parents are provided for other instruments. However, these are dependent on the availability of visiting teachers.
90. One lesson was seen during the inspection and it reached a satisfactory standard. The teacher ensured that all the pupils were involved and she engendered a sense of enjoyment in singing and making music. She used praise well to sustain the pupils' interest and to enable them to make progress in learning actions and to sing in unison. The subject makes a satisfactory contribution to the pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development and supports their personal development as members of the school and the wider community. The school is using national guidelines to plan what should be taught in each year group and to make sure that the pupils build on what they have learned before. The pupils listen to music from different traditions and have occasional opportunities to hear professional musicians and groups from the secondary school. Some of the pupils form a keen group of hand-bell ringers who perform at a number of events in the village. The school performs musical events regularly for parents and friends of the school on occasions such as Harvest Festival and Christmas.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

91. The pupils' attain standards in physical education (PE) that are in line with those expected nationally at ages seven and eleven. It was only possible to observe lessons in dance during the inspection, but teachers' planning shows that the pupils are provided with a programme of activities that includes games, dance, gymnastics, athletics and swimming. All of the pupils currently in Year 6 can swim at least 25 metres. Overall, standards are similar to those found in the last inspection.
92. Pupils in the infants are able to warm up appropriately before taking part in lessons. They listen well and follow the teacher's instructions as they move confidently in a variety of ways and with increasing awareness of space and the position of others. They concentrate well and work hard to improve their performance. By the end of Year 2, most pupils have a sound sense of how movements can be linked together and can be changed to alter the effect. They develop their imagination, for example, by pushing and stretching an imaginary balloon. In the juniors, the pupils continue to make satisfactory progress. By the time they leave the school, most pupils have developed a sound understanding of how they can move 'robotically' or to make themselves bigger. They link movements together well and have an increasing sense of rhythm. Older children respond well to the opportunities to analyse each other's performance and they make sensible and thoughtful suggestions of how it might be improved.
93. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Lessons are well organised and the teachers have appropriately high expectations of the pupils' capabilities and how they should behave. In the best lessons, particularly in the juniors, there is a clear focus on what the pupils will learn and how they might improve their performance. There are occasional opportunities for them to analyse the work of others, but this is not a regular feature. The pupils respond well to this teaching by working hard, behaving very well and making good progress during the lesson. All lessons feature appropriate warm-up and cool-down activities and the teachers ensure that the pupils understand why they are doing this. The headteacher provides good leadership and ensures that a broad and balanced programme is offered. Many pupils benefit from the good range of extra-curricular sporting activities that includes football, netball and outdoor pursuits and further expertise is provided by visitors, for example in a range of dance forms and in football. The school has a satisfactory hard-play area, makes effective use of the nearby village hall for indoor lessons - where there are appropriate plans to improve the accessibility of large apparatus - and has access to a local playing field. Resources for PE are satisfactory.