

INSPECTION REPORT

HESSLE PENSURST PRIMARY SCHOOL

Hessle

LEA area: East Riding of Yorkshire

Unique reference number: 117849

Headteacher: Derek Sutherland

Reporting inspector: Eileen Parry
2615

Dates of inspection: 9th – 12th December 2002

Inspection number: 247816

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Nursery, Infant and Junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Winthorpe Road
First Lane
Hessle
East Riding of Yorkshire

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr R Lithgow

Date of previous inspection: May 2000

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
2615	Eileen Parry	Registered inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Music Special educational needs Educational inclusion	What sort of a school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
13448	Dawn Lloyd	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development Partnership with parents. How well does the school care for its pupils?
27591	Madeline Campbell	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Art and design Geography Religious education	
2628	Jim Edwards	Team inspector	Science Physical education	
4303	Simon Reynolds	Team inspector	English Design and technology History	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Hessle Penshurst Primary School is smaller than at the previous inspection but is still larger than average in size with 302 pupils on roll. In addition 52 children attend the nursery part-time. Most pupils live in the housing estates close to the school but around 11 per cent come from an area of the neighbouring local education authority of Hull, which has been designated as an Education Action Zone. Almost all pupils are white and speak only English. The number who take free school meals is broadly in line with the national average, as is the percentage of pupils on the special educational needs register. Many of these pupils have special needs because they find learning difficult and some because they have problems in their behaviour. Around ten per cent of pupils start or leave the school during the year which is slightly more than is usually found. There has been a very high turnover of teachers in the last two years.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school provides a satisfactory quality of education with many good features. It gives satisfactory value for money. Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. The headteacher has given the school a good lead in raising standards and in setting the warm friendly environment of the school. He is well supported by the governing body and by the staff. Many of the teachers with responsibilities have only recently taken these on because of staff changes due to the numbers of pupils in school falling in the last two years. Teachers are committed to improving standards but have still to develop the good management skills to move things on more quickly. The focus on raising standards shows very well in the infants where pupils do well and standards are good. It does not yet show well enough by Year 6, where standards are rising but are still below average and not high enough. Teaching is good in the nursery, reception and infant classes, and satisfactory in the juniors.

What the school does well

- Standards in reading and mathematics in the infants are well above average.
- An interesting curriculum is provided in nursery and reception that helps children to learn well and to achieve good standards.
- The quality of teaching from nursery to Year 4 is good.
- The headteacher leads well and sets a clear direction for improvement.
- The school provides strong support for pupils' personal care and development. As a result, pupils have very positive attitudes, apply themselves to their work and learn effectively.
- There is good support overall for pupils with special educational needs.

What could be improved

- Standards of English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT) in the juniors.
- The management skills of teachers who are responsible for developing subjects throughout the school.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in May 2000 when it was judged to have serious weaknesses. Since then it has improved steadily. Although there is much still to do, partly as a result of the high turnover of staff and the short space of time since the previous inspection, the serious weaknesses have been dealt with. Teaching and learning continue to be good in nursery and reception and from being unsatisfactory, teaching and learning are now good in the infant classes. As a result pupils do well and standards are good. The measures that have been put in place have not yet had a full impact in the juniors but there is evidence that the school has turned the corner in the juniors as well and that the standards that have been falling are now improving. Staff changes mean that there is still a need to develop the management skills of teachers with responsibilities, which was a weakness last time. There have been good improvements in the way that teachers plan and assess pupils' learning. Governors have put good systems in place to see how well the school is meeting its development targets. A new ICT suite is helping to raise standards in ICT.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	D	E	E	D
Mathematics	E	E	E	D
Science	E	E	E	D

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

Results for the national tests taken by pupils at the end of Year 6 have fallen in each of the three years shown, and were well below average in English, mathematics and science last summer. They were below the average achieved in similar schools (based on the take-up of free school meals). When pupils' results are compared with how they did at the end of Year 2, they have made less progress than pupils did nationally. However, about a third of this group of pupils had some special educational need and the school's own information shows that, overall, they had made satisfactory progress from a low starting point. The targets set for 2002 were too ambitious and were not reached; those for 2003 are more realistic and achievable. This year saw good improvement in the test results for pupils at the end of Year 2 in reading and mathematics to a position that is well above average; writing results remain at the same average level, as do the teacher assessments for pupils' work in science.

Well-planned activities in nursery and reception help children to learn through enjoyment and play. As a result, children make good progress and achieve well, some reaching the early stages of the National Curriculum before the end of reception. This good start is built on in the infants and by the end of Year 2, pupils continue to do well reaching above average standards overall in English, mathematics and physical education. In other subjects, their work is satisfactory. This good progress and achievement continue up to Year 4 but slow down in Year 5 due to weaker teaching. The school's measures to improve standards have not had as much impact on the older pupils and by Year 6, although improving, standards are still below the national expectations in English, mathematics, science and ICT. Older pupils' achievements are satisfactory because they have had more to catch up on than the younger

classes. In most other subjects, they reach the expected national standards. There was too little evidence to make judgements about standards and progress in music or design and technology at either Years 2 or 6 or in physical education by Year 6.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Children really like coming to school and often work with enthusiasm, interest and application.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Children behave well in all situations but there are a few who find it difficult to do so consistently.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils respond well when given responsibilities. They relate very well to one another and to adults and are developing mature and sensible attitudes.
Attendance	Average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

Teaching in nursery and reception gives children a good start by making them keen to learn. This is built on well in the infants so that by Year 2, pupils are enthusiastic about their work and doing well in reading, mathematics and most subjects. Teaching continues to be good up to Year 4 but dips in Year 5 where there are some weaknesses in teachers' subject knowledge and in the way pupils are managed. These slow down pupils' progress. In Year 6, sound teaching enables pupils to regain the positive approach that earlier classes show to learning. Teachers mainly plan effectively to meet the needs of the wide range of pupils' attainment but there are sometimes gaps in the levels of challenge for both higher and lower attainers, for example in mathematics, history and science. Pupils respond with energy and interest when the teaching is good. They can be fascinated, absorbed and able to concentrate for very long periods of time but equally will lose interest in the few lessons where the work is not at the right level or the teaching is not good enough. Pupils who find learning difficult work hard and do well because they are supported effectively through additional help or work carefully matched to their needs. A very small number do not learn enough on the occasions when their challenging behaviour means that they have to be moved from their own classroom to calm down and there is no other additional support available.

Literacy is taught well throughout the school with good links being made to all subjects. The teaching of numeracy skills is satisfactory overall, with some significant strengths being balanced by some teachers' lack of subject knowledge. The marking and assessment of

pupils' work in mathematics and science are not as secure as they are in English and do not give pupils as much help in how to improve.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good for children in the nursery and reception classes and satisfactory for the infants and juniors.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good provision is made for pupils with special educational needs although there are sometimes difficulties in meeting the needs of a very few whose behaviour is extremely difficult to manage.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Currently there are no pupils with English as an additional language.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Good overall, with particular strengths in the way that pupils' spiritual and social developments are supported.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares well for its pupils. Some good procedures are in place to assess pupils' learning although procedures for a few subjects have still to be put fully into place.

The school has a satisfactory partnership with its parents. It provides clear information beautifully presented and has tried a variety of ways to involve parents. Teachers have often been disappointed by the response to some of the activities provided and this has led to a slowness in thinking of alternatives.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The school is well led by the headteacher who is supported by a staff committed to improving pupils' education. There is a need to enhance the management skills of teachers with subject responsibilities, for example so that they can more fully support the headteacher in reviewing teaching and learning and helping colleagues to improve.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors fulfil most of their responsibilities well, although they do not routinely send a copy of their annual report to all parents.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good account is taken of pupils' test and assessment information to improve standards. Governors and staff check the progress of the school's improvement plan thoroughly.
The strategic use of resources	Good use is made of the limited funds available and care is taken to get the best value for money, especially in paying for supplies and services.

There are a good number of teachers and support staff and learning resources are satisfactory overall. The new computer suite is helping to raise standards but the poor condition of the hall floor sometimes prevents physical education lessons from taking place. Lack of a separate outdoor play area restricts opportunities for children in the reception class.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school expects children to work hard. • Children like school and make good progress. • They find it easy to approach staff in the school. • Children are helped to become more mature. • Teaching is good. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being informed about how their children are doing. • Closer working between parents and school. • The range of activities other than lessons.

Generally the inspection team agree with the positive comments that parents made. Much of the teaching is good but there are some weaknesses that the school needs to work on. Children do work hard in most lessons and make good progress. The friendliness of the staff is likely to make it easy for parents to approach the school. The range of extra activities that the school provides is similar to that found in most schools; information to parents is of very good quality. The school has tried to involve parents and carers more in its every day life but with only limited success.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1 There has been a downward trend in the results of national tests for eleven year olds over the last three years. This year, 2002, these are well below the national average in English, mathematics and science and below those of similar schools. Given the nature of this particular year group however, where over a third had special educational needs and many pupils started from a low point in terms of skills and knowledge, the results represent a satisfactory achievement. Girls have usually done better than boys in English whereas there is a much more mixed picture in mathematics and science with girls better one year and boys in another. The differences, however, have been quite small. The school missed the targets that were set for the 2002 year group by a large amount but these were not set securely on what the pupils could already do and were far too ambitious. Targets set for 2003 are based on good assessment procedures. They are realistic and achievable. Inspection evidence agrees with the school view that results should rise for the first time for some years.

2 There is clear evidence that the measures to improve standards in English and mathematics have been successful in the infant classes. This is shown in the results of national tests which have improved from below average in reading to well above average and from average to well above average in mathematics. More than half of the pupils reached the higher level 3 in reading which boosted the figures against the national picture significantly. A good proportion reached the higher level in mathematics and in the teacher assessments for science where results overall were average.

3 Consistently good teaching and thoughtful provision ensure that pupils reach good standards and achieve well in English by the end of the infants. Standards in reading are above average by the age of seven. Pupils develop good skills in identifying letters and sounds and at the same time acquire a love of literature. Progress slows down in the juniors because of past weaknesses in teaching but it is now satisfactory overall. By Year 6, pupils can read a range of texts including Internet material, but some are not confident in using the reference library and quite a few have lost their enthusiasm for books. Whilst they can read the words, some do not fully understand what is meant. Pupils write in a range of forms throughout the school at a satisfactory level, although standards by Year 6 are still below average. Handwriting and presentation are weaker, reflecting inconsistent teaching.

4 At the end of Year 2 and up to Year 4, pupils do well in mathematics reaching above average standards. They develop an enthusiasm for the subject because of consistently good teaching. A large number have secure knowledge and skills in all areas of mathematics. By Year 6, there is a much wider spread of attainment. Overall it is below average but pupils' achievement is satisfactory. They are doing better than the previous Year 6 because the school is identifying more clearly what it needs to do to raise standards, for example by examining which areas of mathematics pupils did not get correct in the previous tests and planning more work on those areas. Some pupils are still insecure with simple number facts that hold them back from doing more complex computations and other pupils calculate quickly and accurately. Many pupils find it difficult to apply their knowledge to mathematical problems that are in words. Whilst more able pupils latch on to ideas quickly and with great interest, they are relatively unskilled in spotting patterns and relationships in investigations.

5 Standards in science are in line with expectations by Year 2. They are closer to average in Year 6 than they have been previously, although they are still below average.

Pupils' achievements are satisfactory. By Year 6, pupils often show a sound recall of what they have been taught recently but their learning lacks depth. This is because some areas of the curriculum are not taught fully enough.

6 In art, geography, history and religious education, pupils are working at the expected levels at the end of Years 2 and 6 and are making satisfactory progress. There was too little evidence to make secure judgements about standards and progress in music or design and technology at either Years 2 or 6 or in physical education by Year 6. Standards are rising in ICT throughout the school because of the good provision. They have now reached an average level by Year 2 but are still below expected levels at Year 6. This is because older pupils have not had enough time to develop their skills and experience across the range of ICT activities.

7 Children in the reception class started the school with skills and knowledge that were better than average as a group because of the good provision and progress that children made in the nursery. They have maintained this good progress and overall, they have reached standards that are better than expected for their age in personal and social development, communication and early reading and writing skills, their knowledge and understanding of the world and in their creative development. In mathematics and physical development, their attainment is at the levels expected nationally.

8 Pupils with special educational needs related to learning make good progress overall throughout the school. They make very good progress when they have a combination of activities at the right level for them and support from teachers and support assistants. The school has a very small number of pupils with extremely challenging behaviour. On some occasions, when there is no other support available, these pupils are moved to a different class or group in order to keep them in school. While these measures are successful in containing poor behaviour, there are times when the individual pupil makes little progress in lessons because the work is not at the right level for them.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9 Pupils have a very positive approach to learning. They enjoy school and are eager to do well. They are developing mature, sensible attitudes and relate very well to one another and to adults. Their behaviour is usually good and attendance is close to that found in most primary schools.

10 Parents agree, and the pupils themselves confirm, that they like coming to school because they make good friends, get on well with their teachers and learning is often fun. In lessons they are always eager to answer questions and take part in practical activities. They are very proud of their achievements and anxious to show what they can do; for example, Year 4 pupils in a history lesson were keen to read out their ideas to the whole class. A group of Year 6 pupils voluntarily worked on mathematical puzzles which stretched their thinking capacity, and were bubbling with enthusiasm as they sought approval for their results. Pupils are familiar with classroom routines and almost always settle quickly to their tasks. Even the lower ability groups, who sometimes find concentration difficult, usually remain attentive throughout lessons. Their enthusiasm and application to work help them to learn and contribute to the good behaviour that is seen in many classrooms. When, for example, Year 2 children were given freedom to move about the room measuring objects they were excited and absorbed by the activity, but behaved sensibly throughout. The growing maturity of the oldest children was clearly demonstrated in their calm, focused behaviour during literacy and numeracy lessons, which they attended dressed up in Victorian costumes ready for a history project later in the day.

11 Behaviour in lessons and around the school is usually good, often very good and sometimes excellent, because pupils understand and obey the simple rules that they helped to formulate. Sometimes a few of the older pupils can be reluctant to settle to their work, lose their concentration and cause minor disruption in lessons. This mostly happens when teaching is less successful. There are also some pupils whose behaviour can be extremely challenging, with the result that learning becomes less effective for the whole group. At lunchtimes, behaviour is usually good, especially in the lower school playground, although sometimes lack of supervision can lead to boisterous play amongst the older juniors.

12 The school has very detailed, sensitive procedures for dealing with problem behaviour, with many stages of warnings and sanctions to give pupils an opportunity to improve, but in the past year, six pupils have been excluded for short periods on a number of occasions. In some instances, one exclusion has been sufficient to ensure that the poor behaviour was not repeated, but for those pupils with particular behavioural difficulties, there has been a need for an ongoing system of monitoring and support. All action is carefully documented and governors and parents are involved appropriately, but the strategies for helping these few pupils to conform to the school's expectations are not yet totally effective and can sometimes prevent a pupil from taking part in lessons.

13 Friendship is an aspect of school life that pupils see as important and its effects can be seen in the way they work together in class. In pairs or small groups they co-operate well, discussing their work and coming to joint decisions on action to take, for example working with a partner on stillness in a dance lesson. They appreciate the good relationships they have with their teachers, which in turn, inspire the positive attitudes they have to learning. Pupils want to please by working hard and doing their best. They are polite and friendly to visitors and to staff and are good ambassadors for the school when they go out on trips, earning praise and rewards from places they have visited. The ethos of the school encourages care and consideration for others and this is reflected in the attitudes of the pupils. Some thoughtful appreciation for the views of other people was seen in a Year 6 lesson on *Oliver Twist*, when pupils discussed some difficult ideas and listened respectfully to one another's ideas. Pupils also explained how they would offer support to anyone who was unhappy, and how they were prepared to respect beliefs that differed from their own.

14 Pupils are learning to work independently, finding their own resources in classrooms and often engaging in practical activities with a minimum of supervision. Where opportunities exist to take on responsibility, such as operating the overhead projector or compact disc player during assemblies, acting as librarians or prefects or generally helping the teacher with routine classroom tasks, pupils are happy to volunteer.

15 Attendance figures dipped in the last academic year, but this was the result of teething troubles associated with the introduction of new recording and monitoring systems. Attendance in the current academic year is close to the national average and improving. During the inspection week, attendance was good and there were very few examples of lateness. Unauthorised absence is similar to that found in most primary schools and is caused by the very poor attendance record of one pupil, together with the insistence of some parents on taking their children on holiday in term time, in spite of the school's efforts to discourage this practice.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

16 A similar amount of teaching was judged satisfactory or better to that of the previous inspection. However more than half as much again was judged to be good or better (64 per cent this time as opposed to 42 per cent before) making the picture one of improved teaching overall.

17 Teaching in nursery and reception is good. Well-planned learning experiences take good account of the need for young children to learn as they play. In both classrooms the adults work well together to provide for the learning needs of their pupils and provide some challenging activities that, within the reception class, are moving the children on carefully into the early stages of the National Curriculum. Children with statements of special educational need have high quality support that ensures that they make good progress. Other nursery and reception pupils who are recognised as experiencing learning difficulties are assessed early and are also given good support from teachers and all other adults.

18 Teaching in infant classes is consistently good. There is strong teaching in the juniors up to Year 4 and consistently satisfactory or better teaching in Year 6. The lessons that were judged unsatisfactory were all in Year 5 and pupils do not make enough progress in such lessons or over time.

19 Throughout the school, classrooms are set up well to promote learning, and displays are used effectively as learning resources, for example to remind groups of pupils of their learning targets or to provide lists of important words. Planning for lessons is usually good. At its best it is detailed, sets out what is to be learned and provides a range of work that is suitable for the needs of the pupils in the class. Sometimes there is not enough difference in the work that is set for pupils of different abilities, including when there are sets that put pupils into three groups, for example in mathematics. In the best teaching the good planning is followed up by knowledgeable and enthusiastic teaching that inspires pupils to work hard and to enjoy learning, as in a dance lesson in Year 3/4 and a mathematics lesson in Year 1. Teachers almost always start by setting out what the pupils are going to learn so that pupils are clear about what they are going to do. Teachers often ask questions that make pupils think, as in a Year 6 science lesson where pupils were asked not simply to predict what would happen as they tried to dissolve particles of different sizes in water but to consider why. The good marking that is seen throughout the school in English is not so consistent in other subjects, such as mathematics and science.

20 Sometimes teaching is more modestly paced. Pupils are expected to work calmly and steadily, as in many Year 6 lessons, and they respond with good attitudes and good levels of concentration but without the spark of excitement that is evident in the very good lessons. In a few lessons in Year 5, teaching was judged to be unsatisfactory either through lack of subject knowledge, as in mathematics and dance, or weaknesses in managing and controlling the class, seen in geography and mathematics. In these lessons, pupils cease to listen to the teacher, find it difficult to concentrate on their tasks and most achieve too little when it is time for them to work.

21 Teachers write clear individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs to ensure that their learning is appropriate. There is a good mixture of support from assistants in class and extra sessions which focus on literacy work or particular needs. The smaller numbers in lower sets for English and mathematics, combined with good teaching and effective support from assistants, also help pupils to learn more. As a result of the quality of support, almost all pupils with special educational needs make good and sometimes very good progress. The exception to this is the very small number of pupils with special

educational needs related to their behaviour who sometimes mark time when they are asked to leave their own class and join another in order to calm down.

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

22 The curriculum has improved since the previous inspection and is now satisfactory with some notable strengths. The National Curriculum and locally agreed syllabus for religious education are fully in place and weaknesses reported last time in science and ICT have been rectified. The curriculum for the youngest children in the nursery and reception classes is good because the recommended areas of learning are imaginatively covered. Rich opportunities are provided that lead pupils effectively towards the initial stages of the National Curriculum, particularly in language and number. The exception to this is the limited opportunities provided for outdoor play in the reception class. This is due to the lack of a secure outside play area. This was mentioned in the last inspection report and has not yet been addressed.

23 The school's strategies for literacy and numeracy promote the acquisition of basic skills well in the reception and infant classes. Literacy skills are developed well in the juniors. The strategies for promoting numeracy are used satisfactorily but the needs of all pupils are not addressed to the same high level. However, good and growing opportunities are planned throughout the school for these core skills to be applied in other subjects, such as the use of mathematics in science, and reading and writing skills in history. ICT is used well across the curriculum. The school has adapted national guidelines for teaching other subjects, ensuring a balanced coverage of the different aspects, such as investigations in science, which were reported as unsatisfactory last time. In spite of the necessary focus on raising standards in English, mathematics and science, sufficient time is available for creative subjects, including dance and drama.

24 Long and medium-term planning is sound with learning objectives clearly set out for the appropriate age groups. Common planning across parallel classes ensures equality of access regardless of which class a pupil is placed in. Daily or weekly planning is more variable in quality and there is a general weakness in identifying the needs of different pupils within the class or group. Too often all the pupils are expected to cover the same material and sometimes the provision for pupils who find learning difficult is differentiated solely in terms of the support given by a classroom assistant. Nevertheless, provision for pupils with special needs is good overall because they are supported well and their individual education plans are up to date, setting out personal targets clearly with regular reviews to check how well they are doing. The school has recently established a policy and register for gifted, talented and highly able pupils. The co-ordinator has only just taken up responsibility and recognises that the next step needs to be deciding what additional provision is to be made to meet their needs.

25 The organisation of classes is quite complex. Some year groups are taught in mixed-age classes. In literacy and numeracy, pupils are also regrouped according to age and attainment into sets, and extra teachers are employed to keep these sets small. These arrangements are generally having a positive impact, but senior managers have not yet checked them for effectiveness and value for money. In other subjects, the needs of the different age groups in mixed-age classes are not always identified clearly enough in the weekly or daily planning.

26 The statutory curriculum is enriched in several ways. Staff provide sound opportunities for personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE) largely through

'circle times' when pupils learn to take turns as they discuss relevant issues or feelings associated with problems, such as bullying. The school has plans to adopt a more systematic PSHCE syllabus provided by the local education authority. This extends the current provision for drugs' education and provides a better basis for checking pupils' progress. A theatre group has been booked to present a drama that explores aspects of drugs' awareness. Sex education is provided satisfactorily, mainly through presentations and discussion led by the school nurse to Year 5 pupils.

27 A satisfactory programme of extra-curricular activities is now significantly broader than reported after the last inspection, when it consisted mainly of sports. During the year, provision includes French, Italian, drama and computer clubs as well as sporting activities, mainly designed for older pupils. There is a science club for Year 2 pupils and the headteacher is looking at ways of extending the opportunities for younger pupils further. An annual residential visit is made by the oldest pupils and at least one carefully planned visit linked to a topic each year for every class. For example, the infants visit Bridlington as part of their work in history and geography. Good links are made with the community, for instance through a science/business partnership, and there are satisfactory links with the secondary school to which most pupils transfer.

28 The headteacher is strongly committed to social inclusion, but there are strengths and weaknesses in the way it operates which make it satisfactory overall. The ethos of the school places equal value on all pupils. School activities are open to all, regardless of gender or ability. Arrangements for a very small number of older pupils with serious behavioural difficulties, however, sometimes lead to them missing some lessons.

29 The school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is good, maintaining the judgement of the previous inspection. The provision makes a positive contribution to pupils' personal development.

30 Spiritual development is very good and a strength within the school. During daily assemblies, pupils are given the opportunity for reflection and to join together in prayer. Assemblies are based strongly on a Christian ethos of love and care for each other. The main theme during the inspection was Advent and the time leading up to the birth of Jesus. Candles were lit and pupils were reminded of the real meaning of Christmas and the spirituality of their feelings at this time. A Christingle service for all pupils provided a tranquil occasion, with time used well for reflection.

31 Pupils' moral development is good. Pupils are valued in the school and their efforts are recognised in assemblies through certificates. The clear behaviour policy is reinforced in classrooms. Pupils understand the difference between right and wrong and understand the implications of their actions on others. Pupils are thoughtful and helpful to others and express their views openly, especially where they feel the school could improve. For example, they would like more seating outdoors where they could talk and meet friends. Relationships throughout the school are very good and although some pupils take responsibility, such as prefects, this is underdeveloped in the school. Pupils regularly support charities for the less fortunate – another example of the pupils' care for others.

32 Social development is very good. Pupils' movement around the school is good and they respect each other in a civilised way. They co-operate in pairs and in groups, often of mixed gender, both in the classroom and in the playground. They work collaboratively in many lessons, notably science and physical education, and are confident to express their opinions in discussion. Pupils report that friendship is important in the school. Achievements are recognised with a range of rewards such as Penguin awards, and certificates for the pupil of the week and the pupil of the term. The school values these efforts. School visits are

a feature of the school to increase curriculum opportunities and a residential experience is provided for older pupils each year. Sporting teams give the opportunity for boys and girls to represent their school against other local schools.

33 Cultural development is satisfactory. Children in reception are introduced to a range of beliefs in religious education, such as Hinduism. In infants and juniors, pupils are satisfactorily prepared for living in a world of many different peoples and beliefs by continuing to learn about them. Cultural opportunities are evident in dance and supported by visits outside school, and clubs exist where pupils are introduced to the languages of French and Italian.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

34 Since the last inspection, the school has maintained its good level of care for pupils. A comprehensive health and safety policy is carefully implemented by staff and monitored by governors. It includes regular checks of the building and equipment, termly fire drills and detailed risk assessments for any activity that might involve a safety hazard. Pupils are usually well supervised and staff on duty are equipped with walkie-talkies, a useful precaution in this sprawling building. There are good arrangements for routine first aid and medical care. Child protection procedures are properly in place and staff are aware of their responsibilities.

35 The school encourages children to adopt a healthy lifestyle by including appropriate components, such as sex education and drugs awareness, in the curriculum, with special emphasis given to health matters in an annual Health Week for each year group. A weekly drop-in session offered by the school nurse is particularly appreciated by older pupils.

36 New procedures for promoting and checking attendance have been introduced in the last year and have been very successful in improving overall figures and raising the profile of attendance with children and parents. The computerised registration system enables the school to analyse patterns and identify problems immediately, so that appropriate action can be taken to help pupils attend regularly. Further additions to the rewards given for good attendance are planned, to help the school achieve its target by the end of this academic year.

37 Similarly, the behaviour policy, which includes measures to eliminate bullying, is practical and useful. It is based on the encouragement of good behaviour, and gives clear guidelines to staff on how to handle a range of possible problems. Detailed documentation is kept on those pupils whose behaviour causes concern, so that regular monitoring can be undertaken by the class teacher with the support of the headteacher. Steps to improve poor behaviour are meticulously recorded so that their effectiveness can be assessed and external help sought if necessary. Pupils understand the principles of the behaviour policy and are motivated by the rewards that can be earned, while sanctions are effective for all but a small number of pupils with particular behavioural difficulties.

38 Teachers know pupils very well and routinely check their personal development. Because of the very good relationship they establish with pupils, staff can immediately identify any problems that might arise and take action to deal with them. In their turn, pupils have confidence in their teachers and are not afraid to approach them to discuss any matters that may worry them.

39 The assessment of pupils' learning has been developed well since the previous inspection. Good procedures are in place, including those for pupils with special educational needs, and assessment continues to be a priority. There are assessment policies in all

subjects but not all have been put into practice and some have yet to make an impact on curriculum planning. In the nursery, an assessment is carried out in the first few weeks of attendance and this enables all staff to provide the right type of support for the youngest children. In reception, formal assessments are made early in the children's first weeks in school and this helps the staff to plan to meet their needs.

40 A marking policy now exists but there is a lack of consistency by all staff as to how it is applied. It is, for example, particularly good in English where comments on pupils' work help pupils to know how to improve. Teachers are sometimes over generous or inaccurate in the marking of pupils' work in mathematics and science. The school is aware of this and has identified it as an area for development.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

41 As at the time of the last inspection, parents have mainly positive views of the school. The information provided for them is very good, but their involvement in the life of the school, and in supporting their children's learning, is only satisfactory.

42 Parents expressed predominantly favourable opinions of the school. They believe that pupils are expected to work hard and make good progress. They think that teaching is good, and that staff are approachable and provide good role models for the children. Parents are particularly happy with the attitudes and values the school promotes, which are helping children to become mature and responsible. Clear expectations and a fair discipline policy result in generally good behaviour and most children enjoy coming to school. Parents are happy with the information provided for them and find the school responsive when they have queries. Overall, they believe that the school is much improved since the last inspection.

43 The questionnaire showed a significant number of parents who did not feel well informed about their children's progress, did not feel that the school works closely with them, or that it provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons. A few were not happy with amounts of homework set, but at the pre-inspection meeting, most parents thought homework was about right. Some parents felt that more able pupils could be stretched more.

44 The inspection team agrees with parents that the school promotes positive attitudes and values, and responds well to parental queries. The range of extra-curricular activities is satisfactory and homework appropriately set. Information about pupils' progress is very good. Termly meetings allow parents to see what children are learning and discuss their progress individually with teachers, while written reports give very detailed information about what children know, understand and can do, and set targets for improvement.

45 All the written information provided for parents, including the prospectus and regular newsletters, is of a very high quality. Documents are attractively presented and detailed information on such matters as examination results is shown in the form of colourful charts, making the content very easy to understand. In addition, the school organises curriculum and year group evenings to explain to parents how pupils learn, but staff have been very disappointed that so few parents have taken advantage of these opportunities.

46 Most parents attend consultation meetings with teachers and progress reviews for pupils with special needs. They also respond well to specific requests for help, for example in running a disco or accompanying pupils on trips. Fund-raising events organised by the school are well supported, and any event involving children directly, such as concerts or sports matches, attracts a good attendance by parents. However, few parents help in classrooms and there is no parents' association to provide a focal point for fund-raising and

social events centred on the school. Although the school is happy to welcome parents individually and would enjoy their closer involvement in its daily life, some opportunities to encourage this involvement are missed; for example, parents were not invited to the Christingle services and are not given the opportunity to attend class or celebration assemblies.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

47 Overall, leadership and management are satisfactory. The school is well led by the headteacher who has given the school a firm sense of purpose and generated a shared commitment to improve the pupils' education. This has been particularly important in the last year when there have been some significant staff changes because of falling pupil numbers. For a variety of reasons including promotion, more teachers decided to leave than was needed and the headteacher and governors made the sound decision to make some senior appointments in order to provide a staff with sufficient experience and expertise. As a result, responsibilities for subjects have been revised. Subject leaders have only recently taken these on and some need time and support to develop their management skills. Some of this is recognised within the school improvement plan but other aspects such as individual confidence will take time to develop. Job descriptions have been written as recommended in the previous inspection but teachers find these daunting and they do need to be looked at again. The headteacher has given significant amounts of time to meet with staff and all meetings are carefully followed up with points for action when this is deemed necessary. However, although there has been discussion of the time that co-ordinators need to lead developments in their subjects, there is not a planned programme for this to happen. Given the restrictions that the deficit budget will create (see paragraph 54), such a plan will be more important than usual in determining what needs to be done and when it can be done.

48 Considerable emphasis has been put on collecting test and assessment information. This is now well organised so that the headteacher and co-ordinators can identify strengths and weaknesses in pupils' performance in English, mathematics and science as whole year groups and as individuals. Information is always presented with high quality, making graphs and data easier to understand. The school recognises that the alternative strategies for looking for strengths and weaknesses in order to plan improvements are not as well developed.

49 The headteacher and governors have the capacity and determination to move the school forward. Since the previous inspection that identified serious weaknesses, there has been a considerable investment of time from within the school and from external support into observing lessons to see what can be improved in the classroom. There is evidence to show that the advice that has been given and the strategies for improvement have been effective; for example, teaching and standards in infants were judged unsatisfactory in the previous inspection and good this time. There is also evidence to show that where advice and support did not work, the headteacher and governors have been prepared to take firmer action such as termination of temporary contracts.

50 School development planning is satisfactory. To a large extent, the priorities have been dictated by the results of previous inspections. Although raising the standards that pupils reach is regarded as important, this is not always stated strongly enough in the written plan. For example, keeping class sizes small is a priority on the plan but this is really a strategy for raising standards rather than a priority in itself. Similarly, although good standards are implicit, the aims of the school are more strongly focused on values and attitudes.

51 Governors meet their statutory requirements well with one exception. They produce an annual report but do not routinely send all of it to parents. Instead, parents are made aware that it is available and that they can look at it in school. This does not fully meet the statutory requirement. Governors have set up good structures to check on how well the school is doing; for example, a committee meets monthly to review the school development plan with the headteacher and to make any necessary amendments.

52 The support for newly qualified teachers is satisfactory. A concentration on raising standards in English, mathematics and science has meant that most teaching observations have been in those areas and this has missed individual weaknesses in other subjects. Similarly, the induction of teachers new to the school is satisfactory. Subject leaders being new to their responsibilities and preparation for inspection has meant that not enough time has been given to seeing what help teachers new to the school have needed. However, subject leaders have been asking colleagues to say what they need so that the school can provide support.

53 Parents at the pre-inspection meeting spoke warmly of the good ethos of the school. This is certainly the case and the headteacher sets a model of care and concern for pupils that creates the warm and friendly atmosphere. Parents also said that the environment of the school had improved 'massively' in the last few years. Classrooms are clean, bright and follow the school's policy for making them into active learning environments. However, the headteacher and governors are still very much aware of areas both inside and out that need to be improved. Outdoor play facilities for the reception class have not yet been created but the most urgent need at present in terms of its effect on pupils' education is the state of the floor in the main hall where some of the floor boards lift in damp weather, making the surface uneven and unsuitable for physical education lessons.

54 Up to this year, the school has balanced its budget within each year with small surpluses to carry forward. However, there has been a marked reduction in income for the present year because of falling pupil numbers. This means that the school has agreed a deficit budget with the local education authority in order to protect pupils' education. There is little flexibility in the allocation of available funds once essential costs have been met. The educational priorities that are identified in the school development plan are appropriately funded and specific grant used properly for its designated purpose. The school has made a conscious decision to provide extra funding from its overall budget, to ensure good levels of support for pupils with special educational needs. Governors have a clear understanding of the financial situation and make sure that the school's limited resources are effectively managed. Long-term plans indicate that the deficit which currently exists should be cleared, and governors are prepared to take whatever action is needed in the future to secure a firm financial footing for the school. The principles of best value are understood and applied well, especially in relation to paying for supplies and services. The budget is closely monitored to ensure that expenditure is on target and systems of financial control are efficient and effective. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

55 In order to improve the standards that pupils reach and improve the quality of education further, the headteacher and governors should address the following points.

(1) Raise standards

In English by:-

- Ensuring that higher attaining pupils are fully challenged all of the time.
- Establishing a more structured programme for teaching speaking and listening skills.
- Promoting reading for pleasure with older pupils and continuing to promote the application of literacy skills across the curriculum.
- Improving the teaching of handwriting skills.

Paragraphs 77-88

In mathematics in juniors by:-

- Ensuring that teachers who are insecure with the subject have opportunity to develop their skills and knowledge.
- Ensuring that all pupils are working at the right level for them to make progress.
- Using comments in marking that set pupils the means to improve.

Paragraphs 90-94

In science in juniors by:-

- Ensuring equally good coverage of all areas of the science curriculum.
- Ensuring that teachers plan to challenge the higher attaining pupils.

Paragraphs 95-98

In ICT by:

- Continuing to provide a wide range of ICT experiences.

Paragraphs 123-124

(2) Develop the management skills of teachers with subject responsibilities by:-

- Discussing the different ways that can be used to find out what is happening in their subjects and ensuring that the full range is used.
- Planning a programme that will give them some time to undertake their responsibilities.

Paragraphs 47, 54, 88, 94, 100, 114, 122, 127.

Other smaller issues that the governors should consider in their plan for improvement include:-

Measures to involve parents more fully in the life of the school. *paragraph 46*

Improving the hall floor, and outdoor play facilities for reception class children. *paragraph 53*

Ensuring that pupils with behaviour difficulties do not miss out on some learning. *paragraphs 11, 28*

Sending out the governors' annual report to all parents. *paragraph 51*

Revising support arrangements for new teachers. *paragraph 52*

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	60
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	27

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	7	29	17	4	0	0
Percentage	2	12	50	29	7	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 nearly two percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YN – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	26	302
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	40

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YN – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	5
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	1	41

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	12
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	35

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.3
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.5
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	26	25	51

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	25	25	26
	Girls	23	23	23
	Total	48	48	49
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	94 (80)	94 (92)	96 (92)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	25	26	26
	Girls	23	23	22
	Total	48	49	48
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	94 (86)	96 (92)	94 (98)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	45	36	81

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	24	19	29
	Girls	23	14	25
	Total	47	33	54
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	58 (71)	41 (60)	67 (78)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	21	19	29
	Girls	23	13	25
	Total	44	32	54
Percentage of pupils	School	54 (67)	40 (67)	67 (80)

at NC level 4 or above	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)
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Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	299	15	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	2	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	1	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: YN– Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	13
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.5
Average class size	21.5

Education support staff: YR– Y6

Total number of education support staff	18
Total aggregate hours worked per week	276.5

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2
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	£
Total income	852,798
Total expenditure	850,617
Expenditure per pupil	2,233
Balance brought forward from previous year	7,566
Balance carried forward to next year	9,747

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	27.5
Number of pupils per FTE adult	13

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	8.5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	7.7

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	302
Number of questionnaires returned	40

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	75	25	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	70	30	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	40	45	5	0	10
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	35	53	5	5	3
The teaching is good.	55	35	0	0	10
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	38	40	15	8	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	70	25	0	5	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	78	20	0	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	28	53	13	8	0
The school is well led and managed.	33	55	0	5	8
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	55	40	0	0	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	25	38	13	8	18

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

56 Children in the Foundation Stage (nursery and reception classes) work towards the nationally expected early learning goals. They are given work that is stimulating, interesting and of a good quality. This motivates all children, including those with special educational needs, to learn well. By the time children leave nursery to enter full-time education, they are working at, or slightly above, the nationally expected levels for children of their age. By the end of reception, most children are likely to have reached most of the early learning goals and some children will be working within the early levels of the National Curriculum. This is due to good teaching in all areas of learning. A real strength is the effective teamwork. The nursery nurses and classroom support assistants are fully involved in teaching and bring much enthusiasm and skill to the children's learning. They work very well with the children, for example by careful questioning and by developing vocabulary. Every opportunity is taken to reinforce numeracy and literacy skills, and this helps the children to make good progress in all areas of work.

57 The nursery accommodation is of good quality and includes good, secure outdoor facilities which the staff use well. Although the reception class, which is in another part of the school, is large enough for the number of children in the autumn term, space is limited after Easter when all the children have been admitted to the class. The room does not have a secure area for outdoor play which can be accessed from the classroom. The children use the nursery outside area, but only in the summer. Therefore, for most of the school year, reception children have a restricted curriculum for outdoor play.

Personal and social development

58 Children achieve well and make good progress in this area of learning because teachers have high expectations and plan specific activities to promote these skills. The children quickly get to know the regular routines and take turns well. In nursery, older children provide good role models for younger children. They take part willingly, for example, at tidy-up time because they have learnt that working together makes the task easier. On admission, children soon realise that good behaviour is expected. Staff praise good behaviour and explain calmly why certain behaviours are not acceptable, like shouting out or taking somebody else's belongings. As a result, children show good levels of self-discipline at this young age.

59 Similar routines are in place in reception, so that the children are aware of expectations in terms of behaviour, tidying up and responsibility for making choices. For example, only a small group can work at the water tray at any one time. When all coloured bands are being worn by children, others know they will have to wait their turn. Independence is encouraged in the nursery and expected in the reception class.

60 Relationships are very positive in the warm, caring classrooms and play a significant part in the children's learning. Most children enter the nursery full of enthusiasm and are keen to become involved in the exciting range of activities. They enjoy their work and do it confidently. They respond positively to new experiences, such as wrapping Christmas parcels for Santa's sleigh, programming a computer floor device or making Christmas shapes using play dough and biscuit cutters.

61 The children in the nursery are mature for their age and the group due to move on is set tasks which will prepare them for reception class. This learning is well planned with all

staff so that once in reception, learning is consolidated and taken further. Registration and snack time are used as learning time where the staff celebrate and share successes with all the children. Reception children take a full part in school assemblies.

Communication, language and literacy

62 Children in the nursery are reaching the steps set for their age. By the end of the reception class, most children have achieved the early learning goals and are working within level 1 of the National Curriculum. They make good progress because of good teaching.

63 The children speak with increasing confidence because the staff engage in almost continual conversation with them. They chat, question, and encourage the children to extend what they say. Nursery and reception classrooms are rich environments for promoting the use of language. Staff use every opportunity to develop vocabulary, speaking, listening and writing. The children initiate their own conversations because they are interested in the well-planned activities, as they play – for example, in the post office or in Father Christmas’s outside grotto in the nursery or the Penshurst Toy Hospital in reception.

64 The children listen well to class stories such as *Kipper’s Birthday*, joining in when they can. In the reception class, higher attaining children can identify the names and sounds of certain letters – n, p, g, t – and can identify what sounds are heard at the end of certain words. They are also able to sort objects onto letter groups. Clear labels, descriptions and pictures are prominently displayed and used to encourage the development of early reading skills in both classrooms,

65 Children use the book areas independently to ‘read’ books and are developing a good interest in books and stories. Children use the writing areas to address parcels and cards for the Christmas post or create get-well cards for patients in the toy hospital. Outside literacy time, teachers provide many well-chosen experiences to enhance children’s skills, especially in speaking and listening, such as children in reception listing ingredients for a ‘Yucky’ or ‘Yummy’ cake. Children take books home to read or share with adults.

Mathematical development

66 The children’s attainment in mathematics is average. They experience a wealth of opportunities to use mathematics in practical ways and across other areas of learning. In reception, for example, children opened the Advent Calendar after a weekend and counted up to the date and then further on. Nursery children are given actual boxes of different sizes to try to find out which will fit together and they know the names of a square and circle. In reception, children also know the names of a rectangle, they can order big to small and higher ability children are able to count and order to 20. Mathematical activities are always available. During play activities, for example, children take their first steps towards understanding measuring weight when they use balances to weigh a variety of Christmas parcels. Whilst biscuit making, vocabulary linked to shape is emphasised. Reception children begin to think about estimation. In the reception class, the numeracy strategy is gradually introduced, and builds well on the practical work done earlier.

67 Nursery children take part in baking, where ingredients are weighed out and the number of eggs in a box are counted. In reception, children use ‘more than’ and ‘less than’ when working at a ‘grabbing game’. Staff encourage children to use mathematical vocabulary as they explain their methods. Much attention is given in both classes to consolidating children’s learning through play situations. This ensures children are fully engaged in their learning and excited about the outcomes. For example, they use different shaped packets

from home to weigh and wrap in the Post Office, they calculate the cost of items on the café menu and they sort numbered teddy cards.

68 In nursery and reception, teaching is good, offering children opportunities to consolidate previous learning and extend their mathematical thinking. By the end of the reception year, most children are likely to achieve the early learning goals in this aspect of development and some will be working at a higher level.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

69 Most children attain above average standards by the end of the reception year. The children make good progress in their learning because staff plan an interesting range of activities which help children to learn about the world about them in a variety of ways. For example, they experiment outside using water and guttering to investigate flowing water, and use baking activities to investigate changes that take place when ingredients are mixed together and cooked. In reception, children record their observations with an adult scribing their comments. Such activities form the foundations for more advanced investigative work later in the year. They use plastic mirrors and everyday shiny kitchen equipment to study reflections. They investigate sound and try to wrap up an alarm clock to discover whether the alarm would still be heard.

70 All children have good access to computers. They control the mouse well, making pictures of owls in reception. With the help of adults, they make a robotic toy move in the nursery. Older children can create a pattern using a mouse, change painting or drawing tools, change brush size, colour or texture and try to write their names.

71 Children take part well in discussions that raise an awareness of their own traditions and those of other cultures. They participate in birthday celebrations and study Guru Nanak's birthday, as well as a Japanese Festival of childhood. Reception children also study other faiths by discussing Hinduism and the festival of Diwali. This helps them to respect the views of others and raises their awareness of the importance of belonging to a group. Children also learn about people from other countries as they make food such as pizzas and chapattis.

Physical development

72 Children reach satisfactory standards by the end of the reception year. They learn quickly and make good progress because they participate in structured and purposeful activities both indoors and outdoors. In nursery, they benefit from good, secure outdoor play areas and the use of the hall. Children in reception use the outdoor place area during the summer but make effective use of the adjacent school hall all year round. The children enjoy outdoor activities because they are so varied and interesting. They use large wheeled toys and follow the marked roadway capably. They use the balancing and climbing equipment and use the play house, as well as created areas such as the tent used as Father Christmas's grotto.

73 Reception children use the playground for their outdoor play as well as the large school grounds. They are able to run, crawl, jump and hide, so they have plenty of daily exercise. All Foundation Stage children use the school hall for physical activity. They have to change themselves and fold their clothes. This is an important aspect of their social development. Once ready, they are able to use the space well, running, hopping and walking. Direct teaching of such skills enables children to make good progress in the development of their physical skills.

74 In the classrooms, children are given plenty of opportunity to develop hand and eye co-ordination. They manipulate the computer mouse and mould play dough. They are supervised closely so that they acquire a correct pencil grip when learning to write. When they are ready, they cut paper with scissors, wrap parcels and use small tools such as sieves and tubes. Most children are on course to meet the early learning goals in this area of learning and many will surpass them.

Creative development

75 The children's attainment in creative development is above the levels expected. Their progress is good because they have access to excellent daily activities, and the older class builds on the sure foundations established in nursery. The youngest children create, draw and paint Christmas cards, they print using rollers and they mix colour to look at varying paint tones. The resources provided in the nursery to promote learning and to motivate children in this area are a strength. Such high quality activities are continued in reception. Children use wax crayons and colour washes for wax resist work, coloured play dough for modelling and special drawing pencils to draw fruits from a variety of countries. Children are taught basic skills and techniques well and this has a good impact on the scope and quality of their work. Musical opportunities are provided through singing and assemblies.

76 Children's creative skills are developed further by the provision of a wide range of activities in the role-play areas. Children use resources imaginatively. Reception children play and create situations in the toy hospital making the most of the 'medical' equipment that is on offer. Staff talk to the children as they play to develop their ideas and to encourage their understanding of the need to share and help others.

ENGLISH

77 Standards in English are above average, representing good achievement in the infants. They are below average but satisfactory in the juniors because older pupils have had more to catch up. Reading is better than writing. Standards by the end of Year 2 have improved substantially since the previous inspection because teaching is better and teachers know exactly what their pupils can do and what they need to learn next. Although standards by Year 6 are still below average, and test results have been very disappointing, progress through the junior classes is now satisfactory. It would be even better if teachers planned more carefully to meet the needs of the brighter pupils in each teaching group. The school has made great strides in linking English teaching with some other subjects – most notably history and ICT – and this is well set to be a real strength in future.

78 Test results at the end of Year 2 were unsatisfactory in the last inspection, but since then have improved year on year so that they are now better than in most schools. Younger pupils make good progress to achieve very well in their Year 2 tests, with over half reaching the higher level 3 in reading in 2002, reflecting their good comprehension skills. Results at the end of Year 6, in contrast, have declined over the last three years and are now lower than at the time of the last inspection. Standards in 2002 were well below average with almost half the pupils failing to reach the expected level 4. However, because a school priority had been to challenge the brighter pupils, more achieved the higher level 5 than in previous years. Past weaknesses in teaching contributed to the overall decline and the year group taking the tests in 2002 included a high proportion of pupils with special needs or low ability. Most of the problems in basic skills' teaching highlighted in the last inspection have now been addressed and standards are beginning to rise. Previous targets have not been achieved, but those for 2003, whilst still below average, are more realistic and the school expects to reach them with around two thirds of the Year 6 pupils achieving level 4.

79 Over time the performance of boys has improved relative to girls and they are now achieving better than girls in Year 2 and Year 6 tests. This reflects the deliberate actions of the school, for example in improving the range of reading materials, including non-fiction and a children's newspaper, acquired to interest the boys. Pupils with special educational needs are identified early and, because they are given extra support, make good progress in the infants and juniors.

80 Standards in speaking and listening are around average in Years 2 and 6, and pupils make satisfactory progress. Although not planned as systematically as reading and writing, teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to experience speaking and listening in a range of contexts. Particularly successful is the frequent use of 'talking partners' in lessons. By Year 2, almost all pupils show interest in sharing ideas with others, using appropriate vocabulary. For example, when using whiteboards to list events in the story of *The Frog Prince*, pairs of pupils talked about the words they needed, including imperative verbs, listening well to each other's ideas. By Year 6, they can adapt their speaking to suit circumstances, as in creating a dialogue for a scene from *Oliver Twist* when most pupils showed understanding of the differences between standard English and dialect. Older pupils can express opinions and listen to others' ideas, although sometimes lacking confidence in using specialist vocabulary or adventurous language to make their meaning clear. This is reflected in the written work of all but the highest attaining pupils.

81 Standards in reading are above average by Year 2. Almost all pupils reach at least the expected level because the teaching is well balanced to include a solid grounding in reading skills, whilst also developing a love of books and literature. Many, including the slower readers, have favourite authors, know the difference between fiction and non-fiction and can read with expression and understanding. One boy, for example, startled an inspector when, despite still needing to follow the words with his finger, changed his voice to exclaim "Oh no!" as intended by the author. Higher attaining pupils have good independent reading skills and can talk knowledgeably about characters or plot in a story.

82 Progress in reading slows in Years 3 to 6, although almost all pupils make satisfactory progress and standards are close to average. Pupils can read a range of texts and higher attainers know how to skim and scan to find key information. They can interrogate books and, increasingly, the Internet, to find things out, but some are not confident in using the reference library and quite a few have lost their enthusiasm for books. The school has recognised the need to improve comprehension skills, such as inference and deduction, and some well-focused teaching is raising standards.

83 Writing skills, including spelling, are satisfactory in both the infants and juniors although standards by Year 6 are still below average. Pupils learn to write in a growing range of forms, such as the instructional writing that has featured heavily in the infants this term, and play scripts, developed well in Year 6. Handwriting and presentation are weaker, reflecting inconsistent teaching and expectations in different parts of the school. Because of the very good links with history, literacy skills are developed well outside English lessons. For example, infants have used dictionaries to put together a glossary of words to help in their study of Florence Nightingale. An impressive project on Victorian England has enabled Year 6 pupils to write empathetically about children's life at the time and to get to know the work of Charles Dickens. Whilst a small number of the higher attaining pupils show vigour and variety in their writing, they generally lack confidence in using complex sentences or the precise and imaginative language needed to reach the higher level 5.

84 Teaching is now good in the infants, a substantial improvement since the previous inspection and it remains satisfactory in the juniors. No unsatisfactory lessons were seen

during the inspection. The support given to pupils with special educational needs is good, but sometimes the needs of higher attaining pupils are not met. The National Literacy Strategy is used flexibly in all classes, with additional discrete sessions such as handwriting, spelling, or extended writing. Sometimes the plenary sessions at the end of the literacy hour are too rushed, and the learning is not reinforced or extended as it might be.

85 Throughout the school, lesson objectives are clear and shared with the children so that they know what they are expected to learn. This is successfully combined with group and individual targets, directly based on the National Curriculum, that help pupils to focus on what they need to do to achieve the next level. The marking of written work is usually good, giving precise feedback about strengths and weaknesses. Displays are used well in all classrooms and the long corridor, to celebrate successful work and as a resource for pupils' use.

86 Pupils are grouped according to ability for literacy lessons, using additional staffing to reduce class sizes. Great care is taken to ensure that all groups cover similar material. The arrangements are quite complex and not all staff take full advantage of the situation. For instance, on occasions too much teaching is to the whole set, missing opportunities for more direct teaching of individuals or groups where numbers are relatively low. Whilst much of the teaching is lively and interesting – for example in a Year 1/2 lesson where pupils were fascinated when the teacher revealed a simple model illustrating the Frog Prince story – the pace in some older classes can be pedestrian and pupils work diligently but without enthusiasm. Teachers' subject knowledge is good.

87 The curriculum for reading and writing is built around the National Literacy Strategy. Additional teaching, usually by trained classroom assistants, is provided for small groups of pupils, using national materials to boost specific skills. Currently there is no structured curriculum for covering or assessing speaking and listening. The assessment of reading and writing is thorough and the information gained is being used well to improve the curriculum and teaching.

88 The co-ordinator has very recently taken full responsibility for the subject following a period shadowing the previous, experienced subject manager. She has already begun to influence priorities based on a growing understanding of what is happening throughout the school so that leadership and management are satisfactory. A sensible action plan is in place with the further raising of standards as the central theme. Having completed a period with substantial external support, the school now needs to implement its own programme for finding out what is working well in the English curriculum and what needs to be improved. Overall, the school has made reasonable progress since the last inspection.

MATHEMATICS

89 Test results at the end of Year 2, which were well below average in the last inspection, have improved so that this year, 2002, they are better than in most schools. Younger pupils make good progress to achieve very well in their Year 2 tests, with almost a half reaching the higher level 3. Reasons for the improvement are that pupils are getting a good start in nursery and reception which is built on through good teaching in the infants. For example, current Year 2 pupils, at the beginning of this year, have a good knowledge of numbers to 100 and are beginning to develop an understanding of the place value of each digit. They can double and halve numbers and understand 'more than' and 'less than' as shown in the mental and oral part of their mathematics lessons. They know the names of a suitable range of two and three-dimensional shapes. All pupils are learning to use mathematical vocabulary correctly because teachers are precise in what they say. Pupils develop good skills in measurement through practical activities.

90 Results in the national tests at the end of Year 6 have fallen over the last three years and are now lower than at the time of the last inspection. Standards in 2002 were well below the average for all schools and below those of similar ones. Less than half of the pupils reached the expected level 4 and hardly any gained the higher level 5. However, the school's assessment information shows that these pupils made satisfactory progress because a third had special educational needs and because the starting point for all of them was much lower than in previous and subsequent years. This same information shows that the measures taken to improve standards, combined with good teaching, are having a good effect and year on year, the standards that pupils reach are getting higher. This shows markedly in the test results for Year 2 last year and in the work of pupils up to Year 4. In Years 5 and 6 standards are still below those expected nationally although better than those in previous years. This is in part because of pupils' previous starting points and in part because there are weaknesses in teaching in Year 5, and the sound teaching in Year 6 does enough to bring the pupils back to a satisfactory level of progress and achievement but lacks the dynamism to lift them to a higher level.

91 By Year 6, most pupils are developing a sound knowledge of numbers. They can add, subtract, multiply and divide competently, both on paper and in their heads. There are, however, a number of pupils in the lowest set who have not acquired a secure knowledge of simple numbers. This makes it very difficult for them to apply the knowledge to larger problems. For example, pupils do not know simple multiplication facts; therefore, they make errors when multiplying with tens and units. Most pupils understand how different types of graphs can be used and can describe which is the most suitable. All find it more difficult to decide how to tackle a problem that is expressed in words. Similarly, when given an investigation, pupils lack the skill to begin but once shown how to start, they respond with great enthusiasm and interest. More able pupils have the capacity to leap to more logical solutions, but others work more randomly so that solutions are slower to appear.

92 Teaching from Years 1 to 4 is consistently good and occasionally inspirational. This makes pupils respond with enthusiasm and enjoy learning. Teachers set a brisk pace to the lessons and plan good activities that give pupils sufficient practice to acquire skills without giving them too much and losing their interest. As a result, pupils are doing well. They are acquiring secure skills and knowledge in all aspects of mathematics. Teaching in Year 5 was unsatisfactory. The two lessons seen had different weaknesses. In one, the teacher's inaccurate use of language led to confusion in the pupils' understanding so that they did not know what they had to do. Although there were three levels of tasks, these did not always match the pupils' needs so that some had too little to do and others found the work too difficult. In the other lesson, initial problems were not sorted out so that throughout the rest of the lesson too many pupils were not listening, not taking an active part in the activities and making too little progress. Teaching in Year 6 is controlled and steady so that pupils work neatly and calmly. However, there is a need for the more able pupils to work at a quicker pace and with a greater level of challenge so that they can show what they are capable of. Pupils' written work sometimes discloses a mismatch between the personal targets that are set at the front of the book and the level of challenge. For example, a pupil whose target was to achieve level 3 and another whose target was at the top end of level 4 had both completed fraction work that was exactly the same. Marking, particularly in the juniors, is too variable. Sometimes work is marked carefully with useful comments about what has been done well or where a pupil needs to improve; sometimes very good comments are written so untidily that they give mixed messages about what the teacher wants.

93 The school uses setting arrangements in all year groups. These work efficiently in most year groups but were seen to cause problems in Year 5. The need to sort out sufficient chairs for a larger group got one lesson off to a bad start because the pupils were unsettled, a little noisy and not ready to listen when the lesson began.

94 The co-ordinator took on the responsibility for mathematics in September and has done a great deal of work in this short time. This includes analysing information from the national tests and from the test papers so that the staff know where pupils are not performing so well at Year 6. However, she has not had time to start looking at other types of evidence such as finding out what pupils are doing in classes and how well they understand their work. She has identified where there were shortages of resources, such as too few calculators, and has begun to improve the quality and range of mathematical materials.

SCIENCE

95 The results in the 2002 teacher assessments for Year 2 pupils are in line with the national average, with an above average number of pupils attaining the higher level 3. In the national tests for Year 6 pupils, results in 2002 were well below the national average and below those for similar schools. The number of pupils who achieved the higher grade was also well below average. Results overall have been consistently well below average and have remained at more or less the same level in the last three years. The standards observed in lessons, discussion with pupils and the scrutiny of their work indicate work that is closer to the average but still below, with not enough pupils working at the higher level to lift the judgement.

96 By Year 2, pupils know that a range of household appliances uses mains electricity or batteries and that power is measured in volts. They know that an electric circuit must be complete for a bulb to light. Some pupils understood that an additional bulb in a circuit causes the bulbs to dim. When investigating a range of different materials, pupils learned that light passes through some materials and 'bounces' off shiny ones. Some pupils understood the process of reflection using mirrors but could not explain how reflection could be used.

97 Pupils in Year 6 showed a sound understanding of the work they had covered recently and knowledge that was broadly in line with the expectations for their age. Often, however, they lack depth in their learning. For example, pupils knew about the process of dissolving and successfully predicted that brown sugar would take longer to dissolve in water than castor sugar and icing sugar. They carried out an investigation with care and recorded results in a table. They transferred this data to a block graph and read results efficiently. They know that liquids are measured in millilitres and solids in grams. They understand a 'fair test' and know that one variable can be changed in an experiment. They know that plants reproduce and that seeds are dispersed in a variety of ways. They are unable to recall knowledge of the heart or the skeleton, however. All pupils are enthusiastic when learning about electricity and know that metals conduct heat and electricity. They were not clear how to incorporate a buzzer into the circuit or the role of a switch in a circuit. They know that evaporation results in solutions forming crystals and that the size of crystals depends on the rate of evaporation. Pupils' knowledge of the planetary systems is good and they know that Pluto is the farthest planet away from earth. They know that the moon orbits around the earth but they are not secure in how long it takes. Pupils know that a force is measured in Newtons but cannot explain how a ship floats. Pupils record their work effectively and use mathematics well, for example in measuring and recording through graphs.

98 The quality of teaching is satisfactory, overall, with evidence of good teaching in some lessons. Teachers plan lessons carefully, although there is often not enough detail about how they will stretch the more able. They provide good opportunities for investigative work which is a major improvement since the previous inspection. Teachers' subject knowledge is secure. Pupils' attitudes are very positive and they report that they enjoy practical work. They work equally well with a partner and in groups. Behaviour is often very good and generally pupils work hard and concentrate on the tasks set.

99 Science has been given a higher profile throughout the school and a thriving club takes place each week. A science week planned in the school was successful. Resources are satisfactory and although computers are available in some lessons, there is limited evidence of their use in pupils' work.

100 A recently appointed co-ordinator is keen to raise standards and has implemented better procedures for checking and recording pupils' progress. Staff development has emphasised investigative work and developing methods for pupils to record their observations. Some checking of teaching takes place. Evidence in pupils' work indicates that teachers can be over generous in grading pupils' work. A marking policy is now in place but the marking of work is not always helpful, for example in suggesting how pupils could improve their work. Time for teaching science has been increased and although all areas of the curriculum are covered, some planning for topics such as life processes and living things lacks depth.

ART AND DESIGN

101 Evidence from the two lessons observed and other sources shows that throughout the school, pupils' attainment is satisfactory. Pupils in the infants make sound progress because the teachers give attention to identifying the learning experiences in each lesson. For example, pupils show satisfactory skills when they create drawings using a small frame placed on the work of masters. They undertake preparatory work finding out the tones created by different drawing pencils and use these soundly in their work.

102 In the junior classes, pupils create wallpapers and wrapping papers using computers to create repeated patterns. Their skills in making patterns are satisfactory and the use of computers works well in this context to promote a quicker understanding of how a tile can be used to create individual or flowing patterns. Pupils study, and make, satisfactory replicas of the styles of Salvador Dali, Magritte and Andy Warhol. Year 5 pupils work with still life arrangements and Year 6 pupils integrate their art work with the history topic of the Victorians by making good observational drawings of Victorian artefacts. Years 2 to 6 use sketch books and, in the classes of youngest pupils, samples of work are kept or photographed for records.

103 The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory throughout the school. Teachers use correct terminology and resources are well prepared and ready for use. Lessons have a brisk pace and pupils are challenged by skill, creativity and purpose. Classroom support is often focused on pupils with learning needs and this enables them to make satisfactory progress. Lesson planning reflects progression in learning from one lesson to another.

104 Pupils show much interest for art and design. They work quickly and carefully and are eager to achieve a good result. They make good use of their time and behave satisfactorily. They show confidence and a willingness to try new challenges.

105 The art co-ordinator has been in post only since September 2002. She has identified some shortages in resources and the need to formulate procedures to check and record pupils' progress. The school follows the published government scheme but sensibly uses a two-year cycle in order to avoid repetition in the mixed-aged classes.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

106 Insufficient evidence was available during the inspection to make judgements about standards or the quality of teaching. The subject was a strength in the last inspection and the small amount of evidence seen suggests that good standards have been maintained at least in some classes, despite the school's focus on other subjects and a recent changeover in arrangements for co-ordinating the subject.

107 In Years 1 and 2, pupils have learned to design and make a wheeled vehicle using axles and a suitable range of joining techniques in card and wood. They started the topic by thinking about different types of vehicle. This enabled them to consider what their own designs would need to include, many showing a good understanding of fitness for purpose. The finished designs and models were of a good quality, with computer skills being used effectively to decorate the vehicles with name plates, using a good range of different text effects and colours. Work in English on writing instructions gives pupils a good opportunity to consider the stages in making a jam sandwich.

108 In Year 3/4 a topic on light includes provision to design a fantasy light. Pupils further develop their understanding of designing to a specific brief. They show creativity in their ideas and begin to consider suitable materials. In one lesson the teacher's skilful handling of a brainstorming session enabled all pupils to participate enthusiastically in thinking about different types of light. Many are able to produce a well-labelled diagram and some are beginning to consider ways of improving a design, for example by providing a better on/off switch. Throughout the school, teachers make good links with other subjects, such as in the construction of musical instruments in Year 5.

109 Teaching shows a good understanding of the stages in the designing, making and evaluating process, following a balanced scheme of work, adapted to suit the current makeup of classes. Sufficient time is allocated to allow the development of ideas in sufficient depth with good opportunities for pupils to show individuality and creativity. The subject co-ordinator has only recently taken on the post and has, therefore, had little opportunity to evaluate or improve the subject.

GEOGRAPHY

110 Standards are similar to those noted in the previous inspection, being average by Year 2. Year 6 pupils will undertake their geography modules on rivers and mountainous environments later in the year. Work in earlier years suggests that by Year 6 standards are likely to be in line with expectations but there is not enough evidence at the moment for a secure judgement to be made.

111 Pupils in Year 1 learn about the local area, and show a sound knowledge of different types of homes, facilities and features. They begin to study maps, create their own treasure maps, and start to draw plans using dolls' house furniture to help them understand how to record in two dimensions. In Year 2, through work contrasting Hessle with another location, that of the coastal resort of Bridlington, pupils show a sound awareness of how geographical differences affect lifestyles. They are beginning to grasp concepts such as town, village, country and location and to explain differences in human and physical terms.

112 Pupils' work suggests that junior pupils make satisfactory progress in the subject overall. In Years 3 and 4 they demonstrate a sound understanding of simple similarities and differences between Hessle and an Indian village and the positive and negative aspects of living in such a remote environment. Year 5 pupils undertake a study of water and the necessity of it within our daily lives. Again, a global perspective is used with looking at the need for water in various parts of the world.

113 Although only two lessons were seen during the inspection period, other evidence indicates that teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. In one lesson, the teacher brought enthusiasm and creativity to the lesson, using discussion work effectively so that pupils worked well in pairs, discussing jobs in the home usually undertaken by women. The class teacher challenged the pupils' view of the role of women in the home and knew her pupils well enough to cite instances from their lives where roles have been different. The pace was brisk and the teacher had high expectations of the pupils in terms of standards of work and behaviour. In the other lesson seen, weaknesses in classroom organisation and control led to pupils not concentrating well enough nor doing as much work as they should have done. Teachers help pupils' understanding by making good links to other subjects, for example by including historical and artistic perspectives, listening to stories related to the topic or using the Internet to discover more about the work they are studying. Pupils have satisfactory attitudes towards the subject. They can work hard and maintain keen interest but also work slowly when the teaching is less effective.

114 The geography co-ordinator has made a satisfactory start in promoting the subject. She carries out informal discussions with colleagues to discover the standard of geography in the school. To date she has not been given time to monitor the quality of teaching and learning in geography throughout the school and a formal recording system for the subject has yet to be devised. Scrutiny of work has yet to be carried out on a regular basis and a policy document has yet to be produced.

HISTORY

115 Standards in history are similar to those found in most schools. As in the previous inspection, pupils make satisfactory progress in both the infants and juniors and the great majority reach the expected levels by the end of Years 2 and 6. Some particularly effective work in Year 6 enables all pupils, including those with special educational needs, to study a period such as the Victorians in depth. Good links with other subjects, notably English, help pupils of all abilities to make sound and sometimes good gains in their knowledge, although the acquisition of historical skills is less secure.

116 By Year 2, pupils can recognise differences between present-day life and the past. For example, they know that toys have changed since their parents and grandparents were children. One pupil wrote, "My granddad Alan used to race on his bogie down hills with friends", indicating an interest in the vocabulary of the time. Higher attaining pupils can describe some of the causes of change, for example explaining that Victorians used bathing machines because it was considered rude to undress in public, or the development of new materials such as plastics in the manufacture of toys. They are interested in figures from the past such as Florence Nightingale and are able to trace their personal history from babyhood.

117 By Year 6 most pupils have a secure knowledge of several time periods such as the Romans and most can place these on a broad timeline. They can link cause and effect as in the reasons the smaller Roman army was able to defeat the Celtic troops. Some progress is made in finding and comparing historical sources. For instance, a Year 3/4 topic on 'Invaders and Settlers' began with discussion about how archaeologists look for evidence and the oldest pupils used census information to find out about their town. However, because there is no school agreement about the skills to be taught to each year group, other historical skills such as comparing different interpretations of the past or combining a number of sources of information, are less well covered. Increasingly successful use is made of the Internet to access information both at school and at home with well-designed homework activities featuring regularly as part of the teaching.

118 Teaching and learning are satisfactory with some good features. Staff make good use of national guidance in planning lessons with very strong collaboration between parallel classes ensuring equal access and efficient use of planning time and resources. Some projects are enriched by visits, such as the trip to Bridlington in Year 1/2 and the planned visit to Lincoln by Year 3/4 as part of their work on Roman Britain. These contribute well to aspects of pupils' social and cultural development.

119 Where teaching is most successful, as in the Year 6 Victorian topic, pupils are encouraged to find out more about aspects that interest them, recording their findings in a wide range of ways, including attractive booklets, perhaps using the computer. Occasionally worksheets are used indiscriminately, with all pupils working at the same activity, sometimes doing little more than unnecessary colouring-in. In mixed-age classes, too little reference is made in planning or teaching to the separate needs of each year group.

120 Because staff work hard throughout the school to make history lessons practical and interesting, pupils respond with enthusiasm and enjoy the subject. For example, in a Year 3/4 lesson about Boudicca's revolt, almost everyone in the class wanted to read out their ideas about why the Roman's defeated the Celts. Boys showed particular eagerness in talking about battle tactics and the advantages of different weaponry! The school regularly organises history theme days, such as a Roman day or World War II street party. During the inspection, Year 6 enjoyed a Victorian day when they and staff dressed the part, trying out a range of Victorian pastimes that built understanding of, and empathy for, everyday life of the period. The inclusion of a study of Oliver Twist led many pupils to choose to dress as characters from the story, enhancing their literacy skills whilst contributing to their cultural development.

121 Planning does not generally identify precisely enough what is expected of different groups of pupils so that higher and lower attainers usually cover the same ground. In many lessons, 'talking partners' are used effectively to encourage pupils to talk about their ideas before committing them to paper. High quality classroom and corridor displays are used imaginatively to celebrate completed work and as a resource for learning.

122 Displays are also a major source of information for the subject co-ordinator to monitor the history coverage. Some work scrutiny has been completed but, because the subject has not been a recent school priority, checking and measuring the effectiveness of teaching are not well advanced. These are rightly recognised by the co-ordinator as key areas for future development.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

123 The school now has an ICT suite which makes it possible for a whole class to work together to develop specific skills. This is a considerable improvement on the position at the last inspection and this, together with staff training, is a reason why standards are improving. Standards are in line with those found in most schools by Year 2, but still below the national expectations by Year 6.

124 Although Year 6 pupils have had some experience in all of the areas of the ICT curriculum, they have not yet had enough time to develop good skills. Their work is often purposeful because it is linked to other subjects. Pupils are confident in using computers to present their work. They use different styles for effect and include pictures for illustration. Mostly this work is of a straightforward nature, for example producing a newspaper about Victorian times, but it is beginning to be more complex as when pupils include hyperlinks on a biography to give a greater depth of detail. In doing this work, pupils have also researched information from the internet. Pupils talk about creating graphs on the computer and can say which type of graph would be most suitable. They know how to enter data into a spreadsheet but are less secure about using shortcuts such as a formula to make it quicker.

125 Examples of work from other year groups show that pupils have a sound breadth of experience and also that the standards achieved are getting increasingly closer to those expected nationally. For example, Year 5 pupils have used a sensor to collect information on noise levels, Years 3 and 4 pupils have created repeating patterns and pupils in Year 1 have created their own town maps. In a Year 2 English lesson, pupils used computers capably. They were able to load the program they wanted independently and use the keyboard to enter, delete and change text.

126 In both lessons seen the teaching was sound. The ICT technician was particularly helpful in dealing with problems so that teachers could concentrate on teaching. Teachers used the special whiteboard to teach new skills or revise what was covered earlier. Pupils were keen to get on with their work and worked in pairs successfully so that by the end of the lesson most pairs had completed the task of creating a tile and using it to produce a pattern.

127 The co-ordinator, who took up the responsibility in September, has made a good start in finding out what needs to be done to improve standards in the subject. Assessment is not yet fully in place, but she has devised records to show pupils' progress which are to be introduced later in the year.

MUSIC

128 No judgements can be made about standards or teaching. Because of the way music is included in the timetable over the year and within the inspection week, it was not possible to see any class lessons. Teachers' planning indicates that there is a broad and satisfactory curriculum and that sufficient time is given to the subject in the course of the year. There were photographs which showed pupils working together on percussion activities but there was no written or recorded evidence of pupils' work that would help to make judgements about the standards the pupils reach or the quality of teaching. Pupils enjoy singing in large groups in the juniors and follow the teacher's lead well to sing louder or softer. They have learned some technical language in earlier lessons and could remember what was meant by terms such as 'pitch' and 'dynamics'. A number of pupils are learning to play instruments such as violin, cello and percussion and they benefit from the more technical instruction of these lessons.

129 Co-ordination of the subject is satisfactory. As it has not been a priority for development, there are still areas that need to be introduced, such as assessment. The co-ordinator has identified a need for more work to take place, for example through a local bid for inclusion in a Creative Contexts development, that would raise the profile of music in the school. A separate music room detached from the main building is an asset that provides a space for noisy activities to take place without interruption to the rest of the school. There is a good selection of percussion instruments including some that represent other cultures but the co-ordinator has identified a shortage of recorded music.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

130 The floor of the school hall is in poor condition and floor boards lift in damp conditions. When this happens, as it did around the time of the inspection, lessons have to be abandoned. This means that pupils cannot do gymnastics. Because of these problems and timetable difficulties, no lessons were seen in Year 6 and therefore no judgements can be made about the standards that these pupils reach. Fortunately, the school has a smaller dining room/dance hall which is not affected and some lessons can continue.

131 By the end of Year 2, the standards in dance and games are in line with those expected nationally, and pupils achieve satisfactorily. Pupils moved sensitively to music and travelled at different speeds with control. They interpreted a story focus – “Dawn breaking, explore a magic land” – and collaborated well with a partner when devising partner balances. They demonstrate stillness in a balance. The choice of music by the teacher was appropriate and motivated pupils well. In a games lesson, pupils in a mixed Years 1 and 2 class covered a range of skills including throwing, catching, hitting, skipping and dribbling a ball. Most pupils catch a ball successfully and know that they need to pull the ball into their body on receiving the ball. They throw accurately to a partner. They lack control when hitting a ball with a bat. The standards observed were average.

132 Pupils in a mixed-age class of Year 3 and Year 4 performed well in a dance lesson, which focused on body control through a theme of ‘sculptures’. They had a clear understanding of body tension and stillness in balances and composed a simple motif with a partner. They used space well, moving towards and away from a partner. The quality of their work was above average. Pupils in Year 5, however, produced standards in dance which were below average, due to a lack of challenge by the teacher.

133 The quality of teaching varies from very good to unsatisfactory and is satisfactory overall. The one lesson that was unsatisfactory was due to a lack of teacher expertise. Too much emphasis was placed on a recorded, taped lesson in dance and pupils made insufficient progress. The main features of the best lessons were the enthusiasm and subject knowledge of teachers, who challenged pupils appropriately. Good management strategies were used well in both dance and games lessons and pupils maintained a brisk pace. In dance particularly, pupils are given the opportunity to evaluate and improve each other’s performances. Pupils are enthusiastic about their work and co-operate well together. They concentrate on tasks set even in the cold weather experienced in the outdoor games lesson. Behaviour is almost always very good, sometimes excellent.

134 The enthusiastic co-ordinator offers good support to teachers. Schemes of work are in place and include swimming for pupils in Year 4. The curriculum is restricted by the poor quality of the hall floor which affects the provision for gymnastics particularly. There is no system for checking and recording of pupils’ progress. Resources are satisfactory and those for games are good. An early morning football club takes place in the week and both girls and boys are enthusiastic to take part.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

135 Standards are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus by the end of Years 2 and 6. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, are making sound progress across the school.

136 By the end of Year 2, pupils know and have an understanding of stories from the Christian tradition and can recall the stories of Christmas and Easter. They are provided with frequent opportunities for reflection as they consider the impact of their actions and words on others, both in lessons and assemblies. The high quality teaching observed in Year 1 led pupils to a good understanding of the Christian concept of light and Jesus as the light of the world.

137 By the end of Year 6, pupils have a deeper understanding of the importance of religion in the lives of many people. They become increasingly tolerant and reflective about their own behaviour and feelings and those of others. Much of this work is undertaken in 'circle time' where pupils feel at ease in discussing what can be sensitive issues such as friendships, emotions and coping with anger. Years 3 and 4 pupils think about festivals of light. They discover that other faiths celebrate this concept in their religions, including the Jewish festival of Hanukkah. This topic of work culminates in a Christian Christingle service. Year 5 pupils study different aspects of 'Peace'. They appreciate songs, stories and prayers where peace is the central theme, they discuss peace in the world today and they write peace prayers. The meanings of Christmas and Easter are studied in increasing depth as pupils move through Years 3 to 6. By the end of their time in primary school, most pupils have gained a secure understanding of the customs, practices and festivals of Christianity and also have some knowledge about other religions such as Judaism, Islam and Hinduism.

138 Taking all the evidence into account, teaching is good in the infants and satisfactory in junior classes where strengths are balanced by weaknesses. Teachers in the infants maintained a good pace of learning, were constantly checking pupils' progress and made good use of discussion to consolidate and extend pupils' knowledge and understanding. A particular strength was the way in which teachers developed the spiritual and cultural issues within the lessons and pupils displayed tolerance for different beliefs. High expectations by the teachers resulted in a positive response from pupils, who behaved well, were sensitive to the contributions of others and worked hard. These teachers had secure knowledge and their enjoyment of the subject was evident. In a class of older pupils, previous learning was consolidated and pupils' contributions were well received, but there was evidence of lower expectations in terms of demand, presentation and behaviour. This hindered the learning of many pupils. There was little evidence of differences in planning to take account of pupils' needs, for example those with special educational needs.

139 Relationships between teachers and pupils are, on the whole, good, enabling pupils to feel confident about sharing ideas and insights. Teachers usually plan work well, in line with the locally agreed syllabus. The themes and ideas are stimulating and lead to sound levels of learning. The acquisition of resources and artefacts from other faiths and cultures enriches the curriculum.

140 Pupils enjoy the subject and are open and thoughtful in expressing ideas. More importantly, they, and their teachers, focus upon the key moral teachings of Christianity and genuinely try to interpret them in terms of how they should behave and respond to others. As a result, the subject makes a strong contribution to the school's good provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, benefit from teaching which emphasises a practical approach and the importance of discussion.

141 The enthusiastic co-ordinator is providing effective leadership and a clear sense of direction. Her management skills are good and priorities for further development clearly identified. Resource provision is satisfactory and the newly acquired artefacts are beginning to make an impact on the quality of teaching, especially of faiths other than Christianity. As yet the co-ordinator has not been given time to monitor standards across the school and the subject policy has still to be developed.