

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **HACKNESS CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Hackness, Scarborough

LEA area: North Yorkshire

Unique reference number: 121497

Headteacher: Mrs H Leng

Reporting inspector: Susan Walker  
21045

Dates of inspection: 24 – 26 February 2003

Inspection number: 248265

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	5 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Hackness Scarborough
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Rev J Baker
Date of previous inspection:	October 1997

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

## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

This is a small Voluntary Controlled Church of England Primary School for boys and girls. It is situated in the rural village of Hackness in the North Yorkshire National Park, near to the town of Scarborough. There are 54 pupils on roll of whom almost all are of white UK heritage. The pupils come from a mixture of backgrounds. A high proportion come from rural families and come to school by bus from outlying areas. The rest come from larger neighbouring villages and from the town of Scarborough. A tiny number of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs is about average; of these the majority experience moderate learning difficulties. None of the pupils has a statement of special educational need. The attainment of pupils entering the school is broadly average, although there is a spread of ability. Most of the pupils have had pre-school experience at the village playgroup. The school is part of the local cluster of schools that has recently achieved the Investors in People award. The year groups in the school are small and are significantly affected by the high proportion of pupils who join the school midway through the school year.

## **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

Hackness Primary School is an effective and popular school that is providing a good standard of education for all its pupils. The quality of teaching is good and pupils have very good attitudes to their work, benefiting from the rich and varied curriculum. By the age of eleven standards in English, mathematics and science are above average. The school is very well led and managed by the headteacher. The good quality of education offsets the high running costs; the school provides satisfactory value for money.

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

- Most pupils are doing well in English, mathematics and science. They also achieve well in art and music.
- The teaching is stimulating and interesting; consequently pupils have very good attitudes to learning.
- The school is well led and managed by the headteacher.
- The curriculum is rich and varied with particular strengths in the arts.
- The provision for spiritual development is outstanding; provision for moral, social and cultural development is very good enabling pupils to progress well in their personal development.

### **What could be improved**

- The planning for different year groups is not precise enough, especially in the Foundation Stage.
- The presentation of pupils' work should be better.

*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 October 1997, shortly after the appointment of the current headteacher. Since then there has been good overall improvement and most of the weaknesses identified in the previous report have been remedied.

- There has been particular improvement in information and communication technology because the teachers have developed their expertise well in the subject through further training and new resources have been introduced. As a result pupils are now taught the full range of the curriculum and staff are much more confident in their teaching.

- Curricular resources have improved and continue to be replenished and updated, consequently there are no significant shortages.
- Although standards in mathematics are much the same as they were at the time of the previous inspection, depending on the make-up of each year group, there has been improvement in the teaching resulting from the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy and the additional staff training in its use. Teachers are now more confident and there is a broader range of practical work and investigation than was previously the case. Nevertheless, there continues to be a pattern of better achievement in English than in mathematics.
- Formal checks on health and safety are now made regularly.

## STANDARDS

Standards achieved by eleven-year-olds in national tests are not presented here as a table as only nine pupils took the tests in 2002. In this small school results vary considerably from year to year because, with such small numbers, one pupil represents a significant percentage of the total and can distort the overall picture. This can be clearly seen from test results for eleven-year-olds in 2001 and 2002. In 2001 standards in English and science were well above average and above average in mathematics, whilst in 2002 they took a dip, falling to average in English and science but well below average in mathematics. The school's results in 2002 compared with those achieved in similar schools (i.e. schools with pupils from similar socio-economic backgrounds) were below average in English and very low (in the bottom five per cent nationally) in mathematics.

The work of the current Year 6 pupils is above average in English, mathematics and science and pupils are achieving well. Since 1999 test results show a recurring pattern of more variable attainment in mathematics than in English or science, fluctuating between above average at one extreme to well below average at the other. Although results in 2002 were disappointing, the school is well on course to meet its targets for 2003. Apart from the broad spread of attainment in the year group taking the tests last year an important additional factor that adversely affected the results was that of the nine pupils taking the tests, only one had been in the school since the reception class. All the others had joined the school subsequently and therefore had not benefited from continuity in their education. This has been a factor that has affected the school's performance for several years.

The test scores of Year 2 pupils also fluctuate from year to year; in national tests in 2002 standards achieved in reading were well above average, in writing they were above average, but in mathematics they were below average, mirroring the variations seen in Year 6. The work of the current Year 2 pupils is above average in reading, writing and mathematics and pupils are achieving well.

Standards in art and music are above average and most pupils, including those who find learning difficult, achieve well in these subjects. In French, pupils are making very good progress in acquiring a basic vocabulary and 'feel' for the language. In information and communication technology standards are sound, having benefited greatly from improved resources and teachers' expertise. In the reception class pupils make good progress in developing basic skills in reading and writing so that by the time they begin the National Curriculum in Year 1 most have successfully achieved the early learning goals for the Foundation Stage.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils enjoy coming to school and apply themselves well to work. The majority are interested and are keen to learn.



Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Most pupils are responsible and mature as they work and play together. A small minority become distracted when they are not sufficiently motivated.
Personal development and relationships	Good. The pupils respect each other's feelings and many show remarkable insight and sensitivity during discussions. When given opportunities to show initiative they respond well.
Attendance	Satisfactory.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is underpinned by the very good relationships that exist between teachers and pupils. Though the school is small the staff collectively have a broad range of skills to enable them to teach all the subjects well. The overall quality of teaching is good; it is very good or excellent in well over a third of lessons. There is some very good teaching in all classes and no unsatisfactory teaching was seen during the inspection. The teaching for the few younger children in the reception class enables them to make good progress in acquiring early skills in literacy and numeracy but the provision is not always appropriately matched to their stage of development.

Lessons are invariably well paced and interesting, offering a good choice of resources to consolidate learning. The teaching is lively and interesting, with a particular strength in the way teachers question the pupils and orchestrate discussions, providing plenty of scope for pupils to share their own views and ideas, thus promoting confidence and self esteem very well indeed. Strong emphasis is given to the teaching of the basic skills of English and mathematics and the national strategies for literacy and numeracy provide an effective framework upon which staff build well. Skills in reading, writing and mathematics are used well in a range of other subjects. In many lessons, however, the practice of teaching much the same material to pupils of two different year groups simultaneously has the effect of limiting the level of challenge to higher attainers and sometimes providing insufficient support to those pupils who struggle with learning.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. The curriculum gives good emphasis to all subjects and to literacy and numeracy; the arts are particularly well represented. Educational visits, French and optional activities enrich and broaden the curriculum and help to extend achievement significantly whilst nurturing well-rounded pupils. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. The pupils are well integrated into the life of the school and their needs are met appropriately, mainly through the provision of additional adult support.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	A major strength of the school; provision for spiritual development is excellent. Provision for social, moral and cultural development is very good. There is a strong family atmosphere, much valued by parents and underpinned firmly by Christian values.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school provides a caring environment and pupils are well supported in all their needs.

The school provides a good level of information for parents overall, except in the annual reports, which do not fully meet legal requirements because subjects of the National Curriculum are not reported upon separately. They lack sufficient information about how well pupils are making progress or what they need to do to improve.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The school is very well led and efficiently managed by the headteacher. The clear philosophy promoted by the headteacher and shared among the staff results in a strong team. All teachers have several subject responsibilities, which they undertake proficiently.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors make a sound contribution to the effectiveness of the school. They are supportive and meet frequently though they rely too heavily on the headteacher to keep them informed about the school's performance.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Sound. The staff are reflective and are committed to continual improvement. Teaching and learning are monitored well and the school has begun to use data effectively to provide a clear picture of pupils' progress.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Funds are managed thoughtfully to obtain the maximum benefit for the pupils and expenditure is carefully planned to obtain the best value. Finances are controlled effectively.

The school is generously staffed, enabling many pupils to benefit from the small class sizes. Despite recent improvements the accommodation remains cramped, giving the classrooms a cluttered appearance, and there is no hall for physical education lessons or assemblies. The staff manage the shortcomings of the accommodation well; by using the facilities at a neighbouring school they ensure that pupils do not miss out on any part of the curriculum.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children like school</li> <li>• The school has high expectations</li> <li>• The school is well led and managed</li> <li>• The teaching is good</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A small number of parents would not feel comfortable approaching the school with questions or problems</li> <li>• A few parents would like to see more extra-curricular activities.</li> </ul>

Inspection findings support the parents' positive views of the school. Inspection findings do not concur with parental concerns about approaching the school with problems. All staff make themselves available to parents informally at the start and end of each day to discuss any concerns as they arise. Opportunities for more formal interviews inevitably have to be planned in advance with the headteacher to fit round her full teaching commitment. Inspection findings do not concur with concerns about extra-curricular activities. For such a small school the provision is extensive and complements the curriculum well.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL**

**Most pupils are doing well in English, mathematics and science. They also achieve well in art and music.**

1 Although the results in national tests vary from year to year, standards overall in English, mathematics and science are above average. It is clear that over time pupils' attainment and standards have kept pace with the national trend. In national tests the performance of eleven-year-olds tends to fluctuate between well above average and average, though in comparison with that of similar schools the performance in 2002 was below average. These apparent inconsistencies are due to the varying composition of the groups of pupils taking the tests from year to year, the number of pupils with special educational needs in these groups and, in 2002 in particular, the high proportion of pupils who had joined the school recently. This is why the results were average in English and science but well below average in mathematics instead of above average or higher, which they had been in previous years. In national tests in 2002 the results of seven-year-olds in reading were well above average nationally and above average in writing. The picture in mathematics has been more variable, with results for seven-year-olds below average.

2 Many of the pupils start school with well-developed speech, clear diction and relatively broad vocabularies. As a result of the lively teaching and well-established class routines in Class 1 they quickly gain the confidence to participate fully in activities that promote speaking and listening well. They willingly chat with adults, take part in discussions and talk together in group activities. In this respect the very positive influence from the older pupils in the class helps to bring on the younger children by involving them in their games, incorporating them into discussions and setting an example of listening carefully. Consequently the youngest children make good progress in their social development and in their speaking and listening, which is built upon effectively in subsequent classes.

3 By the time they reach Year 6 most pupils listen attentively and thoughtfully to their teachers and other pupils. Because of the frequent opportunities that are provided for discussion they reflect carefully on what is being said and most contribute to discussions with perceptive and mature observations that are articulated clearly and coherently. The school is good at involving the pupils of all ages in speaking and listening. The pupils willingly share their thoughts in group activities or wider discussions, as speaking and listening have a major part of most lessons. Teachers are, in the main, skilled at drawing in all the pupils, including those who tend to be more reticent. Pupils know that their contributions are valued and this gives them the confidence to take a full part. In all the classes there is a good emphasis on using the correct terminology and teachers use technical terms wherever possible; consequently the pupils follow this lead and use such terms as a matter of course.

4 Most pupils in Year 6 read fluently with understanding at the level expected for their age or higher; lower attainers are more hesitant and tend to lack expression or intonation when reading aloud. When sharing a text together pupils show good skills of comprehension for example when they explore in groups the nuances of the writing and discuss their ideas on what the author is trying to convey. There is a good emphasis on poetry and pupils study some challenging texts such as 'The Stranger', when they carefully examined the text to find ploys used by the writer to hold the attention of the reader that they could reproduce in their own writing. By the time they are eleven the majority of pupils read aloud confidently in front of the class with expression and intonation and can discuss what they have read with good levels of understanding.

5 In Class 1 pupils in Year 1 make good progress in developing basic skills in reading and writing. The standard of writing is not quite so high as in reading. In reading pupils rapidly learn how to recognise letter sounds and how to blend them together to make words. Encouraged by the good level of parental support they make rapid gains in learning to read. Pupils make good

progress with their writing, moving from isolated words to complete sentences within the space of one term. Through regular practice they consolidate their skills and improve their punctuation and spelling so that by the end of Year 2 most can write independently to a good standard for their age. The length of their written pieces increases over time and spelling becomes more consistent.

6 The daily literacy lessons have been implemented well and pupils in all classes are developing secure skills in spelling, grammar and punctuation, which they use with increasing accuracy in their personal writing. Standards in writing are not quite as high as in speaking and listening or reading but there is a good level of imaginative writing. After studying together a text about a Berserker warrior the pupils in Class 2 wrote their own passages using interesting and descriptive vocabulary to add colour to their work. By the age of eleven most pupils are confident at expressing their thoughts with an increasingly mature style. This helps with work in other subjects. Pupils use their writing skills for example when they record their findings in science or geography. Higher attaining pupils use an increasingly varied vocabulary and mature turn of phrase. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress over time, especially when they are supported by adults. Although most pupils are capable of producing neat, correctly formed letters the appearance of their written work is often untidy and this is not always pointed out in the marking of pupils' work.

7 In mathematics whilst standards in Year 2 and Year 6 are above average, they are more variable throughout the rest of the school, depending on the makeup of each year group. For several years there has been a recurring trend of lower test results in mathematics than in English or science. The school has rightly begun to tackle this disparity by analysing test data and results in order to pinpoint any areas of recurring weakness that can be addressed in the teaching but the impact of this exercise has not yet been measured as it is a recent introduction. Since the last inspection the numeracy strategy has been introduced to provide a consistent framework for the teaching of the subject and it has embedded well in all classes. However, when mixed age groups are taught the same material together teachers sometimes find it difficult to provide the right level of challenge for all the pupils with the result that some are marking time, especially during the mental warm up part of the lessons. In all classes mathematical vocabulary is used correctly and appropriately by both staff and pupils to explain processes. There is a good emphasis on practical activities that consolidate learning and enable pupils to readily grasp concepts such as measurement, volume and capacity.

8 In science pupils are doing well because they are encouraged to think about problems from an early age and to try out their ideas in practical ways. Pupils in Class 1 made sensible suggestions about the factors that would affect the fall of a parachute before trying out their ideas to find the best parachute. When discussing ways to modify the parachute they made feasible suggestions such as changing the shape of the canopy or lengthening the strings. Practical activities such as these promote pupils' curiosity well and provide an early insight into the need for fair testing, hypothesising and experimentation. Through an interesting range of tasks pupils throughout the school make good progress in the subject so that by the time they are ready to leave they have a good breadth of knowledge and understanding because they cover a lot of work in the course of a year. They use their skills in literacy and numeracy to good effect to record their work.

9 In art standards by the end of Year 6 are above average and most pupils, including those who find difficulty with more academic subjects, achieve well in the subject. Standards are high because the teaching is good, imparting enthusiasm to the pupils as well as individualised advice and observations to help each pupil to improve his or her work. In a good lesson in Class 3 pupils achieved good standards of work when painting their pieces of bark from close observation. They paid good attention to the mixing of exact tones to capture accurately the colour and texture of the wood and they applied the water colours with careful brushwork to create the desired effects. Throughout the school there is a very good range of well executed work on display that exemplifies the variety of subjects the pupils cover in their artwork over time. Of particular note is the painting done recently by Year 6 pupils based on photographs of Mount Fuji, all of them different. The pupils had captured the various shades and moods of the photographs very accurately, each one being representative of a different time of day or aspect of a season. The resultant work was of high

quality and provided a very worthwhile study of an area of natural beauty as well as an important element of spirituality.

10 Parents at the meeting praised the quality of music education provided by the school and their pleasure at the musical concerts that the pupils regularly perform. The music is a real strength of the school, providing a rich vein of opportunities for pupils to take part in singing and playing music together. The teaching is very good and encourages pupils to thoroughly enjoy making music together. The pupils concentrate well in lessons, striving to improve their performance under the guidance of their teachers. The well-attended music club provides further valuable opportunities for pupils to extend their musical skills as it is led by a very proficient visiting teacher. One of the key strengths of the music is the way in which pupils of all levels of attainment can achieve well. Pupils who have difficulty with academic subjects can excel in playing a musical instrument and the school takes pride in seeing such pupils grow in their self-esteem.

11 In French pupils in Class 3 are making very good progress in acquiring a basic vocabulary and developing the confidence to 'have a go' at speaking the language. They are building up a familiarity with everyday words and phrases which they are able to use in simple conversations and in response to the teacher's questions. All the pupils are encouraged to repeat the teacher's simple sentences aloud and this exercise is highly effective in helping pupils to develop an 'ear' for the pronunciation of the language and to build up their confidence to speak in French. Although some pupils are somewhat faltering in their attempts to speak, the higher attainers can use simple phrases to state, for example, the date and their age and to describe places in a town. Their French lessons provide the basis of an important life skill and are very effective in preparing the pupils for the next stage of their education.

**The teaching is stimulating and interesting; consequently pupils have very good attitudes to learning.**

12 The quality of teaching overall is good and is a major strength of the school, which affects positively the very good attitudes and progress made by the pupils. There is some very good teaching in all classes and subjects; none is unsatisfactory. Since the last inspection the proportion of very good teaching has risen. National strategies for literacy and numeracy have been introduced and have had a positive impact on the quality of teaching in those subjects. The staff are all very different in their styles and approaches to teaching but they gel together very well as a team, with complementary skills and expertise.

13 Most pupils have very good attitudes to their learning. They are keen to learn and show considerable maturity in the way in which they participate in discussions and apply themselves to their work. When negotiating the cramped accommodation they are very sensible, keeping noise to considerate levels and refraining from pushing past each other in the small spaces. Although many of the lessons, especially those for younger children, provide scope for great fun and enthusiasm, the children quickly overcome their excitement and settle to their tasks. Pupils are tolerant of each other and respect each other's views, showing patience when listening to less confident class members. Just occasionally some pupils lose interest in their work and become a little restless and distracted. This is most noticeable when the content of the lesson is too difficult or insufficiently demanding.

14 The teaching of children in the Foundation Stage gets them off to a secure start in school. The children quickly develop very good attitudes to learning because of the very good relationships in the class and the positive influence of the older children. They settle quickly into school routines and make rapid gains in acquiring basic skills in literacy and numeracy as well as laying the foundations in all the areas of learning. However, the complexities of planning for three different year groups with two separate curricula in one class mean that the needs of the youngest children, some of whom have been in school only a few weeks, are not always met fully. Not all activities are entirely appropriate or well matched for their early stage of development and some lack a sharp enough focus on what exactly the children are to learn in each activity. (See paragraph 46).

15 There are several common features that contribute to the good quality of the teaching. The main strength is in the apt choice of teaching methods and the lively way in which teachers introduce lessons, using resources in an imaginative way to stimulate interest. In an excellent music lesson in Class 2 pupils became absorbed in learning because of the very suitable choice of music coupled with the fast moving variety of different activities, all of them planned to develop different skills. As a result of the teacher's expertise in just one lesson pupils learned to play a new tune on their recorders, were introduced to South American music and reinforced their understanding of rhythm and notation.

16 Introductions to lessons are invariably followed up with stimulating, often practical tasks that hold the interest of the pupils well and reinforce learning. Resources are used particularly well to bring lessons to life as when pupils in Class 1 re-enacted their Shabbat feast. Teachers are clear about what they want the pupils to learn in each lesson and usually share this information with the pupils right at the start. Consequently pupils know what they are learning and why. They have a good understanding of how separate subjects fit together. For example one pupil was able to explain that the work he was doing in design and technology was part of the science topic on healthy eating as he created a model of a healthy meal. Pupils in Class 3 each have helpful individual targets for improvement to aim for, which provide them with a clear focus to their work. As a result of the interesting lessons pupils enjoy their learning and most take their work seriously. They are co-operative and sensible in group activities, taking time to give each other a hand when necessary or to share materials generously.

17 There is real strength in the quality of the questioning, which is a hallmark of most lessons. Teachers usually introduce lessons by asking thoughtful questions to establish the level of understanding of the pupils and then developing the discussions further with a deeper level of debate. This approach is very beneficial in promoting the high levels of speaking and listening achieved by the pupils because it encourages them to be reflective and to share their own ideas with confidence. In such sessions the questions are open ended so that pupils are required to explain their thoughts in lengthy responses rather than simple one word answers and this helps them to frame their thoughts sharply and to develop the skill of participating in a discussion. At times the teachers tease out the responses further, not content with one-word answers, and this lifts the quality of discussion even higher, as when pupils in Class 1 considered the factors that affect the fall of a parachute. The teacher's questions led them to make useful observations about the differing speeds at which the parachute might fall, suggesting that changing the shape or lengthening the strings might affect it. Through this gentle probing pupils were able to come to a deeper understanding of how a parachute works. Just occasionally, however, the teachers allow the discussion to become too dominated by the brighter, more articulate pupils to the exclusion of those who are more reticent. Consequently the pupils who are not drawn into the debate tend to 'switch off' and lose interest in the proceedings.

18 The teaching of the basic skills of literacy and numeracy is generally good but could be better if more thought were given to finding better ways to challenge the more able pupils and support those who need help (see paragraph 44). In the best lessons the expectations of what pupils can achieve are high, tasks are carefully chosen to match the needs of the pupils and then good gains are made in learning. These three factors came together well in a good mathematics lesson in Class 1 when pupils were learning to weigh. The average pupils practised using the scales to weigh and record commodities such as lentils whilst the higher attaining pupils were provided with the additional challenge of calculating which packet of corn flakes provided the best value by comparing the weight with the price. This approach is not always evident in lessons however, and when all pupils tackle the same activity at the same level the rate of learning is not as good and some pupils are not working to their full capacity.

19 Most lessons are very well paced with plenty of variety so that pupils are on the ball throughout and enjoy their learning. In all classes teachers are good at giving timely reminders of how long each activity will take and this helps pupils to pace themselves and to complete their tasks within the allocated time. Additional adults such as classroom assistants and supply teachers are used to good effect, being well briefed as to what is expected of them in the lessons and having

good knowledge of individual pupils and their respective needs. When teachers have very good subject knowledge the lessons tend to be particularly good as a result of the enthusiasm that is engendered and the level of additional tuition that can be given when the teacher understands how the pupils' efforts can be improved. This was seen in an art lesson when pupils in Class 3 painted pieces of bark from direct observation. The teacher was able to guide their efforts with individual advice as to how the paint should be worked or how the colour should be mixed to obtain a closer match. As a result the finished work was of high quality and pupils had gained in their understanding of creating accurate hues.

20 Teachers have very good relationships with the pupils, creating a relaxed and productive working atmosphere. An important feature of this is the ambience that is created in discussions, which encourages pupils to participate fully because they know their responses and suggestions will be valued. Just occasionally, however this lapses into too leisurely an atmosphere and pupils' behaviour becomes less well disciplined. On such occasions some pupils become restless and distracted; when this goes unchecked it can escalate so that more pupils lose interest. Sometimes not all pupils are fully engaged in proceedings and teachers do not always take firm enough action to remedy this and bring them back to task. Teachers' expectations of presentation of work are not as high as they should be. (See paragraphs 47 - 49.)

### **The school is very well led and managed by the headteacher.**

21 The leadership and management of the school by the headteacher are very good, as at the last inspection. At that time the headteacher was newly appointed. Although standards remain broadly the same, since then there have been several notable improvements, especially in the broadening of the curriculum, in information and communication technology and the strengthening of the school's ethos. The school's Christian aims and values are extremely well reflected in its work. Relationships are very good throughout the school and a purposeful atmosphere pervades.

22 One of the strengths of this small school is the very good level of teamwork that exists, the headteacher providing a good steer to development. The school improvement plan provides a very clear agenda for the coming year and an outline plan of proposed developments over a three-year period. Priorities for development are entirely appropriate and carefully aligned to the budget. A framework for the plan is drawn up by the headteacher and taken to staff to select priorities. Action plans are then written for each objective and staff training is indicated, although the action plans for specific subjects do not always focus sufficiently on the intended impact on standards, especially in numeracy. This is an efficient way of involving staff in the process because there is a good emphasis on consultation and collaboration. The teachers have a reflective approach to their work and a commitment to continuing improvement. This is seen in the broad range of training they undertake in the course of a year and the achievement of Investors in People.

23 The governing body is supportive and brings a broad range of professional experience to the role. The active involvement of governors in managing the school is developing over time. The Chair of Governors took up post at the same time as the headteacher was appointed and has subsequently been a great support in the management of the school. He and other members of the parish team are regular and welcome informal visitors to the school. Governors meet frequently and the effective committee structure ensures that decisions and information are disseminated at the full meetings of the governing body. Governors take an interest in the school's results but rely too heavily on the headteacher to provide information about how the school performs compared with similar schools. Their monitoring role is not yet fully developed as they do not have a clear enough picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses compared with other schools nor how they might be addressed.

24 Financial management is strong because the School Administrator has taken over the responsibility and has been trained to a high level in the necessary skills to do it proficiently. The bursar from the local education authority provides additional support by setting the budget and providing termly information about the financial position. Consequently the financial control is good. The governors are developing their expertise in managing the finances of the school, although they

are not yet sufficiently proactive in this respect. For example, in seeking best value for money governors place a heavy reliance on the headteacher to keep them informed of the financial position before they make spending decisions, instead of monitoring the financial situation themselves.

25 Because the school is small all teachers have several curricular responsibilities, which they undertake well. Each has a clear and accurate picture of the strengths and weaknesses in her subjects and what needs to be done to improve. An exception to this is the co-ordinator for mathematics, who has only recently adopted the role and is still getting to grips with what needs to be done to raise attainment further in the subject. Having recently undertaken training in preparation for the role and with good professional qualifications and enthusiasm however, she is set to bring about a good improvement in this area.

26 The monitoring of the school's work is done well, within the limitations of the headteacher's class commitment. There is an effective rolling programme for monitoring, with a clear focus on teaching and learning, which provides a helpful platform for staff development as written feedback and professional discussion occur after such monitoring. The monitoring dovetails nicely with the performance management targets set for each teacher.

27 The school has close links with the local cluster of schools and this is beneficial in providing an effective network for sharing resources as well as a supportive group in the formulation of policies and staff training. Furthermore, items of equipment such as outdoor wheeled vehicles for reception age children are bought jointly by the schools in the cluster and shared between them, which is an efficient use of funding. In collaboration with other schools in the local cluster the school has recently achieved the prestigious Investors in People award.

28 The accommodation has recently been improved by the addition of an office, a partition wall between two classes and additional storage space. Despite the alterations the school is very cramped and staff do well to manage the limitations of space so efficiently. There are two main drawbacks to the limited space. First, a considerable amount of equipment takes up valuable space in the classrooms and gives a cluttered appearance that detracts from the very attractive and informative displays of pupils' work. Second, the furniture is not organised to best advantage to maximise the small amount of space. When pupils are seated on the floor in Class 3, for example, they are strung out in a narrow rectangular area, which means that those at the back are too far away from the teacher to be fully involved and at times the teacher has her back to the pupils when writing on the white board. The school could usefully review and rationalise the organisation of the classrooms to minimise some of these difficulties.

### **The curriculum is rich and varied with particular strengths in the arts and pupils achieve well in these subjects.**

29 The school is strongly committed to the provision of a broad curriculum that is relevant to the needs of the pupils, and in the main, the quality and the range of learning opportunities are very good. The subjects of the National Curriculum are taught well with an appropriate emphasis on literacy and numeracy so that basic skills underpin everything else. The staff are especially keen to promote a well-balanced curriculum and so all subjects are given their due status, with a particular strength in the provision for the creative arts. As a result the pupils achieve particularly well in these subjects. The limitations posed by the small accommodation are overcome well by the school so that pupils do not miss out in any aspects of the curriculum. The pupils regularly go to a larger neighbouring school to use the swimming pool and gymnasium to enhance the curriculum for physical education. In this way the school effectively ensures that the pupils receive their full curricular entitlement.

30 The national strategies for literacy and numeracy are now well embedded in the school's practices and are extended effectively in other subjects. For example, in their work on Ancient Egypt pupils have included factual writing as well as extended pieces of imaginative writing such as 'Escape from Crete'. An interesting innovation to the curriculum has been the introduction of a non-academic subject that is woven into some morning sessions to break up the lengthy literacy and



numeracy hours. This system is working well because it allows pupils a period of respite with subjects that demand less intensive mental concentration.

31 At the time of the last inspection a key issue was to improve the provision and teaching in information and communication technology. Since then significant changes have been made in the organisation of the subject so that now one teacher with subject expertise teaches ICT skills to all pupils in Classes 2 and 3. Each individual class teacher then follows up what has been taught in subsequent lessons, using well chosen computer software to support the work that is being done in a range of subjects. This system is working well because it capitalises on the expertise of the teacher with specialist knowledge, supports effectively teachers with less confidence in the subject and, most importantly, enables pupils to put to use their computer skills in a range of subjects.

32 The curriculum in the reception class is planned satisfactorily to make a link between the early learning goals for the Foundation Stage and the National Curriculum. Children make good progress in acquiring social skills as well as basic skills in literacy and numeracy. However, the complexities of planning for a very wide age range have yet to be fully addressed. There are times when the curriculum planned for the Foundation Stage does not fully meet the needs of the children because planning does not identify in enough detail precisely what is to be learned from each activity. The provision for outdoor play in the Foundation Stage is inadequate and does not fully follow national guidance.

33 A good range of additional activities enriches the curriculum and over time the pupils experience many events that bring further interest and breadth to their learning. There are plenty of visits to local places of interest, such as a field visit to Danby Moor when pupils deepened their knowledge of the local area and learned more about rivers as part of their work in geography. There are good links with the local art gallery, where pupils' work is regularly displayed. The regular 'cluster days', when pupils join forces with pupils from neighbouring schools for lessons provide a popular and worthwhile extra dimension to the curriculum.

34 A key strength of the school is the provision for music. Parents at the pre-inspection meeting spoke enthusiastically of the high standards achieved and there are lots of opportunities for pupils to take part in performances and to join in with music-making. The thriving and popular club is well attended and builds on music lessons very effectively in an informal but productive atmosphere. As a result pupils enjoy the experience of being part of an ensemble of assorted instruments, creating music together and achieving a high standard. The choir is also of a high calibre, having recently achieved third place in a regional competition.

35 For such a small school the provision of extra-curricular activities is good. The range of activities on offer meets the needs and interests of most of the older pupils, though there are fewer activities for the younger pupils, as was pointed out by a few parents. The computer club is open to parents as well as pupils to encourage families to learn together. At the time of the inspection members of the cookery club were preparing to make pancakes on Shrove Tuesday. There is also a thriving art club and football coaching as well as the musical activities already mentioned. Although a minority of parents indicated that they would like to see a broader range of activities made available, inspection judgement is that the school is doing a good job in extending the curriculum outside school hours, especially considering its size.

**The provision for spiritual development is outstanding; provision for moral, social and cultural development is very good enabling pupils to progress well in their personal development.**

36 The strong Christian ethos shines through in all aspects of the school's work and it is a major strength. Parents at the meeting prior to the inspection spoke very positively about the way in which the school nurtures each pupil.

37 Spirituality is promoted exceptionally well in the school through assemblies, in lessons and

incidentally through, for example, displays that encourage pupils to reflect. Spirituality is an inherent part of all assemblies and these daily sessions give pupils very good opportunities to think about the world, their place in it and the effects that human behaviour can have on others. As part of a series of assemblies based on quotations from the book of Proverbs pupils considered the text 'Gossip is extremely tasty; how we like to chew it over and swallow it'. Through a carefully worded analogy to food the teacher very skilfully helped the pupils to understand the meaning of the text and to apply it to their own lives. Challenging questions gave pupils plenty of opportunities to explore the implications of gossip and the negative effect it can have on people. Consequently the pupils were able to sensitively and maturely discuss the matter, make perceptive observations and deepen their understanding of a moral issue. The joyful singing of hymns further enhances the sense of spirituality.

38 Spiritual awareness is frequently and well reinforced in many lessons. For example, through sensitive discussion in art pupils talked about their observations and about the colours and textures of the pieces of bark they chose to paint. In a literacy lesson pupils maturely discussed the nuances of the text of a poem 'The Strangers,' interpreting the mood of the poem. Throughout the school attractive displays celebrate pupils' work and widen their appreciation of the natural world, a lovely display of spring flowers in the entrance being a good example of how this is done. Of particular note are the special 'Wow' moments, giving pupils experiences that astound and intrigue. Such a moment was seen in Class 1 when the teacher added blue food colouring to water. Pupils were fascinated by the swirls of colour; even more so when the teacher added oil to the mixture. Pupils were quick to offer predictions as to what might happen and were amazed when the oil floated to the top. But their wide-open eyes and exclamations of 'Wow' when salt was finally added to create moving bubbles rising to the surface was a true moment of awe and wonder.

39 Moral development is promoted very well through the rules and expectations set by the school and the values that are actively promoted and displayed around the school. Teachers seize every opportunity to remind pupils of the effect of their actions on others and to consider the feelings of others. Throughout the school the teachers set good examples in the respectful and gentle way in which they talk to pupils. As a result pupils are, in the main, tolerant and considerate towards each other. The class council system is very effective in providing pupils with opportunities to have a say in how their school is run and to discuss matters of conflict as they arise. This fosters an important life skill, as pupils are encouraged to resolve issues amicably and justly themselves without recourse to adults and without quarrelling. They listen well to each other in these sessions and respect the contributions made by others, even when views differ from their own.

40 Social development is promoted very well through group activities in which pupils learn to negotiate, collaborate and share. These features are taught well from the very first days in school, when children learn to take turns and to listen to what others have to say. The presence of older pupils in all classes has a positive effect on social development because invariably the older pupils set a good example of behaviour to the younger ones. The school works effectively in conjunction with other local schools and there are good opportunities for pupils to work together on 'cluster days'. These provide worthwhile opportunities for pupils to mix with children of a similar age and prepare pupils well for transfer to secondary schools because they have already mixed with pupils from other schools. The pupils enthusiastically support many charities; parents reported that pupils frequently bring their own money to donate.

41 For such a small school cultural development is promoted very well. The local area is used well to teach pupils about their own cultural heritage, the nearby church being an important focus for work in several subjects. The curriculum includes a good emphasis on the art and music of other cultures as was seen in a music lesson when pupils practised a piece from South America on their recorders after first listening to the tune played on the original ethnic instruments. The school provides a good range of activities that enable pupils to learn about other faiths and to understand cultural differences. A very good example of this was seen in a religious education lesson in Class 1 when pupils re-enacted a Shabbat feast as part of their work on Judaism. Through first hand experience and the very good use of artefacts, including special bread baked by the teacher, the pupils came to understand the symbolism of some of the traditions and beliefs of the Jewish faith.

The aptly chosen Jewish background music and the lit candles created a real spirituality to the lesson. Through visiting the multi-cultural centre in Bradford older pupils learn about the Hindu and Muslim faiths, and occasional visitors such as an Indian dancer add a further dimension to their awareness. The 'Church Times', a magazine of local interest produced by pupils in Class 3, is packed with interesting accounts of visits made by pupils and visitors to the school that illustrates clearly the school's involvement with the local community.

42 The personal development of each pupil is enhanced well over time. Because there is a good emphasis on discussion and the sharing of ideas pupils gain considerable confidence in contributing to debates and articulating their thoughts in a coherent way. This prepares them well for the next stage of their education. There are many events such as concerts and services that create chances for all pupils to take speaking parts, which develops confidence well. The pupils themselves organise the popular 'swap shops' where they trade small items such as books and posters and many are involved in undertaking jobs that contribute to the smooth running of the school.

## **WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED**

**The planning for different year groups is not precise enough, especially in the Foundation Stage.**

43 Teachers know the pupils very well and are aware of what each pupil has achieved and of individuals' strengths and weaknesses. However, there are times when planning does not take enough account of the differing needs and stages of development of the pupils. In all the classes there are pupils from more than one year group. This makes it difficult for teachers to pitch the material at the right level for all the pupils, especially when the whole class joins together. Despite the teachers' best efforts, sometimes the ability range is too wide to be taught together effectively, and inevitably, the lesson content is too difficult for some of the pupils. Higher achievers are sometimes held back because they are capable of achieving more in the lesson. In a mathematics lesson in Class 3, for example, all the pupils worked together using white boards to record their responses to mental calculations. Although the lesson was appropriate for the majority, a significant number of lower attaining pupils slipped through the net because their written answers were inaccurate but the lesson moved on without their mistakes being rectified.

44 In some lessons two different year groups are expected to undertake the same written task. Frequently this practice is entirely appropriate because the pupils respond at a level suited to their own stage of development. But this is not always the case and at times the work is too easy for the brighter, older pupils, who may find themselves marking time rehearsing skills they have already mastered, as was seen when pupils in Year 6 completed worksheets on lines of symmetry. Although the sheets served as a reminder to the pupils of work they had already done the task did little to make them think hard or extend their learning. The pupils themselves said they found the task too easy. Similarly, this approach can leave those pupils who find learning difficult struggling with tasks that have not been specifically modified for their needs.

45 Curricular planning for the small number of children in the Foundation Stage does not always take enough account of the stepping stones set out in national guidance, which ensures that young children learn new skills and concepts in a clear and logical sequence. In particular there are gaps in the provision for outdoor physical play because of the limitations of the accommodation. This means that the children miss out on regular activities such as climbing, balancing and controlling and steering wheeled toys, which help to develop muscle control, balance and co-ordination. Currently the school compensates for this by sharing outdoor equipment with other schools in the cluster, who each use the large toys in turn on a termly basis. This means that there are lengthy periods of time when provision of outdoor play is very limited, although the children do participate in good physical education lessons every week.

46 Children in the Foundation Stage are taught in a mixed age class with Year 1 and 2 pupils. The teacher does a good job in organising activities for three different year groups with two different curricula but sometimes the planning for the youngest children is not precise enough to identify clearly what they are expected to learn. For example, in a literacy lesson, they sorted books into fiction and non-fiction successfully, but the supplementary activity they were given was much less focused and the children were not entirely clear what they were expected to do and so the time was not used productively. The lesson objective 'to find something interesting' in the books was not sufficiently precise to translate into a meaningful activity to develop linguistic skills. Occasionally the lesson content is too difficult conceptually for the youngest children. In a religious education lesson about Judaism, for example, despite the teacher's careful attempts to explain, some of the vocabulary and discussion about the symbolism of religious artefacts were above their heads.

**The presentation of pupils' work could be better.**

47 Although the quality and range of work in pupils' books is extensive and reflects the variety of work undertaken in all classes, there is not enough emphasis on neat presentation and consequently pupils do not always take enough pride in their work. As soon as they start school the youngest children make rapid progress in learning to form their letters and digits correctly. This can be seen in their workbooks, where early and somewhat shaky first attempts at writing soon develop into more accurate formation, with better pencil control, correct orientation of letters and an increasing uniformity in height. The quality of presentation is not always sustained as the pupils grow older, however, and there are variable standards of neatness throughout the school.

48 Although many pupils write neatly and are capable of producing nicely presented work this is not always the case and some of the work is untidy. There is inconsistency in the choice of lined or unlined paper for pupils to write on. Teachers do not place enough emphasis on improving the quality of handwriting by insisting, for example, that letters sit on lines or that there is differentiation between tall and short letters. When pupils work their writing into a final draft and use guidelines to help them the presentation is often of a good standard.

49 Several pupils persistently cross out work in an untidy fashion that draws the eye to their mistakes and spoils the appearance of their work. The front covers of some workbooks are defaced with doodling, which spoils the overall quality of the presentation. Teachers' own writing in books does not always reflect the school's chosen handwriting style and is sometimes untidy also, failing to set an example of neatness to the pupils. There are few references to neatness in teachers' marking and often untidy presentation and wrongly formed letters or digits go uncorrected. Not all the work in pupils' books is dated, which makes it difficult, especially for parents, to measure the progress that has been made over time.

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

50 Staff and governors should work together to:

- [i] Ensure that teachers' planning makes appropriate provision for the needs of all pupils. (See paragraphs 43 - 46 ).
- [ii] Improve the presentation of pupils' work. (See paragraphs 47 - 49).

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	18
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	10

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	6	8	3	0	0	0
Percentage	6	33	44	17	0	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

#### Pupils on the school's roll

	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	54
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

#### Special educational needs

	YR– Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	8

#### 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	2
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	4

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.5
National comparative data	5.6

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

NB Results of national tests are not reported when there are fewer than ten pupils taking the tests so that individual pupils cannot be identified.

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

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

<b>Categories used in the Annual School Census</b>	<b>No of pupils on roll</b>	<b>Number of fixed period exclusions</b>	<b>Number of permanent exclusions</b>
White – British	51	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	2	0	0

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

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

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	18
Average class size	18

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

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	29

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	2001/2
	£
Total income	185 308
Total expenditure	176 335
Expenditure per pupil	3094
Balance brought forward from previous year	8750
Balance carried forward to next year	8973

## Recruitment of teachers

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	52
Number of questionnaires returned	44

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	73	25	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	59	36	5	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	59	39	2	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	51	37	7	2	2
The teaching is good.	77	16	5	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	64	32	5	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	77	11	7	5	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	77	23	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	70	20	7	0	2
The school is well led and managed.	77	18	5	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	73	23	0	0	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	55	32	9	0	5



