

INSPECTION REPORT

LEESIDE JUNIOR, INFANT AND NURSERY SCHOOL

Heckmondwike

LEA area: Kirklees

Unique reference number: 130350

Headteacher: Mrs L Shelton

Reporting inspector: Mrs R J Schaffer
23698

Dates of inspection: 3 February – 6 February 2003

Inspection number: 248800

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

| | |
|------------------------------|--|
| Type of school: | Infant and junior |
| School category: | Community |
| Age range of pupils: | 3 to 11 years |
| Gender of pupils: | Mixed |
| School address: | Leeds Old Road Heckmondwike West Yorkshire |
| Postcode: | WF16 9BB |
| Telephone number: | 01924 326 708 |
| Fax number: | 01924 326 710 |
| Appropriate authority: | The governing body |
| Name of chair of governors: | Ms F Gee |
| Date of previous inspection: | November 1997 |

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Team members | | | Subject responsibilities | Aspect responsibilities |
|--------------|---------------|----------------------|---|--|
| 23698 | Jane Schaffer | Registered inspector | Music Physical education Areas of learning in the Foundation Stage English as an additional language | What sort of school is it? School's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further? |
| 11437 | A Anderson | Lay inspector | | Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents? |
| 23204 | C Wojtak | Team inspector | English Information and communication technology Special educational needs | |
| 32159 | B Remond | Team inspector | Mathematics Geography Religious education Educational inclusion | |
| 29263 | F Clarke | Team inspector | Science Art and design Design and technology History | How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils? |

The inspection contractor was:

Nord Anglia School Inspection Services

Strathblane House
Ashfield Road
Cheadle
Stockport
SK8 1BB

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Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is an average sized junior and infant school with a nursery class. It is situated east of the small town of Heckmondwike, in an urban area with a considerable level of social deprivation. There are 220 full-time boys and girls on roll and a further 36 attend the Nursery class part-time. The area is experiencing a falling birth-rate and there are fewer pupils than at the time of previous inspection. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is above average at 29 per cent. Since the previous inspection, the proportion of pupils with special educational needs, including statements, has risen to forty three per cent which is well above average. Ten pupils have a statement of special needs. Most have moderate learning difficulties or problems connected with controlling their own behaviour, a few have medical problems. Very few pupils come from different ethnic groups and an even smaller number speak English in addition to their home language. The number of pupils who change schools is much greater than for most schools. Most children start in the Nursery with attainment well below average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school provides a sound education for its pupils. It takes good care to ensure that all pupils are included in its provision. Standards are high enough in mathematics and science but not in English. Good leadership by the headteacher and governors has ensured that the school has continued to move forward despite many set backs from frequent staff changes. The quality of teaching and learning is good although the management of behaviour occasionally detracts from pupils' learning. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Good teaching in mathematics ensures that from the Nursery class to Year 6 pupils' achievements in mathematics are good, and for some pupils very good.
- Pupils get good opportunities to carry out investigations in science and so they are interested and achieve well.
- Children in the Nursery and Reception classes make very good progress in their personal, social and emotional development and in their understanding of the world around them because of the very good provision.
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because of good support for them.
- Provision for art and design is good and so pupils attain above average standards by the time they are in Year 6.

What could be improved

- Pupils' achievements are not high enough in writing in all classes.
- Pupils are not keen readers in Years 3 to 6 and some do not achieve a high enough standard in reading.
- The school does not check rigorously enough on how effective its work has been or how consistently policies are adhered to, and therefore some initiatives are not as successful as they could be.
- In Years 1 to 2, some activities are not well matched to pupils' interest and stage of maturity and so pupils become inattentive.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school's improvement has been satisfactory since it was last inspected in 1997. It is in a good position to make further improvements. Results in national tests do not look to have improved in comparison to other schools, but standards have risen and this has been recognised by achievement awards from the Department for Education and Skills. There are good programmes for teaching numeracy but more needs to be done to improve those for writing and reading. Pupils' skills in scientific investigation and in information and communication technology have improved considerably.

Support for pupils with special educational needs is now good and there has been good improvement for physical development in the Nursery and Reception classes. Assessment information is used well to check on pupils' progress but it is not always used effectively when planning pupils' work. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory and for their cultural development it is good.

STANDARDS

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

| Performance in: | compared with | | | |
|-----------------|---------------|------|------|-----------------|
| | all schools | | | Similar schools |
| | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2002 |
| English | E* | E | E | E |
| Mathematics | E | E | D | B |
| Science | D | E | E* | E |

Key

Well above average A

above average B

Average C

below average D

Well below average E

The school's results in mathematics improved in 2002. The pupils' performance was below average because too few pupils attained the higher level, but in comparison to similar schools their performance was above average. This was not matched by their performance in English where too many pupils failed to attain the expected level for Year 6 and results were well below average in comparison to all schools and to similar schools. In science, the results were amongst the lowest 5 per cent nationally. Current standards are average in mathematics and science and below average in English, reflecting improvements in teaching and a higher attaining group. The school's targets for 2003 were set too low, which the school recognises, and pupils are on course to exceed them by a wide margin.

Results for pupils at the end of Year 2 in 2002, were in the lowest five per cent nationally in reading and writing and were well below average in mathematics. There was a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in this year group. Current standards of work are below average in English and science but average in mathematics. In the Nursery and Reception, children achieve well. They are on track to reach the nationally expected standards in all areas of learning except communication, language and literacy by the end of the reception year.

All pupils' achievement is good in mathematics. In English, pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory in Years 3 to 6 but satisfactory from Reception to Year 2. Boys do not achieve as well as girls, although the school has taken action to address this. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs achieve well. Those pupils who speak English as an additional language make good progress in learning English. Standards in art and design exceed expectations. In music, standards fall below the expected level as they do in some elements of physical education. By the time they are in Year 6 pupils attain the expected standards in geography, history, design and technology, information and communication technology and religious education.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|--|
| Attitudes to the school | Good. Pupils have good attitudes to the opportunities which the school offers them and most are keen to learn and they try their best at their work. |
| Behaviour, in and out of classrooms | Satisfactory. Behaviour in and around the school, especially in assemblies is good. In lessons, most pupils behave well but some lessons are disrupted by the bad behaviour of a few pupils. In the Nursery and Reception classes, children behave very well. There were six fixed term exclusions in the previous year. |
| Personal development and relationships | Good. Pupils' relations with each other and with adults are constructive and co-operative. By the time pupils are in Year 6 they have a good sense of responsibility and show initiative. |
| Attendance | Attendance is satisfactory but the number of times pupils are away without good reason is too high. |

TEACHING AND LEARNING

| Teaching of pupils in: | Nursery and Reception | Years 1 – 2 | Years 3 – 6 |
|------------------------|-----------------------|--------------|-------------|
| Quality of teaching | Good | Satisfactory | 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 good teaching in Nursery and Reception and in Years 3 to 6 is based on a firm foundation of good planning that ensures that work is well matched to pupils' interest and level of maturity. In Years 1 and 2, a few lessons are not planned well enough to meet the needs of all pupils. In these lessons some pupils become inattentive and learning slows. Stimulating methods are used in mathematics and science and pupils make good gains in their knowledge and understanding. In Reception and Years 1 and 2, spelling and early skills in reading are taught well so that pupils make good progress. Teaching in English in Years 5 and 6 is good and in other year groups it is satisfactory. Pupils' achievement in Years 4 to 6 in English has been affected by gaps in their learning in previous years. Classroom assistants are skilful and used effectively to improve the learning of those pupils with special educational needs. Teachers make good use of information and communication technology and new strategies to improve the learning of boys.

Some teachers do not set a high enough standard for written work in their marking, with the result that pupils' use of correct grammar and punctuation does not improve sufficiently. Some reading activities are not planned well enough in Years 3 to 6, and this affects pupils' interest in books and fluency in reading. In the Nursery and Reception classes, teachers do not provide enough opportunities to encourage children to practise their writing when they are engaged in play activities.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

| Aspect | Comment |
|---|---|
| The quality and range of the curriculum | Satisfactory. Provision for health education is very good. However, drama, music and physical education do not contribute enough to pupils' experiences and the library is not used enough for research. |
| Provision for pupils with special educational needs | Good. The identification and assessment of these pupils' needs is thorough. Support staff are very well trained and use a good range of innovative methods to improve pupils' learning. |
| Provision for pupils with English as an additional language | Satisfactory. Although very few in number, these pupils benefit from the school's good focus on developing spoken English in group work. |
| Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | Good overall. Good opportunities are provided for pupils of different ages to mix together and to understand each others' needs. Provision for spiritual development is satisfactory and pupils' understanding of their own and others' cultures is good. The school is successful in promoting racial harmony. |
| How well the school cares for its pupils | All staff work effectively to support the wellbeing of pupils. Pupils' academic achievements are mostly assessed well, although in reading and writing some assessments are not carried out with enough care. |
| How well the school works in partnership with parents. | Satisfactory. A few parents are involved with the school and contribute well to their own child's learning. However, too few parents help pupils to return their homework when it is finished. |

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|---|
| Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff | The leadership of the headteacher is good and has been effective in ensuring that the school moves forward despite the set backs of a changing staff. Management is satisfactory but checks to ensure that all policies are adhered to are not rigorous enough. |
| How well the governors fulfill their responsibilities | Good. The governors play an active part in planning the direction of the school. They use data from national tests to ask the school to account for pupils' achievements. |
| The school's evaluation of its performance | The school analyses data from the national tests and its own assessments well to determine what needs to be done to raise standards. However, the success of school initiatives is not evaluated well enough to determine what further action to take. |
| The strategic use of resources | Good. School finances are generally well directed towards the school's priorities. However, the weakness in evaluation means that governors cannot be sure that it gains best value from its spending. |

Although the school has had many staff changes, the number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff is satisfactory. Learning support staff are well trained and effective in their work. Resources are satisfactory overall, except in English where the lack of good books hinders pupils' learning. The accommodation is spacious and has many good features such as the large hall and stage and the shared work areas outside of classrooms.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

| What pleases parents most | What parents would like to see improved |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their child enjoys coming to school. • The teaching is good and their child is making good progress. • They would feel happy approaching the school with any problems. • The school expects their child to work hard and is helping him/her to become more mature. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some felt that their child did not get the right amount of homework. • Some felt that there were not enough activities outside of lessons. • Some felt that they were not kept well informed as to how their child was progressing. • Some were unhappy with the behaviour in the school. |

Inspectors share many of the positive views the parents have of the school and do not agree with most of the negative views. The school sets pupils a good amount of homework. Unfortunately, a high proportion of pupils do not return it to school. There are a reasonable number of activities outside of lessons but some are not well attended. The school provides all the usual means of informing parents about their child's progress, but not as many parents attend meetings as in other schools. Most pupils behave well, but in a small number of lessons, behaviour was not satisfactory and inspectors agree that this could be improved.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

- 1 In English, mathematics and science, the school has gradually improved the numbers of pupils attaining the expected level in National Curriculum tests at end of Year 6 from the very low level at which they were in 1997, when the school was last inspected. This has meant that improvements in the school's results have kept pace with the national trend, albeit at a lower level, and for two years running this has gained the school the Department for Education and Skills achievement award. The pupils attained the targets set by the school in 2002 but these targets were low. They are again low for this year and pupils are on track to exceed them by a wide margin in mathematics and by a smaller margin in English. The school recognizing that the targets set two years ago were now too low has set its own higher targets for the current year.
- 2 Improvements for Year 6 pupils have been considerably better in mathematics than in English. This is shown by the fact that in the tests for 2002, a greater number of pupils attained the higher level in mathematics than in English. The school's results were above average in comparison to similar schools. Improvements have come about because teachers make good use of the methods recommended in the National Numeracy Strategy, and analysis of data has helped the school focus on areas of the mathematics curriculum that need to be improved. The current co-ordinator for mathematics has good subject knowledge and a determination to improve standards that has been communicated well to staff so that expectations are high. Staff have looked for guidance and had the good practice of the co-ordinator as a role model. In 2002, boys' performance was still not as good as the girls but they are catching up.
- 3 In English, the school's well below and very low results at the end of Year 6 are brought about because boys are not improving fast enough. In most years, girls' results have improved when compared against girls nationally. The school identified the need to improve the achievement of boys. It introduced a project entitled 'Raising Achievement in Writing' that aimed to stimulate and motivate boys as writers. Strategies from this initiative have been incorporated into teachers' planning but there has not been sufficient time to judge the impact of this on standards.
- 4 At the end of Year 2, the pupils' performance has been well below average in the National Curriculum tests for reading, writing and mathematics for four years. In 2002 their results were in the lowest five per cent nationally and in comparison to similar schools for reading and writing. This year group had a particularly large proportion of pupils with special educational needs and there were far more boys than girls. As in the older year groups, the under achievement of boys played the main part in the low results. Teachers' assessments for science 2002 showed the same well below average standard.
- 5 When children start in the Nursery class, their skills in speaking and listening and knowledge of books and letters are well below that of most children of this age. Assessments of children starting in the Reception class indicate that the majority of children have attainment below average and very few who attain above expected levels.

- 6 In the current Reception year, children are on course to meet the goals set for them in personal, social and emotional development, in mathematical, physical and creative development and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. The majority will not meet the goals in communication, language and literacy. The higher attaining children in the Reception class are confident at expressing their ideas. Some can use the range of words and forms of speech that you would expect for their age. They make very good progress in this area by listening to their teachers and talking with them and with other children as they play. There are, however, a good number whose diction is not good and who still need support from an adult to choose the words they need to make their meaning clear. Higher attaining children read a satisfactory number of words and know many of the letter names and sounds. However, they struggle to write a simple sentence without adult support. Those of lower attainment have difficulty writing their names correctly.
- 7 Pupils in Year 6 are currently attaining nationally expected standards in mathematics and science but are below this in English. They are attaining at a much higher level than the pupils in the previous year partly because the overall ability of the group is better and partly because teaching and planning has improved. Their achievement is good in mathematics and science, but in English, for those of average and higher attainment their achievement is unsatisfactory. In Year 2, the school's improvement in teaching mathematics over the past two years has resulted in pupils' attainment being similar to the national average. In English and science it is below average but this is an improvement on the previous year.
- 8 In Year 2, some pupils are not yet ready to listen attentively for more than short periods of time and this affects their skills in speaking. Pupils of all levels of attainment are confident to put forward their ideas but some struggle to find the right words and sentence structures to express their meaning clearly. Pupils of higher attainment read at the level expected for their age and are beginning to use a number of different strategies to work out the meaning of what they read. They take notice of full stops to give expression to their reading. Those of average attainment do not read fluently although they have begun to build up a good number of words they know by sight. They know the sounds that letters make and use these well to read and spell unfamiliar words. Pupils of lower attainment and those with special educational needs have a small number of words they know by sight and use letter sounds well to help them make a good guess at words they do not know. Most pupils write simple sentences in a logical sequence but few use punctuation correctly. In a challenging lesson in mathematics, higher and average attaining pupils worked well on problems involving the use of a bus timetable. They used their knowledge of a digital clock to work out the time the bus took between two stops. In science, pupils have been given good opportunities to develop their understanding of investigation through good practical activities that they enjoy. However, they do not record much of their work. They do not have a good enough understanding of the scientific terms they are expected to know at their age. For example, although they can name different materials such as glass and wood, they find it difficult to explain the properties of these materials using simple words such as 'hard', 'smooth' or 'transparent' correctly. Year 2 pupils use their skills in reading to help them with their work in other subjects but they do not use writing well enough. For instance, in history they label a picture of the hospital where Florence Nightingale worked instead of writing a description.
- 9 In English, pupils in Year 6, have a satisfactory knowledge of aspects of grammar, punctuation and stylistic features, such as the use of paragraphs and imagery. However, they do not use these features with confidence. Pieces of writing are often too short or lack depth, particular when describing characters, for instance in a story.

Pupils' reading skills are competent but they do not look into the text of what they read for clues to a deeper level of meaning. They lack the knowledge about authors and books expected nationally for their age. Most Year 6 pupils can speak clearly to present their point of view in small groups but many lack confidence to pitch their voice at the right level to larger audiences. In mathematics lessons, pupils work well on fractions, decimals and percentages and have a good grasp of how these are related. Their mental calculations are as quick and accurate. In science, they have developed a good knowledge of the scientific process of enquiry because the school has successfully planned science learning through investigations for the last two years. Their use of scientific vocabulary such as that relating to the changing states of materials, from gas to liquid is satisfactory. Pupils make satisfactory use of mathematics and information and communication technology when analyzing data they have gathered. They make good use of their skills in reading when working in other subjects. In some subjects their written work is of a good standard, for instance in history, but often it is too brief and not well presented.

- 10 There have been good improvements in the teaching of information and communication technology since the previous inspection when pupils' attainment was below expectations. By the time pupils are in Years 2 and 6, they attain the standards expected for their age. Pupils in Year 2 use computers to present their work in different ways and they have a good understanding of how to use computers to sort data. They know how to find out information with adult help and they can give instructions to move a programmable toy. The school has set up its own web site and this is helping pupils in Year 6 understand the many uses of the internet. They use computers confidently to present their work incorporating pictures and designs and for obtaining information from databases. Pupils' use their skills in information and communication technology to help them learn in other subjects.
- 11 Good provision and teaching in art and design results in pupils developing their skills well as they move up the school. Above average standards are achieved in both Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils use paint and other media well. They have good knowledge of the work of well-known artists and they use this to develop their own work. In music, pupils have not had the opportunity to increase their musical knowledge and skills year by year. In Year 2 and Year 6, standards are below expectations. In physical education, pupils attain the standards expected by Year 2, but in Year 6 their standards vary from above expectations in swimming to below in dance. In Year 6, pupils attain the standards expected in geography, history, design and technology and religious education. This is the same for Year 2 except in history where a weak understanding of the passing of time and the differences between past times and the present day means that they do not attain the standard expected for their age.
- 12 Pupils with special education needs make good progress towards the targets set for them. Those pupils with emotional and behavioural needs also make good progress in controlling some inappropriate behaviour and become effective members of their classes. They develop good relationships with their classmates and accept the authority of the teacher. The highest attaining pupils make good progress in mathematics, in science their progress is satisfactory but in English they do not make enough progress in Years 3 to 6. The very few pupils who speak English as an additional language make satisfactory progress in learning to speak English. They participate in all activities and have support when it is needed to make the same progress as others in lessons such as mathematics and science.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

- 13 Pupils' attitudes to the school are good as was found at the time of the previous inspection in 1997. Pupils are interested in their lessons and participate well in the activities the school has to offer. In most lessons pupils listen attentively to teachers' explanations and start their work quickly when asked to do so. However, a few pupils, in Years 1 and 2 find it difficult to listen for more than short periods of time. When teachers' explanations are too lengthy, these pupils become restless. They are sometimes taken out of class by an adult for short periods of time to give them a break from concentration, after which they return and settle to tasks. There are a number of activities offered to pupils out of school time. Some of these, such as the modern dance session, are well attended and pupils are enthusiastic about the activity. However, some are not well attended and the teachers have to work hard to encourage interest and support.
- 14 The children in the Nursery and Reception classes behave very well. When they join the Nursery class many lack confidence or an understanding of how they should behave. The encouragement of staff and very good organisation helps children to settle quickly and gain confidence. Children respond very well to the clear expectation of good behaviour. They share resource and take pride in looking after them. For instance, all children hang up their aprons after they have finished playing in the water without an adult supervising this.
- 15 Although there is some documentary evidence of occasional challenging behaviour from a minority of pupils, including six fixed term exclusions, the behaviour of most pupils at the school during the inspection was observed to be at least satisfactory. In assemblies and lunchtimes it is good. Good behaviour was evident in a whole school assembly with a good moral theme related to the story of David & Goliath. In lessons when pupils are not well challenged, behaviour is satisfactory for the majority but a few become disruptive. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to co-operate with each other when working in groups. For example, in one music lesson, the good teaching was matched by good behaviour as most pupils in the class worked in collaboration to determine the musical notation of the tune 'Dem Bones'. In science investigations and when working on computers, pupils behave well, take care of the equipment and work together productively.
- 16 The day-to-day relationships, between pupils and teachers and amongst pupils, are good. Pupils' maturity increases well as they move up the school and this is an improvement since the inspection in 1997. In all classes, pupils respond well to the responsibilities involved in maintaining a tidy classroom. Older pupils willingly take on the responsibilities they are given around the school such as preparing the music for assembly, manning the main office at lunchtime and acting as prefects on the corridors. They also act as 'befrienders' in the playground. A rota system is used to select pupils for particular jobs and pupils appreciate the fairness of this system. At assembly times, pupils behave very responsibly when allowed to choose who they should sit beside. Pupils show initiative in small ways, such as seeing when an adult needs help to carry items, but the school does not plan a wide range of opportunities for pupils to use their own initiative.
- 17 The attendance at the school is satisfactory. However, the recorded incidences of unauthorised absence are high in comparison to the national average. Although there is some evidence of occasional pupil lateness, the majority of pupils come to school and lessons on time. This is a similar picture to that at the time of the previous inspection.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

- 18 Nearly all teachers have joined the school since the inspection in 1997. Most have been at the school for less than two years and some for only one term, while one teacher is not permanent to the staff. Teaching teams are new and still at the stage of reviewing and evaluating their planning and practice. The quality of teaching was judged to be of a slightly higher standard at the previous inspection. The school has made good improvements in the teaching of mathematics and in the use of information and communication technology for pupils' learning. The teaching of English is good in Years 5 and 6 and satisfactory in other year groups. Overall improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory.
- 19 The quality of teaching and learning is good in Years 3 to 6 and in the Nursery and Reception classes. It is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. The unsatisfactory lessons were in Years 1 to 4. They occurred in science, music and physical education when teachers' subject knowledge was weak and lessons did not provide enough challenge. The best teaching was seen in Years 5 and 6. Lessons in these classes were often stimulating. Teachers' very good subject knowledge and high expectations allowed them to pitch the lessons at a level that challenged pupils to try their hardest and pupils' work rate was good. In Years 3 to 6, teachers plan stimulating and well structured lessons to provide pupils with opportunities to write at length and these are having a good affect on the quality of pupils' writing. Pupils' work indicates that some aspects of English, for example, spelling and punctuation, that are now taught well, were not taught well in previous years.
- 20 There are two year groups in all classes so that teachers need to plan for a wide range of needs. Lessons are organised so that the year groups mix, and work is planned to match different levels of attainment. This system has some good benefits such as allowing those who learn more slowly than others in the older classes to revise skills they had not fully acquired the year before. In Years 3 to 6 teachers plan work that is well matched to the next stage of pupils' learning. The strategies for literacy and numeracy and other schemes of work are used well as a guide to the levels that pupils should reach. On occasions, however, in Years 1 and 2 the content of the lesson is better suited to one age group and does not provide enough interest or challenge for all. In these lessons pupils' rate of learning slows. Pupils' written work sometimes shows that the content and level of difficulty does not stretch those of higher attainment in the older age group.
- 21 The increase in the proportion of pupils with special educational needs, especially those with difficulties relating to behaviour or willingness to learn, has increased since the previous inspection. The school has looked at how to manage pupils' behaviour through a system of rewards and sanctions so that these pupils needs are met and to ensure that a few do not disrupt the learning of others. Some members of staff use the system very successfully. However, in some lessons in Years 1 to 4, teachers' use of the behaviour policy is not fully effective. The teacher has to interrupt the lesson to attend to pupils who are inattentive or misbehaving. Order is restored because all teachers have a good relationship with the pupils in their class and individual pupils respond well to them but, in some cases, it takes a while. The difficulties arise when the style, pace or content of the lesson does not provide well for the different levels of maturity of the two age groups. This happens most frequently in Years 1 and 2 when pupils find it difficult to listen during the introductory part of the lesson. Some pupils in these year groups are unable to concentrate for more than ten or fifteen minutes. Teachers do not always capture their interest or use methods that are appropriate for their needs. In the past twelve months, the school has also introduced some new teaching methods that focus on raising pupils' self

esteem and understanding of their own learning. One of the strategies in this approach is to allow pupils a short break, called a 'brain gym'. This allows pupils to do a completely different type of activity such as physical movement for a few moments before continuing with mental work. This strategy was seen working effectively in several lessons. In the 15 minute sessions set aside each day for everyone to read in class, teachers do not use good strategies to encourage pupils' interest and enthusiasm for reading.

- 22 In numeracy and literacy lessons, pupils learn mental arithmetic skills and how to read and spell words at a good rate. Sessions are well organised and lively. Teachers in the Reception and Years 1 and 2 have a good understanding of how to use all the senses to help pupils remember the sounds letters make and their names. A good focus on regularly checking how well pupils know commonly used words in Years 1 and 2 is making a difference to how quickly pupils learn and retain these words. In the Reception classes a computer program was used very effectively to teach children how to form letters. However, in Years 1 to 6 teachers have not taken up this method or found other good strategies to teach handwriting. As a result, a considerable number of pupils do not form letters well or make good progress with handwriting. Teachers' good knowledge of how calculations can be made in different ways helps pupils to gain confidence in mental arithmetic. Teachers understand that mathematics needs to be fun even when memorizing facts, for instance, in a Year 3 and 4 class pupils learned their multiplication tables for the week by singing them. Teachers have begun to use effective strategies, such as providing an element of competition in activities and more practical work, to increase the efforts made by boys. However, this is a recent initiative and has not yet had an impact on boys' achievement.
- 23 Teachers have good subject knowledge in science. This helps them to devise investigations that are well organised and matched to pupils' level of interest and knowledge. Pupils learn at a good rate because they are fully involved in practical tasks and teachers challenge their thinking by asking relevant questions as work proceeds. Most teachers' subject knowledge is limited in physical education. Lessons are planned from the commercial scheme without enough understanding of how to match the activities to the level of pupils' attainment. As a result, most lessons lack challenge and interest. In the Nursery and Reception classes, teachers have a very good understanding of how to organise the day and the learning environment so as to promote children's confidence and prompt their curiosity. When starting in the Nursery, many of the children show little interest in the world around them and lack the initiative to decide on even a simple course of action. Repetition provides security and the many different activities allow children to take their first steps in determining what to do for themselves and so gradually to grow in confidence. However, teachers in the Nursery and Reception classes do not have a good understanding of how to encourage children to write when they are engaged in play activities. Planning in this aspect is weak and does not link sufficiently to the work the children have done in the teacher led tasks. As a result, children do not practise their skills in writing enough or gain confidence in writing. Teachers in all classes have a good understanding of how to promote discussion and co-operation through pupils working in groups or pairs. This is effective in helping pupils develop their skills in speaking and listening. In information and communication technology lessons, paired working is used very effectively to develop pupils' skills on computers.
- 24 The marking of pupils' work is not always done well. Praise and affirmation of pupils' efforts are generally used well, but not all teachers give pupils a clear message that they expect them to produce good work. In literacy in a Year 3 and 4 class, pupils have a target to reach that helps them understand what they need to do to improve.

This method of motivating pupils is effective but has not yet been extended to other classes. Teachers ask good questions and generally use the end part of lessons well to assess how pupils have done, but this is not always used enough to plan future work. All teachers let pupils know at the start what they are expected to have learned by the end of the lesson. However, not all spur pupils on as the lesson proceeds by referring back to these goals. The school has a good system for teachers to assess pupils' learning in the literacy sessions when pupils work in a group on reading and writing tasks. When used well, these assessments are very effective as they provide a day-to-day record of how well pupils are learning. However, some teachers do not make regular use of these assessment procedures.

- 25 The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is good because teachers are directed and guided by well thought out specific learning plans. These include clear and precise targets that identify the next stage of learning for these pupils. Skilled, trained and well deployed learning support assistants help individual or groups of pupils to achieve their targets. Careful thought has been given to the balance of withdrawing pupils and including them in the class work. Teachers receive good support from the co-ordinator for special educational needs to analyse pupils' progress and identify the next targets. In the older classes, there are no pupils who speak English as an additional language. In the younger classes and in Nursery and Reception, teachers pay good attention to helping them learn and use the English language by providing good opportunities for pupils to talk together at group times.
- 26 Teachers make good use of information and communication technology to develop learning in other subjects when the class goes to the computer suite. However, back in class, its use is more limited and teachers do not make enough use of computers in literacy lessons do develop skills such as planning and revising written work. Teachers and classroom assistants plan together very well so that classroom assistants' time is put to best use. They are fully involved in lessons, sometimes participating with the pupils, as in a physical education lesson, when this provided good encouragement for a pupil who had physical problems. Care is taken to ensure that those pupils receiving support do not become too dependent on an adult.
- 27 The school has appointed a member of staff to oversee the provision of homework. This good strategy is working well and ensures that the amount of homework that is set agrees with the school policy for each year group. Homework helps to extend the learning that takes place in class. However, it is not as effective as it might be as almost half of the pupils do not return it to school. The one aspect of homework that needs improving is the reading books that go home. These are not graded sufficiently for pupils to choose a book that is at their level and many of the books are of an unsatisfactory quality.

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

- 28 The curriculum provided for children in the Nursery and Reception classes is well planned in accordance with the nationally agreed early learning goals. Emphasis is rightly placed on children's' personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy and mathematical development. Appropriate elements of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy are incorporated into lessons in the Reception year. The children are encouraged to enjoy learning and to take part in a wide range of activities which support their progress effectively in all areas.

- 29 From Year 1 to Year 6 the quality and range of opportunities provided by the school is satisfactory and those aspects of the curriculum required by law are in place. This is an improvement since the previous inspection when provision for information and communication technology was unsatisfactory. The school has successfully introduced the national framework for the teaching of numeracy which has a positive effect on the quality of educational provision. Planning from the national framework for literacy is satisfactory but the school has not fully benefited from recent national guidance concerning development of writing in Years 1 and 2 and grammar in Years 3 and 6. This has been because the role of the English co-ordinator has changed frequently since the previous inspection.
- 30 The school has adopted the nationally recommended guidance for other subjects, adapting them to its own needs and providing clear guidance for their use. This is done well in most subjects but in music and physical education planning does not always provide for the interest and level of attainment of the pupils. Subjects are taught within the structure of a two-year rolling programme because all pupils are taught in mixed year classes. This arrangement works well when teachers ensure that the content of the lesson is well matched to the learning needs of all the pupils in the class.
- 31 The school has developed various strategies to enhance areas of the curriculum. For example, in science, greater emphasis is now put on practical and investigative work, which has helped to raise standards, and to promote literacy skills the school has developed a spelling programme and introduced the RAW (Raising Achievement in Writing) project.
- 32 A developing strength of the curriculum is the linkage between subjects so that new learning in one subject consolidates previous learning in another. For example, in one class, work done on myths in a literacy lesson was very successfully linked to art and design and history. There are good connections made between history and geography. Art and design supports many subjects and science provides opportunities for working with numbers and for data recording. However, throughout the school writing skills are generally not well promoted. Analysis of pupils' books shows that in subjects such as history and geography writing is not developed well. Role-play and drama are not developed sufficiently and this limits pupils' progress in speaking and listening. Teachers do not make enough use of the library to develop pupils' skills in research and their interest in reading.
- 33 The school takes good steps to ensure that all pupils are included in its provision. An analysis of pupils' achievements in English, mathematics and science indicated that girls' performance in national tests is better than that of boys. To help redress the balance teachers make efforts to cater for boys' interests in the subject matter of lessons and through the accelerated learning programme. These efforts clearly reflect the school's strong commitment to providing equal opportunities for all. This commitment is also shown in the school's very good arrangements for teaching and supporting those pupils with special educational needs.
- 34 The school has recently received the prestigious 'Healthy Schools Award'. The curriculum for personal, social and health education is very good. Pupils are given opportunities to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills for making informed decisions about healthy living. There is a coherent and comprehensive set of plans to develop personal and social education, including citizenship and health education which takes place mainly through designated lessons, but also through subjects such as religious education and science. Due attention is given to the dangers of the misuse of drugs and to sex education. Such activities make a considerable

contribution to this area of the curriculum, as do visitors such as the school nurse, the community policeman, a drug awareness team and the 'Danger Rangers' who talk to pupils about personal safety.

- 35 The school provides a good range of activities that broaden pupils' experiences, enrich the curriculum and stimulate pupils' work. These activities include outings to places of interest such as Scarborough, Oakwell Hall and the water treatment works in Sheffield and a visitor to the school who developed mathematical knowledge through the enjoyment of relevant rhymes and songs. The residential visit by the older pupils to Kettlewell develops their social skills and promotes their access to more adventurous activities. The quality and range of activities provided outside lessons is good and includes activities such as football, hockey and African music and dance
- 36 There are good links with the community. Clergy from local churches are regular visitors to the school and take assemblies. Tuition from local sports clubs such as the Batley Bulldogs enhances the physical education curriculum. Trips within the immediate locality, for instance to look at local houses and buildings, support pupils' work in all areas of the curriculum.
- 37 All pupils benefit from the effective contacts that the school has established with other educational institutions. There are effective links with Spen Valley High School to which most pupils will transfer. Pupils have opportunities to become familiar with some aspects of their new school. For instance, pupils spend a day working in the interactive classroom there to produce a newspaper, and staff from the high school come into Leaside to help pupils prepare for a musical performance which takes place in the courtyard at the high school.
- 38 At the time of the previous inspection in 1997, the school was asked to improve planning for spiritual and culture development in lessons. The school appointed a member of staff with special responsibility for these areas. This resulted in teachers identifying aspects of the curriculum that could be improved by including a spiritual and cultural element. There were some good whole school initiatives that involved visits out and visitors to the school. Unfortunately, the member of staff left, and although some improvements continued others were not kept up so well. Nevertheless there has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection and overall, the provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is good.
- 39 The spiritual development of pupils is satisfactory. A daily assembly ensures that statutory requirements for collective worship are met. Planning for assemblies is good with a range of appropriate themes covering all aspects of pupils' personal development. For instance, one assembly, taken by one of the teaching staff, included an effective theme linked to good friends and one by the headteacher highlighted the problems of bullying. Spirituality is also evident through a variety of school displays and occasionally by way of the curriculum in subjects such as religious education, art, history and geography. However, some of the assemblies observed during the week of inspection had a lack of spiritual content and time for reflection. In lessons teachers sometimes miss opportunities to promote pupils' awareness of spirituality or to reflect on personal issues or powerful ideas.
- 40 The moral development of pupils is good. Teachers act as good role models for pupils in the way they present themselves in the classroom and around the school. The caring ethos of the school is used very well to promote the difference between right and wrong. In the Nursery and Reception classes children are taught from an

early age to take turns and to share toys and games with others. The school's behaviour code is not always consistently promoted but lessons on personal, social and health issues are effectively used to underpin and enhance pupils' moral development.

- 41 The social development of pupils is very good and the opportunities provided by the school to enhance this provision are numerous. For example, pupils practise their social skills in the school dining room and in the playground. The school introduced a very innovative approach to seating during assembly times that has been much appreciated by pupils and provides very well for their social skills. They are allowed to choose where and with whom they sit. They enter assembly in a very orderly manner and sensibly find their place, choosing sometimes to sit with those in their own class and sometimes with younger or older friends or family members. There are good opportunities presented for social development in the classroom through speaking and listening and also in group work. A good example of this was seen during a school lunch break when children from different year groups worked very well together on a number of indoor projects including, lantern making, painting and drawing. Extra curricular activities and external visits into the local environment are also used effectively to enhance the social provision.
- 42 Cultural development of pupils is good. Pupils have many opportunities to study local, national and different cultures from around the world through subjects such as English, history, geography and art and design. Visits are made into the local environment for geographical or historical study and many pupils in Years 5 and 6 attend a residential trip to the Yorkshire Dales. Visits are also arranged to the nearby Oakwell Hall which stages history days in which local actors dress up in costume and play character roles whilst pupils are encouraged to ask questions related to the particular time period being portrayed. The wider study of the richness of other cultures is planned for well in music, art and design and the choice of literature. Displays of artefacts are used well to interest and inform. For example, on the ground floor of the school, there is a very effective display of Indian photographs, explanations of art, customs and religion, and a wide range of Indian artefacts. Pupils are encouraged to stop, look and in some cases touch.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

- 43 The high level of child protection and welfare support to pupils at the school, together with the very good procedures for promoting pupils' personal development have a very positive impact on pupils' self esteem and they are a significant strength of the school. The school staff, including lunchtime staff, are very well supported by a range of external agencies.
- 44 In the classroom and playground, teachers and support assistants are very quick to notice any personal difficulties exhibited by pupils and to take appropriate and remedial action. The school operates a good first aid system for minor accidents and appropriate records are maintained. The school carries out proper health and safety audits of the site and a log is kept and monitored to ensure that identified problems are resolved. The school's child protection policy is based appropriately on the local education authority's guidelines. Members of staff, both teaching and non-teaching, are very well informed about all child protection procedures.
- 45 The school's systems for promoting good attendance are satisfactory. Together with the occasional assistance of external agencies, it regularly monitors individual levels of pupil absence. It promotes good attendance through effective reward systems and messages to parents. At present, however, the school does not chase up absent

children (without reason) by telephone until they have been absent for three days. This does not send parents a strong enough message with regard to good attendance and there is not enough check on pupils' safe arrival at school.

- 46 Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are satisfactory and those for eliminating oppressive behaviour are good. There is a wide range of rewards and sanctions to encourage good behaviour. However, these are somewhat complex and procedures are not consistently promoted across the whole school. The impact of this inconsistency can partly be seen in some classrooms where a minority of pupils occasionally disrupts a lesson and consequently the progress made in learning by the majority. Pupils all understand what they should do if they are bullied. Through clear and unequivocal messages pupils understand that bullying will not be tolerated. Incidents of bullying are dealt with promptly and fairly. The school has a good attitude to the challenge of admitting pupils on roll who may have experienced significant difficulties at other schools.
- 47 Pupils' academic performance and personal development is monitored well both formally and informally by the school and steps are taken to identify individual problems. The school provides a very good level of personal support to pupils, which is aimed at raising their individual self-esteem. It acknowledges pupils' individual achievement through the praise given to them in the classroom and, more formally, in regular sharing and presentation assemblies. Older pupils' personal development is enhanced by the 'befriender' system which works very effectively to support younger pupils in the playground.
- 48 There are good, stimulating programmes of work for pupils with special educational needs. These pupils are included in all activities and events organised by the school. They are, for example, taught as part of the class in literacy lessons, taking a full part in whole class activities. They then withdraw to work with a supporting adult for group activities, before returning to the classroom for the final whole class session. Other teaching activities to support pupils with special educational needs include the 'Fuzz Buzz' language work, 'Toe By Toe', 'The Listening Project', additional speech therapy, and numeracy support. Teachers and classroom assistants work very well together to assess their progress using the individual targets that have been agreed in the learning plans.
- 49 The school has good procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress in English, mathematics and science. A carefully planned and systematic programme of statutory and non-statutory testing is carried out throughout the school. The results are analysed thoroughly and used to set the whole school and class targets for future attainment. This has been useful in raising standards of spelling and mental arithmetic. Information gathered about the pupils' work is used effectively to predict National Curriculum levels at the end of Year 6. Assessment procedures have recently been introduced for all other subjects except music and religious education. They provide good information on the skills and knowledge pupils acquire in each unit of work. However they have not been in place for a full year so they have not yet had an impact on pupils' learning. The recording of individual pupils' learning in English, mathematics and science is carried out at the end of each term. This information is checked by the headteacher to ascertain how well individual pupils' progress each year. Subject co-ordinators are involved in this process but do not make enough use of the information to guide curriculum planning for the future.
- 50 Teachers' use of assessment information to guide planning for lessons in mathematics and science is good. In English, however, the use of the school's agreed procedures is inconsistent. For instance, there is good assessment of how

quickly pupils learn the key words in all year groups, but assessment of their progress in group reading and writing sessions is not always carried out well. This is because there are good assessment procedures although not all staff carry them out regularly. In the Nursery and Reception classes, staff observe and record children's progress as they take part in activities and the findings are used effectively to provide future activities for the children that closely match their needs.

- 51 The assessment of pupils with special educational needs is good. Information from the earliest assessments is used to target pupils for additional support. The analysis of annual test results identifies pupils who are not making sufficient progress. Class teachers' concerns, result in the special educational needs co-ordinator making further assessments of specific pupils. Class teachers, learning support assistants and the special needs co-ordinator work together well to track the progress of pupils with special educational needs towards the targets set for them and to adapt them when necessary.
- 52 The school has made a good start in using assessment information to set group targets for pupils in English and mathematics. However, except in the deputy headteacher's class, most of these targets are not specific enough to meet individual pupils' immediate learning needs. Teachers do not always refer to the targets in lessons or when marking pupils' work and so, in the majority of classes, they are not having any significant effect on pupils' progress.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

- 53 Parents' views of the school are satisfactory, as are the school's links with parents. The information provided for parents about pupils' progress is satisfactory, as is the impact of parental involvement with the school.
- 54 The parents' meeting with the inspectors was not well attended and the parental questionnaire was returned by a low percentage of parents. Based on these low returns, a majority of parents are supportive of the school and of its aims and objectives but there are a number of areas where a significant minority of parents feel dissatisfied with the work of the school. Most parents feel that their children like school and that they are making good progress. Parents also feel that the teaching is good. Most are happy with the leadership and management of the school and feel that the school is approachable. However, a significant minority of parents feel concerned that behaviour is not good. Some are unhappy about the levels of homework; that they are not kept well informed; that the school does not work closely with parents and that the range of extra curricular activities is unsatisfactory. During the inspection, the team concluded that they agreed with parents' positive comments but they disagreed with the majority of the negative comments made by parents. Inspectors agreed that in a few lessons behaviour was not good enough but found behaviour in and around the school good.
- 55 The information provided for parents through the prospectus and annual governors' report to parents is helpful and informative and meets statutory requirements. Parents regularly receive good quality newsletters that include a wide range of school topic information and domestic issues. The school also provides a number of open evening opportunities for parents to visit school to discuss their child's progress. The annual academic reports to parents are of a satisfactory standard but lack a note of the key target areas for each pupil's development. Those parents who attend the courses held at the school, that are aimed at helping them become skilled at supporting their child's learning, appreciate this opportunity. The number doing so is small. It is clear from parents' responses that a small number of parents do not feel

that the school is listening to them. The school has already identified the need to further develop its relationship with parents.

- 56 A very small minority of parents are frequent visitors to the school both in terms of providing very welcome classroom support and in helping to organise and run extra curricular activities and other events. All parents have been invited to enter into a home/school agreement which is designed to promote improved relationships between the school, parents and children. A significant proportion of parents do not respond by returning the agreement to school. The school has good procedures to help new parents and pupils settle into school. Access to the teaching staff and Headteacher is good. No member of staff has the responsibility of drawing together the many different initiatives and aspects of the school's partnership with parents, although the newly appointed co-ordinator for homework is having a good effect on monitoring homework provision. There is also a very good level of additional support provided to the parents of pupils with special educational needs.
- 57 Some parents also play an important part in their children's education by helping them at home, for example, listening to them read or in assisting them with occasional project work which is related to a particular topic being studied at school. However, based on the low percentage return of set homework, the support for children at home is inconsistent. Parental attendance at school concerts, celebrations and sports days is good and the overall support of parents for the school is satisfactory.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

- 58 The leadership of the school is good and overall management is satisfactory. The headteacher has led the school well through a number of serious difficulties that have included a high staff turn-over and problems in appointing suitable staff to posts of responsibility. She has retained a clear view of the school's direction and how to accomplish what needs to be done to raise standards. This has been effective in the improvement of mathematics, science and information and communication technology. The governing body has played an important role in providing support and continuity during unsettled times. Good procedures are in place to ensure that newly appointed staff quickly become assimilated into the staff team. This has meant that new staff with management responsibilities have been able to take up their posts and start to make a difference as soon as they have been appointed. Despite the considerable disruption to the school's work, the headteacher and governors have kept the school moving forward. This has resulted in satisfactory improvement since the last inspection.
- 59 The aims of the school are good. They include a commitment to pupils' individual achievements, promoting good relationships and working together. They are clearly stated and communicated to the school community. They are put simply in the brochure and are very visible in the communal areas of the school. In most instances, the school is working well to achieve these aims. The school is particularly successful in ensuring that each pupil is included in its provision and it is welcoming to those who have not been successfully included in other schools.
- 60 School policies are not monitored as frequently and as successfully as they need to be and this has led to some inconsistencies. One instance of this is the behaviour policy. It is not providing as well as it might for some pupils in Years 1 and 2 who do not always respond in the way they should to the different rewards and sanctions. The school allowed teachers to interpret the policy to suit their individual style. This

means that pupils do not have the security of knowing exactly what is expected of them as they move from one class to the next.

- 61 The deputy headteacher and two of the three key stage co-ordinators are new to their posts, starting either one term or, just before, the inspection. They have all concentrated appropriately on making their class teaching effective so as to be good role models for others. The headteacher sets a good store by involving staff appropriately in the management of the school and in creating effective teams. For instance, all staff contribute through their action plans and discussions to the school's plans for future improvement. The staff taking up the new senior management posts were asked to discuss and agree their own roles and responsibilities. This has resulted in them quickly learning about each other and working together well as a team from the start. The only senior management role that has remained stable over the past two years has been that of the special needs co-ordinator. This member of staff has provided effective leadership and management which is reflected in the good provision for these pupils. She has worked hard to involve parents and has provided good guidance to teachers and to learning support assistants so that their work is effective. A member of the governing body has taken a particular interest in the provision for special needs and has provided good support. Sometimes this has been by questioning why numbers have increased and in helping to look for answers both in the school's means of identification and in the changes to the local community.
- 62 The school has a good system for tracking pupils' achievements year on year. It uses this to ensure that, when pupils do not make as much progress as expected, questions are asked to determine whether teaching was less effective or whether the pupil has experienced difficulties outside of school, for instance poor attendance or emotional problems caused by family disruption. The school has analysed data from national tests and its own school assessments. These properly identified the need to raise the achievements of boys and to improve pupils' writing. Good action was taken to address both these issues and the school recognises that more needs to be done.
- 63 The headteacher and the mathematics co-ordinator have carried out well focused classroom observations to evaluate teaching. Each member of staff is observed at least once a term and written evaluations of these observations show that good work was celebrated but useful pointers for improvement were also identified. This work has been responsible for some of the success of the teaching in mathematics. The main weakness in evaluation is that the school has not firmly established the expectation of all carrying out agreed procedures by a set time. Without this expectation work is sometimes postponed, perhaps for good reason, but then possibly forgotten or not carried out until much later. Subject leaders are now very keen to improve the standards in their subject. Most are newly appointed, either to the school or to the role. However, there are insufficient structures whereby co-ordinators can check, or use the checks carried out by key stage co-ordinators, to be sure that their intended improvements are both useful and being maintained. The school does not carry out enough formal checks on pupils' work, although it has satisfactory plans to do this in the next two terms. For example, it has not yet started to check whether marking is used well enough to help pupils improve, or how well their work is presented, or whether teachers carry out all assessments effectively.
- 64 Governors know the school well. They make frequent visits that focus on particular subject areas or aspects for which they are responsible. They ask questions with regard to school issues and those that are prompted by the analysis of data. However, they have not done enough to make sure that evaluations of school improvements and school policies are sufficiently detailed and thorough and

contribute to the on-going work of the school. For instance, the good work that was carried out under the initiative 'Raising Achievement in Writing' was not evaluated rigorously enough at the end of the year to identify what worked well and what was less successful so that teachers could build on this and develop it further in the coming years. The means of judging success too often relies on broad statements that are not clearly linked to school's very detailed curriculum targets for each element of English and mathematics.

- 65 The process of performance management is embedded into the school's process of self-evaluation and is beginning to make an effective contribution to the professional development of staff. Time is set aside for its proper delivery and the headteacher provides the necessary classroom support. It is appropriately linked to school development but also provides for teachers to address their own needs and interests.
- 66 The management of the school's finances is satisfactory and the use of grants is good. The headteacher is careful to access as many grants as possible for the benefit of the pupils. There are efficient procedures to track spending and determine priorities for resources identified in the school's improvement plan. The school seeks to be prudent in its spending. For instance, when a major project is being considered, a range of costed options are sought so as to determine best value. However, because the finance committee do not evaluate fully the effect of spending on the standards pupils achieve, they do not know how effective their decisions have been. The governors receive regular financial updates from the finance committee. However, there is no delegated limit to spending for the headteacher, and this is not recommended practice in government guidelines for the management of school finances. A financial audit was carried out in December 2000. However, the finance committee have not been actively involved in tackling the minor issues identified in this report. Money provided for pupils with special educational needs is very effectively used. Most subject areas have sufficient resources that are of good enough quality to teach the curriculum. However, in English, the range of books in all year groups is limited. The computer suite and library have sufficient equipment and stock but the library is not used enough to encourage reading and research skills. Some of the equipment in the Nursery and Reception classes, such as the blocks for building and some table top games, is in need of replacement.
- 67 The current staffing of the school provides a satisfactory balance between experienced staff and those who are new to the school and relatively new to teaching. Suitably qualified staff support those pupils with special educational needs; these include the coordinator and classroom support assistants. All staff have a clear job description which identifies their subject and managerial responsibilities. Teachers are well supported by classroom support assistants who make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning and progress, as do lunchtime supervisors. Administrative staff, the caretaker, and cleaners make a good contribution to the efficient running of the school.
- 68 The school's accommodation is spacious and allows for effective delivery of the curriculum. The plentiful areas for displays of work are well used to celebrate pupils' achievements and to create focal points for discussion and appreciation. Most classrooms are large and are in satisfactory decorative order. There are good, shared areas adjoining classrooms that provide for group work and the storage of resources. The large hall is well utilised by the school which also has the advantage of a separate dining room. The relatively new computer suite is now in regular use and there is a large library. In addition, the school has the benefit of several small rooms that are used for purposes such as a medical room and a community room. There are extensive outside play facilities including a large shared area of grass

which is well utilised in the summer months for outdoor sports and games. However, the cost of maintenance is high and sometimes repairs are not carried out quickly enough, as happened when the storeroom for physical education equipment leaked resulting in damage to resources.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

69 The headteacher, staff and governors should now address the following key issues:

- (1) Improve pupils' achievement in writing by:
 - providing more opportunities for children in the Nursery and Reception classes to practise writing when they are engaged in play activities; (Paragraph references: 23, 77)
 - ensuring that in Years 1 to 6 teachers assess pupils' skills in writing by consistently using the school's good procedures for this; (Paragraph references: 24, 50, 87, 88)
 - raising expectations of the quality of pupils' written work in all subjects; (Paragraph reference: 9, 32, 87, 121, 127)
 - providing well judged targets for writing that motivate pupils to improve their writing. (Paragraph references: 24, 52, 87, 88)
- (2) Ensure that books and reading are well promoted in lessons and in whole school activities by:
 - Improving teachers' use of the school's current procedures for assessing reading; (Paragraph references: 24, 50, 88)
 - by developing interest in books in the time when everyone reads in class; (Paragraph references: 21, 88)
 - by improving the range and amount of good quality reading books, and the grading and quality of the books that go home for parents to share; (Paragraph references: 27, 86)
 - increasing the use of the library for research and enjoyment of books. (Paragraph reference: 32, 86)
- (3) Ensure that school improvements and initiatives are evaluated in enough detail with reference to the impact that they have on pupils' learning; and that monitoring is done rigorously so that agreed whole school policies are always put into practice. (Paragraph references 38, 46, 50, 60, 64)
- (4) Ensure that in Years 1 and 2 activities are well matched to pupils' interest and stage of maturity so as to improve pupils' skills in listening. (Paragraph references: 13, 21, 88)

In addition to the key issues the governors should include in their action plan the following less significant issues:

- a). Planning for music, physical education, drama and role-play do not make a sufficient contribution to pupils' experiences. (Paragraph references: 11, 32, 88, 138, 140, 144)
- b) Too many pupils stay away from school without good reason. (Paragraph reference: 17, 41)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

| | |
|--|----|
| Number of lessons observed | 55 |
| Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils | 42 |

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

| | Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|------------|-----------|-----------|------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| Number | 1 | 6 | 26 | 19 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| Percentage | 2 | 11 | 47 | 35 | 5 | 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 less than one percentage point.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

| | Nursery | YR – Y6 |
|---|---------|---------|
| Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils) | 18 | 220 |
| Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals | N/a | 56 |

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

| | Nursery | YR – Y6 |
|---|---------|---------|
| Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs | 0 | 10 |
| Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register | 3 | 94 |

English as an additional language

| | No of pupils |
|---|--------------|
| Number of pupils with English as an additional language | 3 |

Pupil mobility in the last school year

| | No of pupils |
|--|--------------|
| Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission | 36 |
| Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving | 45 |

Attendance

Authorised absence

| | % |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data | 4.5 |
| National comparative data | 5.4 |

Unauthorised absence

| | % |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data | 1.3 |
| 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)

| | Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
|--|------|------|-------|-------|
| Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year | 2002 | 24 | 16 | 40 |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results | | Reading | Writing | Mathematics |
|---|----------|---------|---------|-------------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above | Boys | 11 | 9 | 16 |
| | Girls | 11 | 10 | 11 |
| | Total | 22 | 19 | 27 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School | 55 (71) | 48 (74) | 68 (84) |
| | National | 84 (84) | 86 (86) | 90 (91) |

| Teachers' Assessments | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above | Boys | 12 | 16 | 17 |
| | Girls | 10 | 10 | 12 |
| | Total | 22 | 26 | 29 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School | 55 (68) | 65 (71) | 73 (82) |
| | 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)

| | Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
|--|------|------|-------|-------|
| Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year | 2002 | 22 | 14 | 36 |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above | Boys | 9 | 14 | 13 |
| | Girls | 11 | 12 | 13 |
| | Total | 20 | 26 | 26 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above | School | 56 (59) | 72 (59) | 72 (84) |
| | National | 75 (75) | 73 (71) | 86 (87) |

| Teachers' Assessments | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above | Boys | 10 | 14 | 14 |
| | Girls | 11 | 11 | 13 |
| | Total | 21 | 25 | 27 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above | School | 58 (59) | 69 (53) | 75 (63) |
| | National | 73 (72) | 74 (74) | 82 (82) |

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

Ethnic background of pupils

| Categories used in the Annual School Census |
|---|
| White – British |
| White – Irish |
| White – any other White background |
| Mixed – White and Black Caribbean |
| Mixed – White and Black African |
| Mixed – White and Asian |
| Mixed – any other mixed background |
| Asian or Asian British - Indian |
| Asian or Asian British - Pakistani |
| Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi |
| Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background |
| Black or Black British – Caribbean |
| Black or Black British – African |
| Black or Black British – any other Black background |
| Chinese |
| Any other ethnic group |
| No ethnic group recorded |

Exclusions in the last school year

| No of pupils on roll | Number of fixed period exclusions | Number of permanent exclusions |
|----------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 213 | 6 | 0 |
| 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 4 | 0 | 0 |
| 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 2 | 0 | 0 |
| 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 1 | 0 | 0 |
| 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 0 | 0 | 0 |

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

| | |
|--|------|
| Total number of qualified teachers (FTE) | 9.56 |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher | 23 |
| Average class size | 27.5 |

Education support staff: YR – Y6

| | |
|---|-----|
| Total number of education support staff | 14 |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week | 271 |

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

| | |
|--|----|
| Total number of qualified teachers (FTE) | 1 |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher | 18 |
| Total number of education support staff | 1 |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week | 32 |
| Number of pupils per FTE adult | 9 |

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

| | |
|----------------|---------|
| Financial year | 2001/02 |
|----------------|---------|

| | |
|--|---------|
| | £ |
| Total income | 639,881 |
| Total expenditure | 639,459 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 2,431 |
| Balance brought forward from previous year | 13,796 |
| Balance carried forward to next year | 14,218 |

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 |

| | |
|--|---|
| Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE) | 1 |
| Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE) | 1 |
| Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE) | 0 |

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-----|
| Number of questionnaires sent out | 218 |
| Number of questionnaires returned | 47 |

Percentage of responses in each category

| | Strongly agree | Tend to agree | Tend to disagree | Strongly disagree | Don't know |
|--|----------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|------------|
| My child likes school. | 68 | 26 | 4 | 2 | 0 |
| My child is making good progress in school. | 66 | 28 | 4 | 0 | 2 |
| Behaviour in the school is good. | 34 | 43 | 11 | 9 | 4 |
| My child gets the right amount of work to do at home. | 43 | 32 | 6 | 11 | 9 |
| The teaching is good. | 66 | 30 | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on. | 60 | 23 | 11 | 4 | 2 |
| I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem. | 64 | 30 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best. | 66 | 30 | 2 | 0 | 2 |
| The school works closely with parents. | 43 | 47 | 11 | 0 | 0 |
| The school is well led and managed. | 55 | 32 | 11 | 0 | 2 |
| The school is helping my child become mature and responsible. | 51 | 38 | 9 | 0 | 2 |
| The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons. | 38 | 32 | 9 | 9 | 13 |

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

- 70 Children of nursery age and those in the Reception are taught together in the foundation stage which consists of three separate base rooms and a large shared area. Nursery children attend part-time, either morning or afternoon, while reception children stay all day. Nursery children start in September or January in the term, or two terms before they are four and there is the same pattern of admission for the reception children when they are approaching five.
- 71 When children start in the Nursery, their confidence, basic skills and understanding of the world around them is much lower than for most children, and there are few whose attainment is high. The number of children with special educational needs is higher than in most foundation stage classes. In the current year no child is starting with a statement of special need but there have been such children in previous years.
- 72 Teaching in the foundation stage is good overall. It is never less than satisfactory and good or very good in more than half of the lessons. Planning is thorough and based on the recommended guidance for this age. The whole staff plan very well together as a team, using the assessments that have previously been made to focus on the individual needs of children. Clear objectives are identified for the learning for the week, particularly for the teacher-led tasks. Occasionally, opportunities to link with the main objectives for the week are not planned for well enough in the activities that children choose for themselves. Children with special educational needs are identified early. Support, resources and specific aspects of learning are identified to help them make good progress. Parents are encouraged to participate. The very few children who speak English as an additional language make good progress in learning English because they are made to feel safe and given good models of spoken English. The accommodation in the Nursery and Reception classes is spacious. There is a very safe outdoor play area that does present some restriction because it is limited in size, but outdoor play requiring more space is also available in the infant play area that is used when it is not playtime for the infants. The outdoor areas have been developed well and this is a considerable improvement since the previous inspection when this area was found to be weak.

Personal, social and emotional development

- 73 Teaching is very good and this helps children to settle quickly into the Nursery when they start, and to develop confidence and good attitudes to learning as they mature. At certain times during the day, the children are free to choose from any of the activities in the three classrooms and outdoors. This means that children of different ages mix freely. The older children sometimes choose to play, for instance, with the newly arrived nursery children, some of whom had only been in school for a week or two. Staff are very good role models and children feel very secure with them. On occasions, staff lead play activities, at other times they wait to see how the children develop the play themselves. It is very clear that children value these times when they are allowed to make their own choices and because there are a good number of activities available to them they gradually increase their confidence in knowing what they want to do and for how long. Children play together very well. There was hardly any discord over shared resources or the purpose of activities. They talk and make decisions together. A lovely example of this occurred in the wet sand play when three children piled the sand high on one side of the tray and patted it down firmly, declaring it to be a 'dinosaur place'. Large shells were used to represent dinosaur footprints. The idea was their own, and they worked together gaining great

satisfaction from their finished creation that was no different to any other pile of sand, except in their imaginations. A teacher encouraged their ideas with questions and praise.

- 74 Children are allowed to choose when they wish to eat their snack and they do so very sensibly, often going to get their milk and a small piece of fruit or other snack food to share at a table with a friend. A member of staff keeps a close watch on the area, ensuring proper care of the food and any waste, such as banana skins, and encouraging a happy and sociable atmosphere. Children are appropriately taught to take care of their own health and hygiene. At tidy up times everyone is involved. On one occasion, to make the chore a happy one, the teacher dressed up in one of the outfits for the new role play area, a 'mummy bear' headgear, tail, paws and apron and so had a laughing group of children following her as she checked that resources and toys in all the areas were properly stowed away.

Communication, language and literacy

- 75 Many children will not achieve the goals for speaking by the end of the reception year. This is because when they start, they have a limited vocabulary and have not developed the structures of speech expected for a child of their age. Quite a number lack confidence to the extent that they do not speak for some time after starting in the Nursery, other than the briefest of communications. Teaching is good and children make good progress. All adults speak clearly and look for opportunities throughout the day to develop children's confidence in speaking. Stories, rhymes and simple songs provide the focus for developing vocabulary and sentence structures. For instance, the simple story of the three bears was told several times during the week so that the descriptors about the bears, chairs and porridge bowls were used over and over again, and most importantly in children's spontaneous play. Children talk to each other as they play and practise the words and forms of speech that they learn from the adults. Occasionally, because there is such a quantity of activities and a large amount of space, adults are not always present when children's interest and quest for words to express it need some adult help.
- 76 The teaching of letter sounds and the formation of letters is particularly successful. When they start in the Nursery, the majority of children have little understanding of how to hold writing implements or of their purpose. The school successfully helps children learn their letter sounds using all their senses. Lively sessions, such as one where children were invited to a pretend tea party to learn the letter 'p' engage their interest. Teachers make very good use of a computer programme for letter formation. It allows the children to see the letters being formed slowly on a wide screen and challenges them to guess a letter when it is partially obscured. In one lesson all children watched this intently and made very good progress in forming the letters the teacher had chosen to practice for that day.
- 77 Teachers are knowledgeable about the different small steps that children make in learning to read and write and careful assessments ensure that activities are at the right level for each child. For example, in the younger Reception class the writing activity, making their front page for their own 'Goldilocks' book, was aimed at helping children understand that writing starts on the left of the page and moves across to the right. In the older Reception class for the same activity, the teacher focused on helping children compose a simple sentence and sounding out the letters to help with the spelling of words. However, both Nursery and Reception children do not practise their writing or mark making enough when not working directly with the teacher. Play activities do not provide enough encouragement to motivate children to write. Although there are notices asking children to write and paper and writing tools are abundant, few children use them. Their imaginations are not fired because the

teachers have not made writing part of the scenario involved with their play. For example, in the 'post office', older 'postal workers' might have to sign in before taking charge of the counter or to fill in an 'application' for a job. Younger ones might have to form the focus letter for the week which was 'p', in order to work in the 'post office'.

Mathematical development

- 78 Counting and exploring elements of mathematics are taught very well and children are on track to attain the goals by the end of the Reception year. Children make good progress because opportunities for children to count and to use the language of number are built into the activities that children choose for themselves. For example, there are notices displaying how many children can play in a certain area and games, printing activities and displays encourage recognition of repeating patterns. Adults ask questions that promote counting and responses that involve measures whenever the opportunity arises. For instance, they ask which model is the longest or how many 'biscuits' the busy 'cooks' have made from play dough. When children start in the Nursery, their mathematical development is generally a little more advanced than other areas. Nevertheless a few of the children playing a game that involved taking one hidden object away from a group of three clearly had difficulty in counting to three without the help of the Nursery Nurse which is something most children can do at their age.

- 79 A very successful lesson in the Reception class developed children's understanding of measuring the weight of different objects. Throughout the week children had had the opportunity to learn the words 'heavy' and 'light' and to gain some experience of how to judge this. They had been really interested in the fact that small parcels could weigh more than a larger one. Building on this understanding, the teacher successfully explained not only how to use scales but how to record their findings properly so that none of the children lost interest, even though they had to concentrate hard. The teacher provided very well graded activity sheets and resources so that those of higher attainment could weigh objects that exceeded ten cubes in weight, while those of lower attainment had smaller numbers of cubes to count out. By the end of the lesson all children had gained a very good understanding of the need to watch to see if the two sides of the scales balanced and to count the cubes carefully in order to make an accurate record.

Knowledge and understanding of the World

- 80 Teaching in this area is very good and children are likely to reach the goals for this area by the end of the Reception year. Their achievements are very good. When children start in the nursery they often lack the curiosity to investigate that is usual at their age. Teachers do much to encourage this, in simple ways to start with but increasing in complexity as the children mature. The outdoor area is used well to increase children's interest in the natural world and the effects of weather. It snowed briefly during the inspection. Wrapped up well the children went outside to explore their well-known garden area now that it had a sprinkling of white. Despite the thin layer, they managed to scoop up some snow with their shovels. The teacher showed them how to pat it into a small mound. In the autumn they had done the same with the leaves. Inside in the Nursery, the teachers had laid out a small model of an igloo complete with a snowy base, penguins and polar bears to encourage talk of ice and snow to match the weather.
- 81 Understanding of concepts is built on slowly through stories or the general topic. For instance, understanding of the different properties of materials had been a focus for a while, stemming from what had been taught about building materials in the story of the 'Three Little Pigs'. The teacher successfully built on this knowledge by providing an investigation into which materials sink and which float. Good discussion and

questions ensured that children used the vocabulary they had learnt to describe what things were made of for example, metal, plastic and wood. The provision of a well resourced post office attracted older children and gave teachers the opportunity to explain how letters are delivered. Two higher attaining children clearly understood that stamps had to be bought and affixed to the letter to pay for it to be taken on its way.

Physical development

- 82 Although the weather was very cold children enjoyed the outside play area most days if for rather brief periods of time. Teaching is good and provides well for their development. Outside they are given good opportunities to explore the garden enclosed by the school building that offers a variety of surfaces and gradients such as slight slopes, steps and stairways. Children run, jump and play on bicycles and other wheeled toys while showing a good awareness of the space they need and what is needed by others. They are able to dig, as on the day it snowed. The adult leading the play outdoors encouraged turn taking activities that gave children the opportunity to develop their skills with small apparatus such as a ball. On this occasion they were throwing a small ball through a ring. Children controlled the ball well and understood that after they had had a turn they ran to the back of the line. The challenge linked with the work on size as the teacher asked them whether or not it was easier to get the ball through a large or small ring. Indoors, good planning allows for children to develop their dexterity as they handle a variety of tools and materials. During the inspection, the children used malleable materials in a variety of ways twisting rolling and cutting play doh in different colours. A small group of older children used scissors very well for their age to cut out card to make little models they had designed themselves. Children make good progress in this area, including understanding how to use equipment safely and to take care of themselves while doing so. They are on track to achieve the goals by the end of the Reception year.

Creative development

- 83 This area of development is well provided for in general and the teaching is good. In most aspects children make good progress. In their exploration of colour, texture and shape their progress is satisfactory Children have very good opportunities to act out their ideas and express their imaginations in role-play. They enjoy dressing-up and pretending to be the characters in the stories they have read. A good and accessible display of musical instruments was used very well by several children during their time to choose their own activities. They picked up the instruments with care and listened to the sounds they made in turn. None of the children banged them without thought even when they played them together to see what effects they could make. Children use computer programs to explore colour and various activities and displays help them to investigate different possibilities. For instance, a display that focused on the contrast between black and white was stocked with black and white paper and instruments for experimentation. Songs, poems and rhymes are used well by staff to develop children's interest in language and creativity. Children make pictures using crayons, paint, collage and many different techniques such as printing and dripping or rolling paint. There are plenty of opportunities for children to use paint and other media to investigate shape and the spaces on paper. However, the lack of a permanent area for children to investigate paint, collage materials and designing and making is a missed opportunity to further develop children's creativity.

ENGLISH

- 84 Standards in English in Year 2 and Year 6 are below average. This is similar to findings reported at the time of the last inspection and standards have remained low due to a combination of factors. Since the last inspection the proportion of pupils

with special educational needs has grown each year and the emotional and behavioural difficulties that hinder learning have increased as have the number of pupils transferring to and from other schools. There have also been many disruptions owing to staff change and in particular in changes to the leadership of the subject. These factors have badly affected learning and some improvements have been slow in coming about. When children start in the Nursery class many have attainment in spoken English well below expectations for their age. Basic skills are now taught well and achievement is sound for most pupils. The pupils in Years 4 to 6, however have not had a sufficiently good grounding in the basic skills, and their achievement is unsatisfactory.

- 85 Pupils' speaking and listening skills are below average in Year 2 and Year 6. The system of talking pairs in Year 1 and 2, however, is effective and is beginning to work well as a strategy for developing confidence, vocabulary and expression. A good example was seen when pupils discussed the behaviour of the ugly sisters from '*Cinderella*' and thought of phrases such as "incredibly mean and nasty." A sizeable proportion of pupils, particularly from age five to nine, find it very difficult to listen attentively. They interrupt others in discussion, which detracts from the learning focus. In Years 3 and 4 there are several pupils in each class, predominantly boys, who have difficulty in concentrating and who 'switch off' from lessons. Strategies such as 'brain gym' breaks (when the pupils carry out exercises requiring focussed concentration) help to re-focus attention. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 converse well in groups and make presentations to the class, such as when they read poetry aloud. They sometimes lack confidence, which can result in a lack of audibility, but they do volunteer willingly. In one lesson very good progress was seen when the teacher coached a small group. It was clear from this lesson that the pupils were unused to this type of activity.
- 86 Standards in reading are below those expected. However, pupils' records show that most make satisfactory progress. By the time pupils are in Year 6, they read sufficiently well to support their work in other subjects. For example, in information and communication technology they read the instructions on the screen and can search for information from a website. However, in Years 3 to 6 pupils do not use a wide enough range of strategies to help them gain meaning from texts. When faced with an unfamiliar word most tend to be heavily reliant on 'sounding out' as a strategy. This is helpful but as pupils gain in fluency they need to make use of the context of what they are reading to help them comprehend. The guided reading and shared reading sessions are giving the pupils increased confidence to tackle new material. Learning is sound but limited because not all teachers complete assessment records and use the information from them to plan future work. Progress is good for pupils with special educational needs who are given more targeted help, linked to their individual programmes and for those pupils taking part in 'The Better Reading Partnership' organised by 'Fastlane.' Many of these pupils are less secure when reading an unfamiliar text in a different format and find the national test reading comprehension very challenging. The teaching assistants foster an interest in reading with strategies such as Pip the puppet, and focusing on the use of sound and letter relationships. They discuss characters, endings and preferences. Pupils are encouraged to read at home but some of the 'jolly books' which are sent home are of poor quality. These books do not offer pupils a good choice and, because they are not banded according to reading age, progress is not as good as it could be. By Years 5 and 6, those pupils classed as 'free readers' have read a broader range of material but others have a more limited choice. Resources are very limited which has a negative effect on pupils' understanding and response to books. In lessons, teachers use a good range of reading materials to excite pupils' interest. For example, in the lessons related to myths in literacy lessons teachers engaged

pupils' interest well. However, most pupils knowledge of fiction is limited to one or two authors such as Jacqueline Wilson, Roald Dahl or J.K.Rowling. Pupils' ability to find information is limited and is not promoted by, for example, visits to the library. The school does not do enough to promote enjoyment and excitement in reading.

- 87 The standard of writing in Year 2 and Year 6 is below expected levels but progress is satisfactory. However, handwriting has not improved since the last inspection. Most Year 2 pupils are not yet writing neatly and at speed. Presentation in Years 3 to 6 is good in some classes but generally expectations are too low. In many classes there is not a clear expectation that written work will be neatly presented, dated and completed. Low expectations are apparent in some books where work is marked cursorily or not at all. This is true of writing across the curriculum. In some religious education books, for example, there is very little written recording. Group targets in English are imprecise and seldom referred to in marking. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 write simple sentences in a logical sequence and sometimes choose interesting words to express their ideas. Few use capital letters and full stops correctly. Spelling is helped by the focus given to the word bank. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 show great enthusiasm for descriptive writing in extended writing sessions when they write stories together. Their work from these sessions is good. Year 5 and 6 pupils use paragraphs correctly and different layouts in their written work but stylistic features are often lacking. There is not a strong enough emphasis on the teaching of punctuation, spelling and grammar and errors are not being corrected consistently. There was little evidence of characterisation in story-writing. An analysis of work shows that some of the older pupils have suffered disruption to their education through changes in staff which has resulted in a poorer quality of marking and low expectations for some pupils, including the highest attaining pupils. Resulting written work, therefore, often lacks depth and originality and pupils are not taught to assess their own work at an appropriate level. There are some good examples of marking where teachers have responded to work positively but have also helped individuals to understand how to further improve, but this is inconsistent. Progress over time is unsatisfactory for the oldest pupils.
- 88 The quality of teaching and learning is sound overall with some good elements. Particularly good features include imaginative teaching strategies such as the brain gym breaks seen in Years 3 to Year 6, and the use of all the senses to teach letter sounds and spelling in Years 1 and 2. In a very good lesson in Years 5 and 6 the atmosphere was motivating and exciting. Every part of the lesson had been carefully planned so that all abilities were being challenged and had something different to bring to the discussion at the end of the lesson. This was a good example of the emphasis placed on valuing the individual that is having such a powerful impact on self-esteem and instilling the confidence to try. Other strengths include the secure subject knowledge and clear learning objectives that are either displayed or explained to the pupils, the guided reading which is well organised so that pupils make progress each week, and the opportunities for encouraging speaking and listening throughout the curriculum. In most lessons, the teachers' skilful questioning checks understanding and extends individual pupils by building on their comments and questions. The main areas for improving teaching are linked to raising expectations in writing through marking, assessment linked to the setting of targets and a more consistent application of the assertive discipline policy. Pupils are not encouraged to read widely and value reading as a source of information and pleasure, particularly in the 15 minutes sessions when everyone reads in class. There is insufficient planning or focus to these times. In Years 1 and 2 pupils sometimes sit for too long listening to explanations and teachers do not provide enough active means for learning, such as role play and drama. This limits the pupils'

progress in speaking and listening, particularly for those pupils who find it difficult to concentrate for long periods of time.

- 89 The leadership and management of the subject over time have suffered from a succession of coordinators, which has resulted in a lack of cohesion and systems that lack rigour. The leadership of the subject is now good as the new co-ordinator, who has been in place for just one term, has a great enthusiasm for the subject and has given good guidance to teachers. Management is satisfactory, although she has not had sufficient time to fully evaluate the systems and procedures throughout the school. Meticulous attention has been paid to a detailed analysis of performance and in some instances this has been used well to inform curriculum planning. For example, by the introduction of better spelling programmes. It has not, however, been fully linked to the setting of targets. A lot of time has been spent on the development of policies but the school does not insist on or check teachers' full adherence to policies such as the marking, handwriting and assessment. The current co-ordinator has been effective in increasing resources. However, she has not had an opportunity to monitor teaching and learning or to increase the effective use of the library.

MATHEMATICS

- 90 There has been a steady improvement in standards in mathematics since the previous inspection as shown by the numbers attaining the expected level in the National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6. This has been brought about by good leadership of the subject by the current co-ordinator who has firmly established the use of the methods recommended in the numeracy strategy in all year groups. The pupils, currently in Year 6, are attaining average standards. They are on track to exceed the school's targets and should meet the targets set nationally.
- 91 The pupils in Year 2 are attaining at a much higher level than in previous years. This is because current good teaching is building on that of the previous years. Pupils are attaining average standards.
- 92 Pupils achieve well throughout school. However, the school is aware that in the past boys have not done as well as girls. There has been a good focus on the need to motivate boys through making sure that mathematics is presented in a lively and competitive way. Most lessons reflected this approach but on some occasions opportunities were missed to keep pupils working at a fast rate. Mental sessions are good but teachers do not make enough use of timed challenges or setting short term achievable targets that are checked regularly. Higher attaining pupils are generally given work that is well matched to their level and in the best lessons this provides them with a good level of challenge. However, marking does not always give a clear message of high expectations. As a result, untidy or messy work is allowed to continue and pupils are not given a clear understanding of how to improve. Pupils who learn more slowly than others and those with special educational needs are provided with good support, either through additional explanations or through well thought out resources. In the very few lessons where pupils speak English as an additional language, teachers and learning support assistants make sure that they have understood the meaning of the mathematical words that are used.
- 93 Teachers plan work that provides an appropriate mix of activities that develop computational skills, problem solving and investigative work. Pupils have average skills in solving mathematical problems that are expressed in words. These are introduced to pupils in Year 1 and pupils are given enough opportunities to practise them. Pupils' competence in other areas of the subject such as shape, space and

measure is sound. Pupils' grasp of mathematical concepts is reinforced well by the opportunities that they are given to practise different elements in subjects such as design and technology, art, geography, history and science. Mathematical skills are reinforced well when pupils use information and communication technology to process data.

- 94 Pupils learn at a good rate because they are interested in mathematics. There are a few pupils, however, who find it particularly difficult to listen attentively and have poor concentration skills. On occasions, teachers do not respond quickly enough to pupils' increasing inattention and this affects the rate of their learning. In most lessons, relationships between pupils and pupils, and between pupils and adults are good, and pupils often support each other in their learning.
- 95 Pupils in Year 2 of average and higher attainment count confidently and accurately between 20 and 40 in 2s and 5s. They understand that doubling is the opposite of halving and use the words 'multiplication' and 'division' with understanding. Lower attaining pupils are accurate in counting in tens and they count in twos with support from resources such as a stick marking out numbers. The quality of teaching is satisfactory for Years 1 and 2. On occasions, lessons become too slow and this allows those pupils who have difficulty sustaining interest to become distracted and lose concentration. Teachers make good use of practical tasks to keep pupils interested and to show how mathematics is involved in everyday life. For example, in a good lesson in Years 1 and 2, pupils worked hard to find the right answers to problems involving the length of time journeys took between several local towns. Most pupils found the task relevant and challenging. All pupils had made good progress in learning to tell the time and to use the fractions 'quarter' and 'half' correctly in relation to time.
- 96 In Years 3 to 6, the quality of teaching is good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and they use the National Numeracy Strategy confidently to raise attainment. Pace in lessons is often good but in some lessons teachers do not keep a close enough eye on how well time is being used. Where the pace is brisk and pupils are presented with an appropriate level of challenge, they are motivated to concentrate and meet that challenge. For example, in a very good lesson in Years 5 and 6, the teacher provided a number of different tasks, that increased in difficulty, focused on converting decimals to fractions using calculators. The tasks were timed and so pupils were keen to beat the timer. Pupils have a good understanding that parts of units can be written as fractions, decimals or percentages, that decimals extend the place value system to tenths and hundredths and that percentages give the number parts per hundred. A lively and purposeful approach resulted in very good progress in learning. In this lesson targets were used well to help pupils understand how well they were progressing.
- 97 The quality of marking is inconsistent. Although pupils' work is marked regularly, there is limited analysis of pupils' strengths and weaknesses. Comments to move pupils' learning forward are not used consistently by all teachers. The presentation of some pupils' work lacks structure and does not encourage pupils to try their best. The school makes use of assessments including National Curriculum tests at the end of Years 2 and 6, and the optional tests at the end of Years 3, 4 and 5. This information is used well to identify any areas of weakness so that future teaching and learning address them. Assessment is used to guide the planning of future work for different ability groups.
- 98 The subject is well led. The subject coordinator who took up the post in January 2003 had been shadowing the previous post holder for longer. Part of the induction

process was to monitor teaching and learning and from this the subject coordinator gained a good overview of the subject from a whole school perspective. A policy review is planned for in the summer 2003 and a subject action plan will feed into the school development plan. Parents were involved in a 'Mathematics Week' and this helped to raise the profile of the subject.

SCIENCE

- 99 The attainment of Year 6 pupils is broadly average and more pupils are likely to achieve the higher level than in previous years. There are a number of reasons for this improvement. The adoption of the nationally approved scheme of work has enabled teachers to set work at the right level and to plan lessons that interest pupils. The school has now put a great emphasis on developing investigative skills. Teaching in Years 3 to 6 is consistently good and for older pupils it is very good and pupils achieve well. The work of the present Year 2 pupils is generally below average and few pupils attain highly. However, taking into account the low attainment of many pupils on entry to the nursery, achievement is satisfactory.
- 100 In all classes pupils with special educational needs work well with other pupils and make similar progress. They are given good support by teachers or classroom assistants to record their work. Girls' performance has been better than that of boys. The school is taking this into account when planning activities, for instance by ensuring that tasks develop learning from practical or investigative activities.
- 101 Standards in science have improved since the time of the last inspection when, although progress in lessons was satisfactory for the majority of pupils, progress over time throughout the school was unsatisfactory. At that time there was insufficient attention given to the development of scientific enquiry skills. While this element has not yet been fully addressed for younger pupils, scientific enquiry is now a feature in all science lessons from Year 3 to Year 6 and is effectively helping to raise standards.
- 102 Pupils in Year 2 accurately identify a wide range of sources of sound. They understand that plants need water and light for growth and know that a seed planted in soil would first take root and then sprout a shoot. They recognise that ice melts in a warm room and name other materials that melt such as chocolate and ice cream and that when you mix ingredients for a cake, these will change when put into a hot oven. However, poor writing skills prevent most pupils from writing clear explanations and they demonstrate their knowledge and understanding with drawings. Although by Year 2 most pupils have benefited from sound teaching many have not retained the depth of knowledge to reach the expected level in the national tests. For example, pupils correctly identify materials such as wood, plastic, metal, cloth and glass and say what they might be used for but find difficulty in describing the properties of these materials. Pupils were observed carrying out investigative work on sound but the work in their files does not reflect this aspect of science. None of the activities included making predictions or making a step-by-step record of a fair test. Some methods of recording do not present enough challenge for those of higher attainment.
- 103 Years 5 and 6 pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of many aspects of science. They carry out investigations and demonstrate ideas of their own. Pupils of all abilities accurately describe the circulatory system and how the heart works using scientific vocabulary such as 'oxygenate' confidently. After carrying out investigations, pupils come to conclusions which in turn are used to solve problems, for instance, when knowledge gained from an investigation into factors affecting

evaporation was applied to the problem of how to dry washing. Pupils' work in their books is well presented and makes a good contribution to literacy as they write their predictions, methods and conclusions carefully and clearly. Numeracy skills are developed through data handling and through recording, for example, different pulse rates. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 demonstrated their knowledge of the properties of various materials when they investigated their suitability as packaging for a delicate object to be sent abroad. Their awareness of the principles of fair testing was shown by remarks such as "we will need to take account of the amount of wrapping as well".

- 104 Teaching is good overall. It has improved since the last inspection when it was satisfactory. Of the lessons observed all but two were judged to be good. One of these lessons was very good and the other was unsatisfactory. Lessons are well planned and have a clear purpose. Teachers have good subject knowledge which results in clear explanations. They use questions effectively to develop pupils' understanding. Class management skills are generally good and teachers involve pupils in interesting practical activities. In a very good lesson, Years 5 and 6 pupils were helped to use their existing knowledge about factors which affect the heart rate, to make predictions and to set up their own investigation to test these predictions. The teacher interspersed clear explanations with pertinent questions to test pupils' understanding of the task they were to engage in. She presented scientific facts to the pupils, turning instruction into a process of sharing her knowledge with them, encouraging a mature and reflective response from the class. Pupils responded well, putting forward their own interpretation of what they were learning, further enabling the teacher to assess their knowledge and understanding. In a Year 1 and 2 lesson, the teacher successfully linked science and music. Pupils investigated the sounds that could be produced from a variety of musical instruments and subsequently classified those sounds in terms of "sound noise". The teacher's very good management skills and her careful questioning to establish understanding enabled all pupils to be engaged in an enjoyable and productive session which developed their perception of sound. Because of the good teaching they experience, pupils' attitudes to science are positive. Relationships in classrooms are good and pupils work well together. They work hard, stay on task and maintain a good level of concentration. They are eager to answer questions and enjoy their work, especially the interesting range of practical activities that they engage in. In the one unsatisfactory lesson, the teacher provided pupils with the opportunity to investigate sounds but explanations for the need to categorise these sounds and to identify similarities and difference were not clear, and as a result pupils' understanding of this part of scientific enquiry was not developed.
- 105 Pupils' progress is tracked at the end of units of study and through annual testing so that teachers are aware of the broad levels reached. Teachers also know which pupils have achieved as they should at the end of a unit and those who have not. They use this information to plan work that builds on pupils' previous knowledge. However the quality of marking of pupils' work varies for different age groups. Work done by pupils in Years 1 and 2 is not marked regularly. In Years 3 and 4 work is marked with positive comments but does not indicate to pupils how to improve.
- 106 The co-ordinator joined the school at the start of this school year. She is enthusiastic and her good leadership and management has begun to have a good impact on standards. She has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the subject having carried out an audit and has formulated an appropriate action plan. However, the subject was without stable leadership for some time so that although the school identified the need to raise standards in science, those colleagues whose subject knowledge is weak have not had enough support to ensure that lessons are successful. Through the good relationships that are fostered through practical

working in groups, science makes a good contribution to pupils' personal and social development.

ART AND DESIGN

- 107 The attainment of pupils in Year 2 is at the expected level and in Year 6 it is above the nationally expected level. Throughout the school, achievement over time is very good for all pupils, including those with special educational needs. This is a good improvement since the previous inspection when standards were below average for both years groups and pupils made poor progress. There have been significant improvements in the provision for art and design. At that time, although teaching in the lessons observed was satisfactory, teachers' subject knowledge was judged to be low resulting in poor expectations of pupils' work. Now teaching and learning are consistently good or better.
- 108 Teaching in Years 1 and 2 is good. Pupils engage in a rich variety of activities to foster their artistic knowledge, appreciation and ability. Their collage of 'City Scapes', showing silhouettes of buildings against a darkened sky is particularly attractive. It has involved using media such as charcoal, ink and paint and techniques such as printing and line drawing. Pupils made good progress in the lesson observed as they demonstrated their ability to roll clay and fashion modroc to make tiles. They subsequently decorated the tiles, either by pressing shapes, patterns and texture into the surface or engraving patterns and textures using a pointed tool. At the start of the lesson the pupils were lively and excited by the prospect of the activities to come and the teacher wisely kept the introduction short so pupils moved quickly to the practical activities. The teacher's management of the pupils and the lesson was very good. Resources were well prepared and readily available so the lesson proceeded at a good pace with pupils well supported by the teacher and the classroom assistant to produce good quality work.
- 109 In Years 3 and 4, teaching is also good. Pupils have investigated patterns on fabrics and objects concentrating particularly on Indian designs. This has led to a number of art processes, most of which are successfully linked with other subjects such as geography, mathematics and religious education. They include making designs which they effectively use as a basis for fabric printing and decorating clay tiles. In the lesson observed, pupils investigated the tactile qualities of clay and developed their manipulative techniques when using it. They showed a clear understanding of the techniques of both making tiles and using slip and clay worms to join them into a three-dimensional container. This was because the teachers took the pupils carefully through the whole 'design and make process' and very effectively helped them to consolidate their previous learning before they embarked on the activity.
- 110 In an excellent lesson in Years 5 and 6 pupils worked collaboratively on planning for an applique picture, designing and cutting out shapes incorporating a variety of techniques. Pupils made very good progress and produced high quality work because of excellent teaching. The teacher used the story of 'Theseus and the Minotaur', which pupils had encountered in history and geography topics, as an inspiration for the project. She established a calm learning environment with music and effectively supported pupils, helping them to develop their own ideas.
- 111 Very good initial input is a feature in all lessons. Sharing the objectives of the lesson with the pupils ensures that they know exactly what is required. All pupils enjoy the interesting activities and are well-motivated to respond to the high expectations for their work and learning. Teachers make very good cross-curricular links so that art and design permeates and enhances all areas of learning in the school. This ensures

that it makes a very good contribution to pupils' personal, social, spiritual and cultural development.

- 112 The subject is well managed. The co-ordinator has clear views as to how the teaching of art should be developed throughout the school. The schools' programme of work is based on nationally approved guidelines tailored to the needs of the school.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

- 113 Although no lessons were observed, analysis of pupils' work, teachers' planning and discussion with pupils indicate teaching is at least satisfactory. The pupils are being taught the full design and technology process. Their attainments match those expected of pupils in Year 2 and Year 6, and have been maintained since the previous inspection.
- 114 Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have designed a house for a fairy tale character, taking note of features such as windows and doors, and incorporating these into their designs. In making their houses the pupils demonstrate competent cutting and fastening skills. Writing about what they have done makes a satisfactory contribution to the development of literacy skills. Pupils enjoyed this task greatly, one pupil for instance bringing a similar model he had made at home. In connection with their project on healthy eating pupils made lemon curd and designed and made a fruit salad. This too was used satisfactorily to develop literacy skills when they devised a set of instructions.
- 115 By the time they are in Year 6 pupils have a clear understanding of the design process and have developed appropriate making and evaluating skills. This is because they have had regular, well-structured tasks to help them develop their skills. Year 5 and 6 pupils have used a combination of materials to produce attractive working musical instruments. This project was successfully linked to a literacy theme when pupils were set the task of designing and making an instrument which would make sounds to accompany a water poem. However, pupils' work in folders indicates that teachers miss opportunities to promote literacy when they accept work from pupils which is lacking in length and detail.
- 116 Leadership and management of the subject is satisfactory. The school now makes use of the national guidelines which has helped to increase teachers' confidence, and has ensured that pupils' making and designing skills are developed in conjunction with each other on each project. All pupils are included in activities and group projects provide good opportunities to develop pupils' personal and social skills. The co-ordinator has been leading the subject since September 2002. She correctly identified that her first task was to ensure that teachers have the resources they need to deliver the different units of work successfully.

GEOGRAPHY

- 117 Attainment matches that expected nationally for pupils in Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils make satisfactory progress in all year groups. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to their prior attainment. They are included in all activities and are well supported by classroom assistants. The school has improved provision and learning in the subject since the last inspection.
- 118 In Years 1 and 2, pupils successfully identify physical features such as coastlines, mountains, roads and houses. Pupils in Year 2 understand how symbols are used

on maps to show particular features and that these are organised into a key. There is evidence both in discussions with pupils and in their written work, that they have a satisfactory understanding of localities beyond their own. On a map of the British Isles pupils of all levels could point out where Scotland, England, Ireland and Wales were. Pupils use appropriate geographical language at the level expected for their age. By the end of Year 2 pupils have a satisfactory understanding of place.

- 119 In Years 3 and 4 pupils acquire a satisfactory understanding of the factors relating to development and land use. In their study of Chembakolli, a village in India, pupils compare and contrast their own area with that in a different locality, using photographs as a secondary source of evidence. They describe clearly and give reasons for the distinctive character of localities based on features and human activity. Pupils continue to use appropriate geographical vocabulary. Some teachers use information and communication technology well, for instance using computers to sort data collected in geographical surveys, but their use in research has not been fully developed. The school rightly identifies this as an area for further development.
- 120 Pupils in Years 5 and 6, explain with a satisfactory amount of detail how natural and human processes impact on the environment. In their project on water, the pupils showed a sound understanding of the effect of irrigation on plant growth. A homework project on water usefully extended pupils' learning. One pupil in Year 5, for example, knew that only one per cent of the world's water was drinkable. By the end of Year 6 pupils have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of place. One pupil described Greece as being in Europe and 'next to', Turkey. This work was part of a topic on Ancient Greece. Work in pupils' books show that they have a sound understanding of different scales on maps although the use of keys was limited. An annual field trip to Kettlewell provides pupils in Years 5 and 6 with the opportunity of reinforcing learning and extending their understanding of the natural world.
- 121 Teaching was satisfactory overall. However, tasks are not always well enough matched to the pupils' different levels of ability. The oldest pupils and those of higher attainment are not always given enough challenge. The quality and quantity of written work are unsatisfactory because of poor presentation and lack of depth in writing.
- 122 The subject coordinator who is relatively new to teaching was absent during the inspection. Her leadership and management is satisfactory. She has identified areas for development appropriately. For instance, she has correctly identified that the school's procedures for assessing pupils' achievement need further development. A useful means of assessing pupils' skills is in place but it is not yet linked to teachers' planning. Resources are used well, particularly in the many attractive displays that promote pupils' thinking and self-esteem. Geography makes a good contribution to pupils' moral, social and cultural development.

HISTORY

- 123 Standards are at the nationally expected levels for pupils in Year 6 which is an improvement since the last inspection when standards were below average. Although no lessons were observed in Years 1 or 2, analysis of work together with discussion with Year 2 pupils indicate that standards are below average as they were at the time of the last inspection.
- 124 Year 2 pupils identified accurately some of the poor conditions found in the hospital at Scutari, when they learnt about the life of Florence Nightingale. In this unit of work they learnt that hospital care and home comforts, such as families having washing

machines have improved since then. Pupils have begun to build a view of passing time but are not familiar with terms such as '100 years ago'. Even higher attaining pupils have weak understanding of how much of everyday life has changed as time has passed. They had difficulty, for instance, in placing pictures of three well-known objects into a simple sequence that started with the furthest back in time. History has not been taught a great deal since the start of the autumn term because it does not occur as often this year as geography in the two year planning cycle.

- 125 Pupils in Year 6 have a good knowledge of the Ancient Greeks. They have located events from that era in order on a line that indicates the passing of time, and have compared life in Athens and Sparta. They enjoyed their work on the Victorians and described in some detail what Victorian schools were like and the conditions for children who were poor at that time. Pupils' skills in research are satisfactory. They can find out what happened in the past by looking for evidence and information in books, newspapers, photographs and on the internet, although opportunities for using information and communication technology has not been developed as much as it could have been. They talk knowledgeably about 'pictures telling stories'. They describe some of the artefacts they handled when learning about World War II, demonstrating their sound understanding of the importance of using primary sources to find out what life was like at a particular period in time. Pupils are developing a good awareness of the historical importance of certain events, and sequence these in the order in which they occurred.
- 126 Teaching is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6. Only one lesson was observed during the inspection. The quality of teaching in the lesson seen was good. The lesson stimulated pupils' interest and curiosity about the past and they were attentive, hardworking and enthusiastic. Pupils took on the role of an archeologist to find out about Ancient Greece. They learned how digs are constructed and how to glean information from a dig. The teachers' lively manner and anecdotes successfully brought history to life. The teacher made good use of pupils' "findings" to raise further questions and increase pupils' understanding and knowledge. All pupils participate fully in lessons and those with special educational needs are helped by extra resources or adult support to work as productively as other pupils.
- 127 History makes a good contribution to literacy in terms of speaking and listening and when it is used to promote extended writing such as pupils' own mythical writing based on the myths of Ancient Greece. However, analysis of pupils' work shows that often pupils' recorded work is unfinished and opportunities to encourage pupils to write about historical events in their own words are missed.
- 128 Leadership and management are satisfactory. The recently appointed co-ordinator is proposing to produce a portfolio of work to provide a guide for teachers to judge National Curriculum levels. This will be helpful. She has worked hard to ensure that there are now good resources available for each unit in the national scheme which has been adapted to the schools' needs. An interesting range of visits, for instance, to Dewsbury Museum and Cap House Colliery provide a greater understanding of life in the past and make a good contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

- 129 Standards match national expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and show good improvement since the last inspection when standards were below average. Achievement is satisfactory. There have been good improvements in this subject in

all of its aspects and much of this success is down to the effectiveness of the coordinator. Standards have improved and are continuing to rise; teachers are more confident in delivering an enriched curriculum; resources are greatly improved and put to good use. Throughout the school, there is no significant difference between the achievements of boys and girls or between pupils from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

- 130 By the end of Year 2, pupils have experienced a wide range of topics and achievement is satisfactory. Many pupils do not have easy access to a computer at home and yet their mouse control, knowledge and use of different tools when creating pictures are developing well. Word processing shows sound progression, from simple messages in Year 1 to more complex text in Year 2, which is saved and printed. Pupils also use the computer for data handling, linking it to other subjects such as mathematics and geography. A good example is when pupils carry out a survey of the way their class travels to school and put this information into a database. In mathematics they give instructions to enable a programmable toy to visit objects. They still require a lot of input from the supporting adults.
- 131 Standards in Years 3 to 6 have risen since the last inspection and there are positive signs that standards are beginning to rise even higher. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 are confident with features such as 'drag' and 'drop' and editing tools such as 'print preview' and 'undo.' They are becoming adept at producing posters and using the Internet for research. The information and communication technology suite is in constant use and because it is often used well, most pupils make sound progress. Unfortunately, many pupils in Year 5 and Year 6 have not experienced good provision earlier in their school life and their new learning cannot build easily on previous learning. This is compounded by the fact that several teachers in the past lacked good subject knowledge. Pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding were not reinforced and improved through their work in other subjects. This is no longer the case. Many of the older pupils have experience of setting up, or obtaining information from, databases and using spreadsheet data for modelling. In lessons seen, all pupils were focused on the task of creating a healthy menu. There is less evidence of pupils programming the computer to control movement or sound, or of using computer equipment to sense physical data, although these elements are planned to take place over the two-year cycle. Desktop-publishing skills are satisfactorily developed and these are being further developed in the extra-curricular computer club. Research skills using the Internet are planned for well, although pupils' current work in history, geography and science do not have a great many examples of this type of work.
- 132 Teaching is good. Good features include: good levels of preparation and organisation, effective deployment of teaching assistants, clear explanations and the introduction of new tools at an appropriate pace. These ensure that pupils use computers sensibly and with confidence and learn at a good rate. Teachers give good reminders to pupils about important learning points, both at the start of the lesson and as work proceeds, and time for them to practise their skills. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen in the subject. On one occasion, the teacher acted as the non-expert, which was very motivating for the pupils who immediately wanted to show their superior skills and knowledge. In the weakest lesson, the task was well planned, but a group of pupils at one computer was too large so that, although they shared their computer well, waiting too long for a turn affected their interest in the task. In most lessons, well-motivated pupils work with enthusiasm. They want to succeed, and are determined to master the skills they need. They work very well together and keep each other achieving. For example, in a well-planned lesson in Years 1 and 2, pupils worked independently but offered help to each other when they

could. Consequently, the teacher was able to give quality time to pairs of pupils. In this lesson pupils made good progress in learning to enter information into a data base on how they travel to school. It was a good support to their work in geography and mathematics. Teachers assess pupils' efforts well as work proceeds but evaluation of finished work is not always rigorous enough to help pupils understand how to improve.

- 133 The subject is well led and managed by the coordinator and the technical assistant. The coordinator has a clear-sighted view of how the subject needs to develop in order to raise standards and much has been achieved. Resources are good and help to promote learning. As well as the network of computers in the suite there are computers in classrooms, a set of laptops, digital and video cameras, listening centres and a good-sized interactive whiteboard in the library. The curriculum is well-planned and teachers are beginning to make good use of information and communication technology in literacy and numeracy lessons. All pupils are included well in information and communication technology lessons and there are good programmes to support the learning of pupils with special educational needs. Areas for development include: a review of current plans to ensure that skills are being acquired at an appropriate level of challenge and developed in a progressive way; evaluation of the assessment and recording system which is being trialled; continuing professional development for all staff to increase confidence and subject knowledge; development of the school web site; and further monitoring of learning to raise standards even further.

MUSIC

- 134 Although the new co-ordinator has some very good ideas to promote music throughout the school, these have not yet had time to make a difference to the standards pupils are attaining. Standards in Year 2 and Year 6 are below the national expectations. This is similar to the pupils' attainment at the time of the previous inspection and improvement has been unsatisfactory.
- 135 In Years 1 and 2, teaching is satisfactory. It varies from good to unsatisfactory. In the unsatisfactory lesson pupils did not enjoy the lesson or have enough opportunities to practise musical skills, and they did not make enough progress. In Years 5 and 6, the lessons seen were good, but pupils had clearly missed work from other years and so the teachers had to provide tasks that were more suitable for a younger age range. In Years 3 and 4, work was provided at the level expected for this age range. Pupils' achievements were satisfactory. This was because work built on the good experiences they had had in previous years when the music co-ordinator had had the opportunity to take the whole of Years 1 and 2 for music.
- 136 In a good lesson in Years 1 and 2, pupils made good progress in clapping the rhythm of their names and the names of others in the class. They enjoyed the task and, as the lesson proceeded, more challenge was presented. For instance, all pupils listened to and then clapped the rhythm of a taped song. Then in a more difficult task one pupil was chosen to clap the rhythm of a nursery rhyme while others listened in order to identify it. Pupils were proud when they managed this. The progressively more difficult tasks meant that pupils tried hard and made good progress. However, in the other lesson in the same year group, pupils lost interest and did not learn because the teacher, having little subject knowledge, spent too long explaining the task and the meaning of the words 'pulse' and 'rhythm'. An initial task was too difficult and so pupils became disheartened and a few became disruptive. The activities all involved the pupils in responding by clapping as a whole class, and when errors were made the teacher had no strategies to put them right.

- 137 In Years 3 to 6 current teaching is satisfactory but teaching in previous years has left gaps in pupils' knowledge. In a lesson in Years 3 and 4, the teacher led a whole class composition inspired by a Chinese dragon. The pupils achieved an evocative and tuneful composition but too much adult help stifled creativity. Some pupils played instruments while others sang or spoke lines. All learnt some of the problems of composition and how to overcome them but progress was greater for those playing instruments than for the majority who were the choral backing. In the lessons in Years 5 and 6, all pupils had good opportunities to revisit the concepts of pulse and rhythmic patterns and of group singing in three parts. However, pupils' understanding of how to successfully pitch their voices in a performance, was not as high as it should be for their age. They enjoyed the lessons and worked hard, but their musicianship showed that there have been gaps in their learning. They could not, for instance, suggest how they might vary the simple song that they performed by making any changes, such as to the tone or volume, and what effect that might have. They have limited musical vocabulary.
- 138 The co-ordinator provides good leadership and satisfactory management. Having started in September, she is enthusiastic and knowledgeable. She has been raising the profile of the subject by suggesting ways that music might be linked with other areas of the curriculum. Music played in assembly and at other times contributes well to pupils' spiritual and cultural development. All pupils are included in musical activities. Two small groups meet after school for choir and recorders. A few pupils pay a small fee to attend a lively African drumming class also after school. However, the co-ordinator has not been in post long enough to evaluate current planning to ensure that lessons provide enough challenge and varied musical opportunities so as to raise standards and increase pupils' enjoyment of music. The processes of assessment are unsatisfactory and have been identified by the school as in need of development.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

- 139 Pupils in Year 2 and Year 6, attain standards that are expected for their age, although in a dance lesson in Years 5 and 6 pupils did not attain the standard expected nationally for their age in this element. Teachers' records show that pupils attain a good standard in Year 6 in swimming; all pupils swim the expected distance for this age and many swim up to 200 metres in length. Records also indicate a satisfactory standard in athletics and games. In gymnastics standards are below national expectations.
- 140 Although the co-ordinator has good subject knowledge, most other teachers are not confident in some elements of physical education and as a result, pupils' achievement in dance and gymnastics is not satisfactory. Teachers follow the commercially produced scheme too slavishly and do not take enough account of pupils' interests and achievements. Lessons have a very narrow focus providing, pupils with only a very few skills to practise in each lesson. Teaching was satisfactory, in that the objectives of the lesson were mainly achieved, but pupils' participation was dutiful rather than energetic. Teachers and classroom assistants work well together to ensure that pupils with special educational needs are included fully.
- 141 In all lessons, teachers start with a good warm-up session so that pupils' heart rates are increased. Teachers draw pupils' attention to this and pupils clearly understand that it is a necessary part of exercise. All teachers have devised different and lively sessions. A particularly good warm-up time was provided in a Year 5 and 6 dance

lesson when the teacher had selected several pupils to choose and demonstrate the range of exercises for others to follow. In most lessons, the enjoyment and interest that pupils show in the warm-up activities is not repeated in the main part of the lesson. Lengthy explanations and corrections such as 'that was not what I asked for' slowed the pace and vigour with which pupils worked, although behavior was always at least satisfactory and often good.

- 142 In Years 1 and 2, the main activity in both lessons involved the pupils in learning to aim with accuracy. For the main part of the lesson pupils tried hard to hit a target such as a hoop or bucket with either a ball or rubber ring. In both lessons, errors occurred with regard to resources. For example, in one lesson a ball was to be aimed at a disc, but as the ball bounced off the disc it was difficult for the pupils to judge whether or not they had succeeded. The pupils found it difficult to sustain their interest in this single activity. One teacher realizing this, altered the planning of the lessons so as to include catching and pupils immediately became more enthusiastic. Pupils' skills at throwing, catching and aiming a ball are at the level expected for this age and they use space and their bodies well when running in an enclosed area.
- 143 In Years 3 to 6 teaching was satisfactory in the main, although one lesson was unsatisfactory, despite the good relationship clearly established between teacher and pupils. In this lesson, the objective to link different traveling movements such as running and sliding was very difficult to interpret in a meaningful way. As a result, pupils spent a great deal of time sliding on their fronts or backs, alternating this with the type of running that they do every day on the playground, with little comprehension as to why they should chose either movement. In a lesson in Years 5 and 6, the teacher had developed the pupils' understanding of improvising a group dance to express the mood of a piece of music. Pupils worked very well in their groups discussing what type of actions they should include. However, few used the quality of expressive movement expected for pupils in Year 6. They understood that they needed a starting position but their reasons for choice were very limited.
- 144 Whilst the co-ordinator has led the subject well in many respects, she has faced some difficulties that have hindered her drive to raise standards. For instance, she observed lessons and provided guidance for improvement to staff who left the school shortly afterwards. New members of staff joined with limited knowledge in physical education. Resources were destroyed when the store room leaked and efforts were concentrated on replacing these. These factors have resulted in unsatisfactory improvement since the previous inspection with standards not as high as at that time. The school has devised its own scheme for dance which is well thought out and relevant to pupils' interests, but teachers have not enough confidence to use it well and develop pupils' skills year on year. The school uses a commercially produced scheme for most other aspects of the subject. It presents difficulties for teachers who are not knowledgeable, and in its current form does not relate well to the pupils' level of interest or provide them with the challenge that they need. After school clubs such as those for netball and football develop pupils' interests and social awareness and in the summer athletic events and a swimming gala raise pupils' enthusiasm for sport. However, not many pupils are involved in these activities and the school acknowledges that this could be developed further.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

- 145 In the last report attainment was judged to be in line with the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus which had only just been introduced. The school now has a policy and plans work from the Kirklees Agreed Syllabus.
- 146 Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall and pupils with special educational needs are well supported and included in all activities. As a result, they make progress in their learning in line with their ability, either as a result of work, which is adapted to suit their needs or by additional help from their teacher or educational teaching assistant. All year groups are given satisfactory opportunities to think for themselves during religious education lessons.
- 147 Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have visited a local church. This helped them to gain a good understanding of the religious significance of external and internal architectural features, such as a font and stained glass windows. Pupils make some sensible comparisons between a church and a mosque. They have satisfactory knowledge of some simple similarities and differences between different faiths.
- 148 By Year 6 pupils demonstrate a deeper knowledge and understanding of different faiths and what is meant by faith. In Years 3 and 4, pupils have compared and contrasted the stories of Abraham and Ibrahim in the three traditions, Christianity, Judaism, and Islam. In Years 5 and 6, pupils gained a sound understanding of the significance of colour in the expression of religious beliefs when the Dean of Wakefield visited their class. The opportunity to meet and question the Dean was an effective strategy in developing, not only the pupils' understanding of the Christian faith but also their skills in posing questions to a visitor. The visit provided a well for pupils' spiritual development. For instance, pupils responded very well when the Dean explained why she kissed her stole before putting it away.
- 149 The quality of teaching is good. Lessons are usually well planned and include clear direction for classroom assistants. Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the subject. They use precise, specific language in their discussions with pupils and in doing so increase pupils' vocabulary and improve their speaking and listening skills in a structured way. Pupils listen thoughtfully and most are confident to offer their views and opinions. Teachers set a good example in valuing pupils' opinions and as a result pupils show respect for each others' contributions. which makes a good contribution to the development of their social and moral awareness. However, pupils' written work is not always presented well and teachers do not provide enough tasks to promote pupils' skills in writing.
- 150 The leadership and management of the subject is satisfactory, although going through a period of change. There is a new subject coordinator and the Kirklees Agreed Syllabus has recently been revised. The school is using this as an opportunity to review the subject and to assess whether its resources are sufficient. Teachers make use of local resources, particularly visits to local places of worship and the expertise of religious leaders in the community but this is an area that could be developed further.