

INSPECTION REPORT

ST. JOSEPH'S RC VA PRIMARY SCHOOL

Dinnington near Sheffield

LEA area: Rotherham

Unique reference number: 106943

Headteacher: Mr. T. Horton

Reporting inspector: Alan W. Perks
18889

Dates of inspection: 24th - 27th June 2002

Inspection number: 249968

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

| | |
|------------------------------|---|
| Type of school: | Primary |
| School category: | Voluntary aided |
| Age range of pupils: | 3 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils: | Mixed |
| School address: | Lidgett Lane Dinnington Sheffield |
| Postcode: | S25 2QD |
| Telephone number: | 01909 550123 |
| Fax number: | 01909 560283 |
| Appropriate authority: | The governing body |
| Name of chair of governors: | Mrs. H. Massarella |
| Date of previous inspection: | March 1998 |

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Team members | | | Subject responsibilities | Aspect responsibilities |
|--------------|----------------|----------------------|---|---|
| 18889 | Alan W Perks | Registered inspector | Foundation stage curriculum Equality of opportunity Music | What sort of school is it? The 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? |
| 9103 | Anita Strong | Lay inspector | | How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents? |
| 17976 | John Francis | Team inspector | English Art and design Physical education | Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. |
| 20086 | David Speakman | Team inspector | Special educational needs Mathematics Information and communication technology Design and technology | |
| 24528 | Garth Muton | Team inspector | Science Geography History | How good are curricular opportunities offered to pupils? |

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REPORT CONTENTS

| | Page |
|---|-----------|
| PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT | 6 |
| Information about the school | |
| How good the school is | |
| What the school does well | |
| What could be improved | |
| How the school has improved since its last inspection | |
| Standards | |
| Pupils' attitudes and values | |
| Teaching and learning | |
| Other aspects of the school | |
| How well the school is led and managed | |
| Parents' and carers' views of the school | |
| | |
| PART B: COMMENTARY | |
| | |
| HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS? | 11 |
| The school's results and pupils' achievements | |
| Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development | |
| | |
| HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT? | 14 |
| | |
| HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS? | 16 |
| | |
| HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS? | 18 |
| | |
| HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS | 19 |
| | |
| HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED? | 20 |
| | |
| WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER? | 23 |
| | |
| PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS | 24 |
| | |
| PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES | 28 |

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St. Joseph's RC Primary School, Dinnington, is for pupils aged 3 to 11 and is situated about eight miles from Rotherham and to the east of Sheffield. It serves children from the town and about one-third who travel in from the surrounding area. Pupils come from homes that show a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds, about 70 per cent are of the Catholic faith and there is an even spread of attainment on entry to the reception class. There are almost equal numbers of girls and boys. The school has a broadly average pupil population of 223, which includes 51 nursery children who attend part-time in the new nursery unit. The school's baseline assessments show that children entering the school at age 5 have skill levels that, overall, are near to average. Three pupils carry Statements of Special Educational Need (1.4 per cent), which is slightly lower than the national average (1.6 per cent). There are 22 pupils on the school's special educational needs register (9.9 per cent), which is well below the national average (23.2 per cent). These pupils have a diverse range of learning difficulties. A further two children in the nursery are supported by outside specialists. There are no pupils who are learning English as an additional language. Six pupils (2.7 per cent) are designated as non-white and come from ethnic minority groups. There are no travellers, asylum seekers or refugees. Pupil mobility is very low. 23 pupils (10.3 per cent) are eligible for the free school-meal entitlement, which is within the national average range (8.7 to 19.6 per cent). This is a very similar picture to that at the time of the previous inspection. The deputy headteacher has been assigned to another school since January 2002, otherwise there have been few changes to personnel.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This school has many good features and, by the age of eleven, the larger proportion of pupils achieve above average standards in English, mathematics and science. This is the product of a great deal of good teaching in these subjects to maintain the good levels reported by the previous inspection. All members of the school benefit greatly from the loving, caring and harmonious ethos that spreads throughout the school. The headteacher provides very good leadership and management, and he is strongly supported by governors and staff in the continuing endeavour to improve standards and facilities. The school continues to give good value for money.

What the school does well

- Good provision enables the larger proportion of pupils to attain above average standards in English, mathematics, science and good standards in music.
- The school successfully encourages very good pupil attitudes, behaviour and racial harmony, so that pupils enjoy very good relationships in a caring learning environment that offers equality of opportunity for all.
- A large proportion of teaching is good or better across the school. Children receive a very good start in the purpose built nursery unit and this firm beginning, together with conscientious teaching, enables them to make good progress in learning as they move through the school.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is very good, so that all members of the school feel cared for and comfortable within a suitably challenging environment;
- The school's partnership with its parents and the local community is very good.
- Leadership and management is good overall, and other levels of management are successful mainly because of the very good guidance that they receive from the headteacher.

What could be improved

- Standards in geography of those pupils aged ten and eleven are lower than expected.
- The teaching does not always make the most efficient use of assessment data and competent classroom support assistants are not always used to best effect.
- There is room for further development of the co-ordinators in areas such as monitoring of standards, teaching and learning across the school, so that they can share and implement best practices.
- The governing body still does not meet all legal requirements.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in March 1998 and has made satisfactory improvement since then. Most notable improvements are seen in the quality of pupils' writing following a specific school focus that successfully encouraged the use of more extensive vocabulary and writing for a wide range of purposes. Additionally:

- Better than expected levels have been maintained in English, mathematics, science and music.
- Pupils' standards in information and communication technology have been successfully maintained to remain satisfactory, despite increasing national expectation, and this is partly due to the significant expansion of resources.
- The quality and range of learning opportunities have improved for children who have not reached the age of compulsory schooling and for those pupils aged seven to eleven.
- The provision for art and design has improved so that pupils are now achieving standards that are above the expected level for pupils aged seven to eleven.
- The construction of the nursery unit, which has provided a high quality learning environment for very young children.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs has been maintained at its good level so that these pupils continue to make good progress in relation to their specific difficulties; there is equality of opportunity for all groups.
- Planned provision for pupils' learning about geography is not as good and is widely variable across ages seven to eleven, ranging from good to unsatisfactory, so that pupils' knowledge and understanding do not reach expected levels by the time they are eleven.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education has been retained at a high level so that almost all pupils continue to show very good attitudes, behaviour and relationships; non-Catholic pupils are fully integrated.
- School attendance has been carefully monitored so that almost all pupils attend regularly, giving a well above average level when compared to other primary schools.
- The care for all youngsters and adults on site has been maintained at its very high level, as has the very good relationship that the school retains with its parents and members of the community.
- Progress with two of the three key issues has been satisfactory, even though there has been significant reallocation of subjects and changes to the roles and responsibilities of subject and other co-ordinators following the relocation of the deputy headteacher to aid difficulties experienced by a local school.
- Assessment procedures and practices have been improved for English and mathematics especially, but the data collected and analysed is not always used to best effect in teachers' planning for other subjects.
- The governing body have taken advice in the hope of fulfilling all of their statutory responsibilities, but there remain some details that are missing from their annual report to parents about the provision for pupils with disabilities.
- This body has improved its monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance to a good level, mainly by following the very good advice provided by the headteacher.
- Other structural development of the buildings has improved hygiene and facilities for pupils, and there are firm plans to make up the shortfall in toilet accommodation for adults using the site.
- The school has recently been through a period of considerable change and pressure, which has been successfully managed, and when all factors are taken into account the school continues to give good value for money.

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 |
| | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2001 |
| English | B | C | B | B |
| mathematics | C | C | D | D |

| Key | |
|--------------------|---|
| well above average | A |
| above average | B |
| average | C |
| below average | D |

| | | | | | | |
|---------|---|---|---|---|--------------------|---|
| science | C | A | D | D | well below average | E |
|---------|---|---|---|---|--------------------|---|

National Curriculum assessment results for 2001 show that, by the age of eleven, pupils in the school attained above average standards in English and below average standards in mathematics and science. When compared to similar schools, using the average points score, standards attained in English were above average, and those in mathematics and science were below average. These statistics are influenced by the lower than average number of pupils attaining at higher levels and the lower than average cohort sometimes taking the tests. The school was marginally below the expected levels in both mathematics and science overall, and the proportion of pupils attaining at the expected levels was above the average levels. Standards in these three subjects have fluctuated year on year and do not consistently agree with the above average standards found at the time of the previous report. The school had set targets in English and mathematics that were close to national levels and these were exceeded. This inspection shows that by the age of eleven, the larger proportion of pupils attain standards in English, mathematics and science that are above the levels expected for pupils of this age. Across the school, those pupils with special educational needs make good progress with their learning in relation to their known difficulties, and those few from ethnic minority backgrounds make progress at similar rates to all other groups. Earlier differences between the attainment of boys and girls have been successfully overcome.

Children in the nursery have a wonderful start to their education in this school and about three quarters are on course to meet early learning goals by the time they are five. The larger proportion of pupils aged seven are achieving very good standards in speaking and listening, and good standards in reading, writing, numeracy, science and music. Their standards in art and design, design and technology, geography, history, information and communication technology and physical education are as expected.

The larger proportion of pupils aged ten and eleven in Year 6 show above expected standards in art and design and music. Their standards in design and technology, history and physical education are as expected, but are below those expected for geography; pupils' standards in religious education are reported separately.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|---|
| Attitudes to the school | Very good. Almost all pupils arrive promptly and sustain good levels of concentration throughout the day. Pupils enjoy their schoolwork because of the caring attitude of staff and the very good relationships that they have with them, other pupils and the remaining adults around them. |
| Behaviour, in and out of classrooms | Very good. Most pupils' behaviour is very good, and this helps them concentrate on their learning. These pupils show high levels of personal responsibility, and take their tasks seriously. There were no incidences of bullying or harassment observed or reported during the inspection, although there was some disruptive behaviour by a few pupils in Year 5. |
| Personal development and relationships | Very good. Pupils' personal development is good. They show trustworthy attitudes to their learning. Relationships between pupils are very good. They show care and consideration for each other, regardless of gender, race, religion or difference in age. |
| Attendance | Very good. Attendance levels are much better than the national average. The level of authorised absence is lower than average. Although unauthorised absence is low, it has risen slightly. |

TEACHING AND LEARNING

| Teaching of pupils in: | Nursery and Reception | Years 1 – 2 | Years 3 – 6 |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
|-------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|

| | | | |
|---------------------|------|------|------|
| Quality of teaching | Good | Good | Good |
|---------------------|------|------|------|

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

Overall, the quality of teaching is good in all phases of the school, which is the same as the quality reported by the previous inspection team. The teaching seen during the inspection was almost always satisfactory or better, with the larger proportion of teachers consistently providing good or better teaching. There was one unsatisfactory lesson presented by a visiting teacher. Using a wide range of additional evidence, teaching provision over time has also been good overall, and ranges from very good through to a very small amount of unsatisfactory provision. Teaching in the nursery unit is consistently very good and that in the reception class good overall, leading to children in these two classes making good progress in their early learning. This rate of progress is generally maintained as they move through the school. Across the school, the skills of literacy, numeracy, science and music are mostly taught to a good standard. Provision is inclusive of all pupil groups.

In better lessons, planning takes good account of the wide range of prior attainment in each group, expectations of what pupils might achieve are high and teaching staff use increasingly challenging questions to promote pupils to think more deeply about their answers. Weaknesses in teaching occur when teachers' planning is not used to best effect, as in geography, and so pupils do not show that they know and understand facts and other aspects of learning to the required level. Additionally, in some other subjects, such as science and physical education, not enough notice is taken of pupils' previous level of achievement, so that those with higher skill levels do not achieve even higher standards. When used effectively, as in many literacy and numeracy lessons, classroom support assistants have a good effect on pupils' rate of learning and the standards they reach. At other times, their skills are not used to best effect, which is wasting a valuable resource.

The teaching of pupils who have special educational needs is good. Almost all of these pupils have targets that relate to improvements in aspects of English or in behaviour. Progress towards meeting individual targets is effectively monitored so that teachers can give support at the appropriate levels as necessary, and this is where best use of classroom support assistants is seen. The few pupils who come from ethnic minority backgrounds have equality of opportunity and make suitable progress in line with those from other groups.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

| Aspect | Comment |
|---|--|
| The quality and range of the curriculum | Good overall. The quality and range of learning opportunities have improved and they now meet all statutory requirements. The curriculum is broad and generally balanced, which satisfies the needs of almost all pupils in the important subjects of English, mathematics and science. There is equality of opportunity for all. Provision for children at the foundation stage is very good. Provision for extra-curricular activities is very good. |
| Provision for pupils with special educational needs | Good. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good, enabling them to make good progress towards their targets. Targets in individual education plans (IEPs) are appropriate and followed carefully in literacy lessons. However, these targets are not always considered sufficiently for all subjects in teachers' short-term planning. |
| Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | Very good. This is clearly a significant strength. Teachers and other staff successfully promote a clear moral code and are very good role models to pupils. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is very good and that for cultural good. Pupils show exceptional respect for the feelings, values and beliefs of others. |
| How well the school | Very good. The school's procedures for child protection are very good and |

| | |
|---|--|
| cares for its pupils | those for ensuring pupils' welfare, health and safety are good. The school has good arrangements in place to assess pupils' academic performance and personal development. The support and guidance that pupils receive from staff are very good. Strategies for checking and improving attendance are very good. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are good. Best practice is seen in English and mathematics, but there are weaknesses in some other subjects, such as science and geography. |
| How well the school works in partnership with parents | Very good. Most parents' views of the school are very positive. They feel very welcome and are highly satisfied with what the school provides. Mostly good quality information keeps them suitably informed, and they state that they find all staff approachable and friendly. This continues to be a significant strength of the school. |

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|--|
| Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff | Good overall. The headteacher is caring, hard working, and provides very good leadership, management and educational direction for the school. There is a harmonious working relationship with all staff and together they show strong commitment to raising standards. Key staff are extremely supportive, but many have new roles and responsibilities and are not yet showing their full potential. |
| How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities | Good overall. The governing body continue to be a very effective group for bringing about the desired improvements. They are successfully working alongside the headteacher to shape the direction of the school and direct pupils' progress with their learning. They provide adequate staffing, accommodation and learning resources. They fulfil almost all of their statutory responsibilities, but are still not providing all necessary information to parents, despite seeking professional help. |
| The school's evaluation of its performance | Good. There is good evaluation of all school activity. Various working parties and group committees of governors meet regularly to consider the school's performance and how improvements might be made. As a result, there is good monitoring of the effects of governing body decisions, and how these affect pupils' learning. There is useful review of pupils' standards of attainment, as with test results, and appropriate action is extensively discussed and agreed. This promotes pupils' learning in almost all areas of activity. |
| The strategic use of resources | Good. There is good, effective targeting of resources to bring about agreed improvements, such as maintaining staffing and development of the buildings and outside areas. The governors and headteacher have a good awareness of the principles of best value. There is very good financial control, and there is good use of financial resources, including additional funding for three pupils with Statements of Special Educational Needs. The school gives good value for money. |

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

| What pleases parents most | What parents would like to see improved |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents say that their children like going to school. Many parents state that their children make good progress because of the good teaching. A large proportion states that the school | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There was some concern over the provision of homework. There was some concern over the quality of information to parents about the progress that their children make. |

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>successfully helps their children to mature and take increasing responsibility for their actions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Almost all find it very easy to approach the school with questions and problems to do with their children. | |
|---|--|

There was very good support for the school from those parents who attended the meeting and from responses to questionnaires. The inspection team firmly supports the views of these parents about the many strengths of the school. Although a few parents indicated some concerns over homework, the inspection team could find no evidence that homework was not suitably considered by teaching staff. The provision for homework is good and the team finds that the school is very willing to discuss this aspect of pupils' learning and any other parental concerns. Similarly, the information sent to parents is at least satisfactory, although there are some minor discrepancies in the annual report from governors and annual reports on pupils to parents. The team concludes that the school's relationship with its parents and other members of the community continues to be a significant strength.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. When children enter the nursery unit from age three, their skill levels are widely varied, and overall are as expected for children of their age. The weakest area of these children's development is in their communication, language and literacy skills, which generally are below expected levels. Their physical development is above the expected level. Their development in the other areas of learning is as expected. They arrive with expected levels of personal, social skills and are able to cope with the change in routine. They are ready to extend their simple mathematical skills and their knowledge and understanding of the world is sufficient. Their creative development is satisfactory so that they eagerly use simple tools and equipment to create new products. As a result of very good teaching in the nursery unit and good overall teaching in the reception class, children make good progress and about three-quarters achieve the nationally recommended early learning goals by the age of five in all the areas mentioned above. However, despite enthusiastic and purposeful teaching, the remaining quarter remain below expected levels.
2. At age seven, National Curriculum assessment test results for 2001 showed significant improvement in reading and writing from results in Year 2000. The proportion of pupils attaining national standards of Level 2 or better was in line with the national average in reading and well above average in writing. The proportion attaining the higher Level 3 or better was below the national average in reading and close to the average in writing. In mathematics, the proportion attaining Level 2 or better was above the national average, but the proportion attaining Level 3 or better was well below the average. Teacher assessments in science showed that the proportion of pupils attaining Level 2 or better was slightly below the national average, and the proportion attaining Level 3 or better was above average. When compared to similar schools, the performance of pupils was below average in reading, well above average in writing and below average in mathematics. Over the past three years, the performance of boys has not been as good as that of girls in reading, writing and mathematics. The average result for this period falls below the national average, but inspection evidence shows a significant improvement.
3. Some caution should be used when interpreting these statistics because the numbers taking the tests are often below average. At age eleven, National Curriculum assessment test results for 2001 showed that the proportion of pupils attaining the expected Level 4 or better was above the national average in English, and slightly above average in mathematics and science. The proportion attaining the higher Level 5 and above was above average in English and below the national average in mathematics and science. Girls performed better than boys in all three subjects. When compared to schools in similar contexts, results were above average in English, and below average in mathematics and science. Over a three-year period, the attainment of girls has been better than boys in all three subjects. In the light of the 1999 results, targets were agreed with the local education authority and these were exceeded. The average result for this period falls below the national average, but inspection evidence shows a significant improvement.
4. Inspection evidence shows that there is a wide spread of standards of attainment in English, mathematics and science in all year groups, with a weighting towards above average levels, most noticeably in Year 2. By the age of seven, the larger proportion of pupils has made good progress in the essential areas of speaking, listening, reading, writing and numeracy. The larger proportion of pupils attain standards that are above expectations in English, mathematics and science. This represents maintenance of the good standards reported by the previous inspection in all three subjects. The most obvious improvement shows in speaking, listening, reading and writing. By the age of eleven, the larger proportion of pupils attain at above expected levels. The school has successfully addressed the differences in the achievements of boys in comparison to girls, and

intensive concentration on writing has succeeded. Pupils' standards in religious education are reported separately.

5. By ages seven and eleven, there are about one-third of pupils who attain at a higher level in these three subjects. Similarly, about the same proportion do not attain the expected levels. This can partly be attributed to their lower than average level of initial skills on starting the school, partly the differences in each year's group of pupils, and partly the differences seen in teaching and other provision. For example, good teaching and increasing resources within the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies enable the large majority of pupils to make good progress within these lessons across the school. The good progress that they make in their learning is directly related to teachers' clear planning of content, effective use of assessment information and the skill with which teachers use their knowledge and understanding of the subject material. Except for the fact that more boys than girls are found in some year groups, thus creating the opportunity for greater swings in statistics, there is no other specific evidence to identify what causes gender differences in national test results beyond variances in achievement levels prior to the tests. All pupils are given the same opportunities to succeed.
6. Pupils' standards of attainment in information and communication technology are satisfactory at ages seven and eleven. There has been improvement since the previous inspection, although the judgement was very similar. This improvement has been necessary to keep abreast of the higher expectations of what pupils at each age are capable of, which has increased provision in the larger proportion of schools across the country. The rate of development has increased significantly from September 2001 because substantial increases in hardware and software, better subject co-ordination and sharing of expertise have raised pupils' standards in word-processing, using PowerPoint presentations and Internet access. The sharing of a bank of laptops has radically increased the opportunities for pupils to access computers, with obvious effect on their standard and skill levels. There has been increased use of listening centres, which has had a good effect on pupils' listening and reading skills especially.
7. By age seven, pupils have made satisfactory progress with their learning in art and design, design and technology, geography, history and physical education, and the larger proportion achieve expected standards in these subjects. Pupils' standards in music have been retained at a good level. By age eleven, the larger proportion of pupils achieves expected levels in design and technology, history and physical education. Their standards in art and design have improved to a good level. The good standards in geography reported by the previous inspection have not been retained and pupils' knowledge, skill and understanding of this subject have slipped to an unsatisfactory level.
8. Across the school, the progress that pupils with diverse special educational needs make with their learning is good in relation to their difficulties. They are provided with good levels of support from their teachers and the learning support assistants. Their targets are regularly and carefully evaluated and reviewed, and new targets are appropriately set to aid progress. These pupils make best progress when aided by additional learning support assistants, and when specialist audio equipment is used by teaching staff for those pupils who are hearing impaired. The setting of work that takes account of the wide range of prior achievement in class groupings, as in literacy and numeracy lessons, is particularly helpful to these pupils because work is regularly set at the correct level from the beginning of each lesson. The few pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds make progress at comparable rates to other pupils because of the full equality of opportunity. Pupils who show higher attainment potential, however, do not always make the progress of which they are capable in subjects other than mathematics. This is evident from the analysis of pupils' previously completed work and observing teachers' planning for some lessons, where the priority has been for all to listen to overly long introductions for the common task, rather than moving on from the individual pupil's levels of skill and understanding, which the teachers clearly know.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. Pupils are enthusiastic about school and, with few exceptions, have very good attitudes in lessons, which contributes to their achievements and the very good behaviour found throughout most of the school. Pupils with special educational needs and those few from minority ethnic backgrounds pay close attention to adults and they persevere with their tasks. Their behaviour is good overall, and they work in partnership with other pupils. As they become older, pupils increasingly take advantage of the many opportunities that the school offers to extend their learning and experiences, for example, extra- curricular clubs and visits.
10. Only in a very few lessons are the pupils not as positive, and this is often as a result of weaknesses in teachers' classroom management. For example, by not insisting on relatively quiet independent working in an English lesson, pupils in Year 5 achieved less than they would otherwise. The inclusive ethos of the school means that all pupils are fully welcomed into the life of the school and made to feel valued. Pupils with special educational needs and those few from minority ethnic backgrounds participate fully in all lessons, are interested in the work and concentrate well.
11. Pupils' personal development is very good. Relationships at all levels are very strong right from the time they start school. The youngest children in the nursery are happy in school. They take part in the activities eagerly, share toys, listen to the teacher carefully and learn to wait their turn, for example, when taking part in a 'circle time' discussion they listen attentively to the child who has the 'Teddy' and wait for their turn to speak. The nursery staff gives consistent guidance, which contributes positively to the children's behaviour and develops very good attitudes to learning. In a reception class mathematics lesson, children had the confidence to answer questions and the praise they received raised their self-esteem.
12. All adults in the school provide very good role models in the friendly, calm and helpful manner with which they deal with the pupils and one another. Pupils are very tolerant of each other, listen to each other's views and respond positively. Discussion during a personal, social and health education lesson showed how they are developing their own ideas, take account of what others say and treat their opinions with respect. They have trust in their teacher and each other, which contributes positively to their personal development.
13. Pupils' spiritual development is very good. The school's ethos is one that encourages strong beliefs. As a result of the school's very good provision, pupils have a good awareness of others and a growing sense of self-belief. This is seen in their willingness to apply themselves to their work and the confidence they have to try hard at whatever they do. For example, a pupil in Year 3 led special prayers for family and friends. The botanical paintings produced by pupils in Year 6 showed great perseverance and creativity and a strong sense of achievement, celebrating both their own work and that of others.
14. Pupils' moral development is very good. They have a clear understanding of right and wrong and a strong sense of justice. They support each other in lessons, help to create the behaviour codes of the school and follow these consistently. Classroom and playground rules are simple, but effective. Almost all pupils show a high level of self-discipline and are friendly and confident with visitors, usually greeting them with a smile. They are well mannered, holding doors open for visitors and each other, and they respond to their teachers politely. The oldest pupils take their responsibilities seriously, for example, when attending the School Council, and when they help the younger children during lunch and playtime.
15. Pupils' social development is very good. They are able to organise themselves and their resources sensibly, they work co-operatively in pairs or small groups and are sensible about borrowing equipment and taking turns. In a Year 2 technology lesson, for example, pupils worked quietly and persevered with quite challenging tasks, listening to and respecting each other's contributions.

Behaviour is very good in almost all classrooms and around the school. Boys and girls of all ages and backgrounds mix and play together well on the playground and they are very clear that poor behaviour, bullying or other undesirable attitudes are rare. Lunchtime is a good social occasion. There have been no recent exclusions. Pupils respond positively to carrying out jobs around the school. Even the youngest children in reception are keen to deliver their attendance register to the office.

16. Pupils' cultural development is generally good. They gain a good awareness of their own culture through geographical and historical based work. In music, they learn songs and vocabulary that reflects other countries and different faiths. However, in art, they only know about Western European artists and their knowledge and understanding of living in a multi-cultural society is just about satisfactory. The few pupils from different ethnic backgrounds are fully integrated into all activities, but they do not have enough opportunities to share and expand their classmates' knowledge of different cultures. One boy was seen showing a steel drum from the Caribbean and pupils who had been disruptive suddenly showed renewed interest and curiosity. The boy knew too little about the drum's origins and how it was used. Pupils use a small collection of multicultural books, but displays of their work on walls that show multi-cultural situations are very few.
17. Since the previous inspection, the level of attendance of the national average has decreased. However, through rigorous monitoring, the level of attendance at the school is very good. Although low, unauthorised absences have increased slightly as the school does not support the view that holidays can be taken during term time. Pupils are keen to attend and they arrive promptly at school.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

18. Overall, the quality of teaching is good, but there was a range of teaching seen that varied from excellent to unsatisfactory. In the teaching observed, 98 per cent was satisfactory or better, 67 per cent was good or better and 20 per cent was very good. One lesson was judged to be excellent. There was 2 per cent of unsatisfactory teaching, which was provided by one of the visiting teachers. Teaching of children in the nursery unit is very good and that in the reception class is good overall. Across the remainder of the school, teaching is good overall, and is especially strong in English, mathematics, science and music. Teaching and other supporting provision enables the larger proportion of pupils, including those with special educational needs and the few from minority ethnic backgrounds, to maintain appropriate levels of progress in almost all subjects as they move through the school. The teaching of art and design has improved significantly, especially for pupils aged seven to eleven, but there are some weaknesses that hinder even higher standards. For example, a little of the teaching of geography and physical education is unsatisfactory. Although there was a very high percentage of satisfactory or better teaching seen, which is similar to the findings of the previous report, other evidence identified some inconsistencies in marking and the use of assessment data, for example, to provide work at suitable levels for all pupils in subjects other than English and mathematics. Most noticeable improvement is shown in the teaching of writing across the school.
19. All teachers make very effective use of guidance provided within the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies to plan interesting programmes of pupils' work. They regularly collect assessment information in these two subjects and use it appropriately, providing pupils with suitably challenging work. This means that progress with learning is regularly good. However, in some other subjects, such as science and physical education, teachers do not make sufficient use of information that they take, or know, about pupils' achievements to enable them to build on from where pupils have reached in their learning. Learning targets are regularly shared with pupils and so many understand what is expected of them in the time allowed. Sometimes, initial work is provided for whole groups to attempt, even though teachers fully appreciate that there is a wide

range of prior attainment within their teaching groups. This is having unfavourable effects on some pupils' behaviour and progress in learning. For example, higher attaining pupils are given a starting task that is too easy. Consequently, they quickly move on to extension work rather than beginning with the extension work and moving deeper into the topic using their firmer knowledge, skills and initiative to better effect. Additionally, in some lessons, pupils with special educational needs require help almost immediately, indicating that insufficient thought has been put into this element of teachers' short-term planning.

20. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the curriculum across the school are good overall, with some staff showing very good knowledge of subjects, such as mathematics and music. This gives staff and pupils great confidence and successfully raises pupils' self-esteem when they perform to groups inside and outside of school. There remain weaknesses in some subjects, such as physical education, mainly because the school relied too heavily on one person's expertise and this left a gap when the teacher left the school. The teaching of basic skills associated with literacy and numeracy is good, which has a very positive effect on the standards reached, the quality of presentation and the accuracy of pupils' recorded work across the school. Teachers' knowledge, skill and understanding of information and communication technology are improving and further training is planned. Teaching of children who have not reached compulsory schooling age is so successful because staff have a very firm knowledge base for teaching using the "stepping stones" approach that moves children along a carefully structured path of learning, which leads towards the recommended early learning goals for children entering the main school.
21. All members of staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and attitude to work, but a few pupils, in Year 5 especially, do not meet these expectations. Staff speak respectfully to pupils, providing very good role models, which has a very positive effect on how pupils respond to adults. They successfully encourage almost all pupils to behave appropriately. They promote good levels of interest and involvement in schoolwork, and successfully encourage pupils to achieve co-operative working relationships with each other and with all adults in the school. This generates very good attitudes to work by almost all pupils, despite some being unsettled by tasks they find too difficult or too easy. Teachers' planning is satisfactory overall, although planning of activities for some age groups and subjects is regularly very good. The less effective teaching showed inappropriate levels of work for some groups of pupils and too low expectations of what pupils might achieve in the time. Where teaching was enthusiastic, carefully planned and suitably demanding, pupils' efforts, interest and work rate increased correspondingly. The most effective teaching regularly produces high levels of interest, concentration and successful development of independence. For example, the use of carefully thought through questions, which are asked at different levels to help individual pupils, persuades them to predict and speculate on probable answers without fear of being embarrassed or wrong. This is a strength in many teaching sessions.
22. The management and control of pupils is good overall, but varies between excellent and unsatisfactory. Staff members have very good interaction with pupils, encouraging them to remain on task, which most do because of these strong relationships. On the rare occasions where there is unsatisfactory management of pupils, teachers' short-term planning is not good enough to take account of some pupils' particular needs and these pupils soon lose interest. Across the school, teachers make some effective use of learning support assistants, particularly in English and mathematics lessons, providing sufficient briefing for them to give good support to pupils in their care, which often means those pupils with special educational needs. All are sufficiently knowledgeable and enthusiastic to have a positive influence on the learning of pupils in their groups. Those who help with the under fives are appropriately qualified to work with this age group and are part of the reason why the children make such good progress in the nursery unit. However, in other parts of the school, best use is not always made of this valuable resource and they sit for unacceptably long periods in too many lessons. Visiting tutors of music successfully encourage pupils to play musical instruments, such as violin and flute, and this provision has a very positive effect on the quality of music experienced by pupils in the seven to eleven age group.

23. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good overall, and varies from very good to unsatisfactory during whole-class lessons. Senior managers successfully carry out the co-ordination of special educational needs teaching. Learning support assistants work in close collaboration with the teachers, successfully implementing the detailed and informative individual education plans, particularly in English and mathematics lessons. However, lessons and practical sessions in other subjects do not always reflect the content of these plans and pupils then rely more heavily on the support of classmates and adults. Most tasks in English and mathematics are adapted effectively to suit pupils' particular needs, but in other lessons tasks and worksheets are sometimes inadequately matched, resulting in pupils needing immediate help with reading of worksheets, for example. This is an improving situation and the effects of better assessment procedures and practices can be seen more markedly for pupils under seven because implementation has taken place earlier. The marking of pupils' work is significantly inconsistent in its quality and creates a key issue for improvement.
24. Teachers make good use of material resources, but there is a significant amount of time difference between that which is planned and what actually takes place. Teachers' planning clearly identifies start and finish times for lessons that often bear no resemblance to actual practice. There is good use of mathematical resources during the numeracy sessions, for example, and good use of percussion instruments to raise standards in musical composing and performance. Teachers make good use of homework to reinforce and extend what pupils learn in school time, as with reading, spelling, mathematics and researching topics. Parents are right in their view that disruption for pupils in Year 5 in this respect has happened because of the difficulties caused by teacher replacements over the past two school terms.

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

25. The school curriculum is broad and balanced and meets statutory requirements to teach all subjects of the National Curriculum. There are appropriate, largely nationally recommended schemes of work in place for all curriculum subjects and these provide secure continuity and progression in learning and appropriate guidance to teachers. However, the school has not yet fully worked out the integration of its own geography scheme of work with the units of work provided by nationally recognised materials. The weekly timetables that show teachers' short term planning profile are not consistent with actual practice. Lessons frequently do not begin on time according to these timetables and so the time allotted to each subject is unclear. The school's arrangements for collective worship conform to statutory requirements. Religious education is reported separately.
26. The government's recommended National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been implemented effectively. Overall, the school provides a good range of worthwhile learning opportunities that successfully meet the interests, aptitudes and special needs of all of its pupils. There is a firm commitment to provide interesting first hand experiences on which to base pupils learning. Teachers take advantage of opportunities to link different subjects within the curriculum. For example, pupils in Year 2 made drawbridge mechanisms as part of their design and technology that linked very appropriately with their history project. There are, however, some weaknesses in planning when teachers lose the clear focus in their subject planning. In geography, for example, the pupils may have received some very stimulating experiences, but teachers' planning and assessment are not rigorous enough to ensure that pupils are building up their subject skills and knowledge to a satisfactory or better level.
27. Good use is made of the school grounds. Pupils work outside of school in the local community and visit places of interest, including residential visits in for pupils in Years 4 and 6. The school choir performs at a large number of different venues. The very good range of extra-curricular activities

reported at the time of the previous inspection has been maintained. There are all year round clubs that take place after school hours for various sporting activities and, in the summer term, six and seven year olds may join in. This extra-curricular opportunity for younger pupils is not a common feature in primary schools, and successfully encourages these young pupils to continue their interest later. The choir and guitar clubs are open to Years 3 to 6, and pupils in Year 2 have the opportunity to learn the descant recorder. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 are encouraged to play tuned instruments and a significant number do so. This provision is funded by the school, which opens up the opportunity to a greater number of pupils, helping to make music a strength of the school.

28. The school makes good provision for pupils' personal social and health education (PSHE). Regular 'circle times' (when pupils gather around for discussion of important topics relevant to them) have been recently introduced. Other contributions to PSHE come from assemblies and from the social responsibilities expected within school, and when pupils take part in out of school activities. Some aspects are covered in lessons; aspects of health education, for example, are taught in science and the governors have adopted policies for sex education and drugs education to ensure that pupils learn about these aspects of life in a manner appropriate to their age. There are not enough opportunities for pupils to guide their own learning by, for example, having their own learning targets and there is, as yet, no agreed policy for the overall provision for PSHE and no work has been done within the school to evaluate its work using the national guidelines.
29. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Clear procedures are in place, and the school follows the new Code of Practice closely on the identification and assessment of pupils. Individual education plans are detailed and are provided for pupils who are at school action and school action plus on the school's special needs register. Almost all of these pupils have targets that relate to improvements in aspects of English or in behaviour. These are carefully and thoughtfully prepared, the targets clearly identify the main priorities, and teaching and assessment procedures are carefully considered. These plans are suitably reviewed each term. Pupils with Statements of Special Educational Needs are provided with good support in line with the requirements of their statements.
30. Provision for pupils' personal development is very good overall. The provision for spiritual development is very good. The school has a strong Catholic ethos and principles. The daily assembly meets the legal requirement for an act of collective worship. Pupils are given suitable opportunities during assembly and 'circle time' to reflect on issues such as friendship and helping others. The millennium "Peace Garden" is a place of calm and quiet and is used sensibly by pupils looking to find somewhere for quiet reflection.
31. Provision for pupils' moral development is very good. Classroom codes of conduct, developed with the pupils, are clearly displayed and there is a playground code for outside use. Teachers and other adults regularly remind pupils of expectations of behaviour and act as very good role models. In a Year 4 mathematics lesson, the teacher used praise very effectively, letting pupils know how much both they and their work are valued, especially when honest answers are given.
32. Provision for social development is very good. Pupils are encouraged to be friendly and helpful to each other. Break times are very good social occasions where pupils play well together and respect each other's rights. Good opportunities are provided in lessons for pupils to work collaboratively, co-operating on tasks and discussing their work with a partner or in a group, as in music. Pupils move around the school sensibly, and when working outside, for example, in the Year 6 physical education lesson, show high levels of co-operation and thought for others. The School Council provides the opportunity for pupils to involve themselves in the 'democratic process' and gives a sense of putting something of worth into the school community. Links with other schools through sporting and artistic events develop wider social skills. The visits that the choir make to a wide range of venues gives these pupils very good opportunities to socialise with a very wide age group.

33. Provision for cultural development is generally good. Pupils gain an awareness of their own culture in geography and history through the study of Victorian life, or comparisons with other communities, for example, in India and Africa. Further opportunities are provided in extra-curricular activities, for example, the choir. However, in art, there is little studied beyond Western European artists and there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to learn about aspects that would improve pupils' awareness of life in a multi-cultural society. There is a small collection of multicultural books in the library but few displays reflect multi-cultural images. Overall, there is not enough emphasis on developing pupils' understanding of the cultural diversity of the world in which they live.
34. The school very effectively fulfils its mission to work in partnership with the community. Links have been strengthened since the previous inspection and they are now very good. The school remains firmly at the heart of the parish, enjoying very strong links with the church. The priest, who is also vice chair of governors, is usually a frequent visitor. Pupils attend Mass and other services at St. Joseph's Church and a celebration is held in the school after the bishop has confirmed pupils into the Catholic faith. The school provides a wide variety of visits that enrich many areas of the curriculum. For example, pupils have been to the Earth Centre, Conisbrough Castle, the National Coal Mining Museum and pupils in Year 4 have recently attended a two day residential visit to Boggle Hole, Robin Hood's Bay. The school has visits from the fire brigade and makes good use, when required, of the school nurse and other professionals, such as the educational psychologist. For over twelve years, pupils in Year 6 have entertained the senior citizens from the community to a weekly lunch, and a party for grandparents is held annually. The school choir plays a major part in the community, singing at the midsummer festival, garden centre and the mayor's concert. Younger pupils have experienced making pizzas at a local super market and local businesses provide food and items for the "Friends Association" school fayres. A more distant shopping centre has provided carpet tiles and money for paint. Pupils show care for others by raising money for charities, such as the Hallam Caring Fund, 'Safe at Last', the police organised 'Lifestyle', and a national press appeal to aid the education of children in Afghanistan. The school opened a "Peace Garden", to mark the millennium and are planning to celebrate the jubilee with a fun day of sports and a disco next month. All of these activities have a very positive effect on pupils' personal development and their learning in general.
35. Relationships with partner institutions are now very good and stronger than found at the time of the previous inspection. The school has half- termly meetings with schools in the local St. Bernard's School 'pyramid', which provides very strong links between other primary schools. Activities include, a joint day of games for all local pupils in Year 6, meetings on specific curriculum subjects and a very strong musical link with the high school, through its Beacon status. Together with six other primary schools, the school is also a member of the 'Dinnington High School Cluster', which meets regularly to discuss common issues and holds an annual full day conference. There are no links with schools that have greater numbers of pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds, which hinders pupils' knowledge and understanding of their place when living in a diverse community. There is a very good induction programme for children coming into the school from the nursery unit, which works closely with the reception class in planning and assessment. There are very good procedures for preparing pupils in Year 6 for the next stage of their education. The school works closely with Dinnington and other high schools in the area, and for the larger proportion of pupils proceeding to St. Bernard's Catholic High School the procedures are excellent. Induction begins at the start of Year 6, with attention focused on the social and academic needs of each pupil. Students from the high schools come to the school for work experience. The school is in partnership with Hallam University for mentoring students and has been chosen to be one of their key schools. All of these links help raise the profile of the school in the community, as well as opening up good opportunities for pupils to work alongside other pupils from schools around them.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

36. The school can be justifiably proud of the quality of care and support it provides for children in the foundation stage and its pupils in Year 1 to Year 6. The strong sense of community found during the previous inspection continues and the school motto “Caring and Sharing” is evident throughout the school. Good provision is made to ensure pupils’ welfare, and parents in the school playground stated that they were very pleased with the care that their children receive and that their children were happy at school.
37. Child Protection procedures are very good and the staff are aware of the need to be vigilant. Overall, health and safety procedures are satisfactory. The school carries out detailed risk assessments for trips out of school and governors are now in the process of establishing a new risk assessment for the school. All members of staff are trained in first aid. Fire drills are carried out regularly, and the yellow card system used in the playground and the cork arrangement in the reception class are valuable exercises in case of a fire. There is also a red card system for summoning immediate help. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good attendance are very good and are rigorously implemented. Registers are taken quickly and efficiently and meet all legal requirements, but some lessons do not always begin as promptly as planning shows. The importance of good attendance is a main item in the home/school agreement and parents are constantly reminded not to take holidays during term time. There has been a slight rise in unauthorised absences due to the school’s strict ruling in this matter. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are very good, with appropriate emphasis on praise and promoting pupils’ self- esteem. ‘Stars of the week’ are celebrated in the weekly newsletters. Pupils are aware of the standards of behaviour expected of them and almost all respond accordingly, which creates an orderly, harmonious atmosphere conducive to good learning. Procedures for monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour are very good and any incident of anti-social behaviour is addressed immediately.
38. Pupils are well supported in their personal development. Pastoral care is the responsibility of the class teachers, who know their pupils very well, are sensitive to their needs and provide very good personal support and guidance. The very positive relationships between pupils and staff encourage very good attitudes to each other and visitors to the school. Pupils are successfully encouraged to take responsibility for themselves and to respect others and their environment. They are quick to offer help to visitors and pupils in Year 6 wait upon the senior citizens at the weekly dinners, whilst pupils in Year 5 act as monitors for the yellow card system in the playground. All pupils have input into their class rules and targets. There are individual end of year tasks, which include a self- assessment and personal portrait writing. The annual reports to parents identify the personal development of their children. “Circle time” (the time when pupils consider each other’s comments) encourages expression of thoughts and feelings. The “Rainbow Club” gives support to those children who have trauma in their lives. Citizenship is now evident in the School Council, which deals with their classmates’ concerns and ideas from the school’s suggestion box. There is a high level of support amongst parents that the school is helping their children to become increasingly mature and responsible, with which the team agrees.
39. The school uses an appropriate range of tests with pupils to assess their levels of attainment and understanding. However, the data from these is not used sufficiently to track pupils’ progress, except for those children in the foundation stage and those pupils having special educational needs, where there is good tracking. In literacy and numeracy, teachers keep on- going records of pupils’ achievements. These are in a whole- school agreed format, which is easily understandable. The intention is that pupils’ attainment in key objectives is recorded as ‘achieved’, ‘exceeded’ or ‘failed to achieve’. Practice is inconsistent and not all teachers’ records give sufficient information. For example, some records fail to indicate which pupils have exceeded the objectives, giving information only on which pupils have achieved, but not how effectively. This information is used to set group targets for pupils, which are regularly assessed and reviewed. This effectively meets the requirements of the average and lower attaining pupils,

but the recorded information in some classes is not sufficient to identify which pupils are in need of extension work because they have exceeded a target.

40. Data gained from the National Curriculum assessment tests in English and mathematics is used effectively to identify strengths and areas for development. These are then written into the subject development plans and weaknesses are addressed effectively. This work is at a superficial level and co-ordinators' knowledge of National Curriculum assessment tests is not sufficient for them to identify all areas of weakness. They readily identify topics that are weak, but have not fully appreciated the effect on reporting of the attainment of higher attaining pupils, for example.
41. In other subjects, assessment records are completed for pupils' attainment in a similar format to that in English and mathematics. Groups of pupils who 'exceed', 'attain' or 'fail to attain' a key objective are recorded as such. This is useful information but, again, the school frequently does not use it sufficiently to further improve standards for all groups of pupils across all subjects.
42. Pupils with special educational needs are regularly assessed, and a good variety of information is recorded to help identify pupils' current attainment. The information gained is used effectively to provide suitable future work for the pupils. The learning support assistants, working with pupils with Statements of Special Educational Need, contribute to keeping detailed records that help ensure that the tasks provided for them are relevant to their present needs.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

43. This remains a great strength of the school and as found at time of the previous inspection. A very large proportion of parents are very satisfied with all aspects of the school, have no concerns and feel very welcome in the school. They praise the 'open door' policy and say that they trust members of staff to deal with any concerns. Parents are particularly satisfied with the fact that their children like school, the progress their children are making, the ethos of love and care and that the school helps their children to become more mature and responsible.
44. The quality of written information is satisfactory. The weekly newsletters are very good and contain information on all aspects of school life and include the eagerly awaited 'stars of the week'. The prospectus is detailed and informative and meets all legal requirements. The governors' annual report to parents, a key issue for improvement, still lacks the detail that gives a clear picture of the school's provision. Pupils' annual reports are detailed and informative, but do not always meet all the legal requirements, as target setting is inconsistent. Although all parents at their meeting felt that they were kept well informed, fifteen per cent of the returned questionnaires felt that they were not and these omissions do give their concerns some validity.
45. Two parents' meetings are held in the year, and these are exceptionally well attended and informative. Parents have the opportunity for a further one if they have any concerns, although these are usually addressed immediately. The school nurse is in attendance at one and school dinners are provided for parents to view. Parents are welcome in the school at any time and are invited to have an input to such things as the behaviour policy. Parents are invited to school activities and assemblies, such as the harvest festival, and there is a very good response. The team found no other evidence to support the small number of the returned questionnaires that stated that the school does not work closely with parents.
46. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are kept informed of the reviews of their children's individual education plans, so that they are fully aware of the provision being made for them. Parents of pupils with Statements of Special Educational Need are suitably invited to the annual review meetings.

47. The effect of the parents' involvement in the school is very good. A very significant number of parents and grandparents help in school each week. Activities include hearing pupils read, making resources such as storybook bags, and in the Tuesday reading and writing workshops that take place for children in the reception class and pupils in Year 1 and Year 2. The 'Friends Association' is very active and very strongly supported by parents. There are two fayres a year and three social evenings, one a theme night, such as the most recent 'Western Night'. Discos are provided for the pupils and money raised provides welcome resources for the school and has paid for the whole school to attend the pantomime and other local productions. The "Friends" plan to be very active in the forthcoming 'Jubilee Day', providing refreshments and running the disco. Each class has a nominated member of the friends to provide first hand contact with the parents.
48. Parents make a very positive contribution to their children's learning at school and at home. The home-school agreement has had a positive effect on learning. It includes, particularly, a section on supporting good attendance, which is now very good and has a very positive effect on the good standards in the school. Parents strongly support the ethos and aims of the school and the behaviour policy. Some parents have been involved in a home/school art programme with the results now on display in the school. These show the benefits of this type of enterprise to both parties. Every weekend for each half-term over a two year period, parents painted, on a rolling programme, to improve the interior of the school buildings, and they have succeeded in making it a more attractive environment in which their children learn. Senior citizens have dinners every week at the school, and grandparents are given an annual party. Many parents and other family members hear children read at home and take them to public libraries, which improves their literacy skills. Parents also make a positive contribution to pupils' learning and development through helping in the classroom, with school visits and by raising substantial funds for the school through the 'Friends Association'.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

49. The leadership and management of the school are good overall and this is an important feature in the school's on-going development. The very good leadership of the headteacher, who is caring, compassionate and supportive of colleagues and yet demanding of improvement, is clearly recognised by parents, governors, staff and other community members. Relationships amongst all staff are excellent, which supports and gives confidence to members in their endeavours to improve, and creates a pleasant, harmonious climate in which pupils learn.

50. The school has made satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection, and has managed to sustain almost all of the strong features reported at that time. The headteacher is clearly aware of where delay and insufficient improvement has taken place, unnecessarily taking full responsibility, but offering reliable and logical reasoning for any shortfall. There has been a determined effort to improve standards across the school, and pupils have benefited. The governors, headteacher and other staff have shown good levels of commitment to advance pupils' learning, particularly in standards pupils attain in writing. The school agrees that some pupils are not achieving their potential, as with higher attaining pupils in science, geography and physical education, and this does not fully reflect the school's written aims. There is clear evidence that this is being successfully addressed. Notable improvement is evident in curriculum provision, the quality of teaching and the environment in which children under five and pupils across the school learn.
51. There is a firm understanding of how the school could improve further. Staff are fully supportive, hardworking and keen to change any identified practices that could be improved because of their confidence in the headteacher's leadership. The appointment of two acting deputy headteachers has been most successful as an interim measure. Both have fully supported the headteacher to the benefit of other staff, pupils and governors. Subject co-ordination is improving, but has been held back by the recent restructuring of delegated roles and responsibilities following the promotion of the deputy headteacher. This was a key issue for improvement and has been satisfactorily addressed, but the school realises that more can be done. Many co-ordinators are very new to role and are developing their roles and responsibilities alongside other colleagues, and the full benefit to staff and pupils' learning is not yet achieved. There is regular monitoring of teaching and learning by the headteacher that is improving both, but sometimes this is not rigorous enough to improve standards to a suitable level, as with geography at the top end of the school. There is not enough observation of teaching and learning by co-ordinators, especially during lesson times, to confirm their knowledge of standards across the school.
52. All staff are kept fully informed of school practices, procedures and developments through the school's very effective communications systems. Teachers and non-teaching staff have regular opportunities to discuss their performance, targets and personal development at a more formal level, which is having a positive effect on standards and provision. Teaching staff work very effectively with the headteacher to try to ensure that all pupils are given the support they need. In this, they have been generally very successful, but there are still some teaching practices that require further improvement, such as making best use of learning support staff. All staff are hardworking and workloads have been sensibly delegated. The school has been successful in enabling temporary or visiting staff to settle quickly and securely into their roles.
53. Management of the provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Pupils are identified through a variety of procedures and placed on the special needs register. Pupils at the stages of school action and school action plus are provided with detailed individual education plans, which set suitable targets for improvement. These plans are reviewed each term, with new targets being set appropriately. The special needs co-ordinator keeps detailed records and the progress made by the pupils is carefully checked. The records kept, together with the provision of suitable work, help to ensure that pupils make good progress. The management of the few pupils with ethnic minority backgrounds is appropriate to their needs.
54. The governing body has made a firm effort to fulfil its statutory responsibilities, but there remain some minor shortfalls in the information that they supply to parents and the ways in which they carry out and report risk assessments. They have sensibly taken advice to improve their practices as this area was a key issue for improvement, but the advice was deficient. This is unfortunate because there is a high level of commitment by governors and they have a clear understanding of school strengths and areas still to be developed. Governors have established a very strong working relationship with the headteacher and other members of staff because they visit the school regularly. Together, the headteacher and governors ensure that monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance is good. They have taken appropriate action since the previous

inspection to improve many elements of school development identified within the report, whilst maintaining or improving other provision. There are effective sub-committees and individual governors are suitably appointed for all specified duties that support the monitoring of teaching, curriculum and pastoral care issues. Teachers frequently give presentations to governors about curriculum development; the most recent being in mathematics, and this keeps members fully informed of current progress.

55. Financial management is good. Funds are allocated effectively to educational priorities, and there are clear links between the school's development plan and finance. Most of this is managed by the headteacher, and there is no system of delegation to subject co-ordinators. Governors carefully evaluate spending to judge best value, including comparisons of outcomes and costs with similar schools. They assess carefully on how to obtain best value for the resources they put into the school or any building work undertaken. Money delegated as specific grants is used effectively and where it is felt necessary, added to by the school. Budget monitoring is regular and detailed and well supported by the work of the school's administrative staff. However, the current budget is very tight and leaves little flexibility or contingency in case of emergency.
56. Most of the staff are well established in the school and have a high level of commitment to school development and the raising of standards. Teachers are well deployed and bring a range of curricular strengths to the school, although there is no full-time co-ordinator with a good knowledge of physical education. The systems for the induction of new staff, including newly qualified teachers, are good, and senior staff provide good support. Performance management and appraisal of staff are well developed, and staff have suitable access to in-service training where necessary. There is a satisfactory level of additional classroom support. While they provide good additional assistance, especially for pupils with special educational needs, they are often under-used during the first parts of literacy and numeracy lessons, and in too many other learning situations.
57. Since the time of the previous inspection, the school accommodation has been significantly improved by the addition of new building for the nursery, which provides an excellent learning environment for the youngest children in the school. The nursery unit is rather isolated from the rest of the school as there is no covered access to it from the main school building. The facilities provided within the main part of the school are satisfactory; the classrooms and office space are reasonably sized and, generally, the building is in a good state of repair, but there is room for improvement. There are only two staff toilets and the 'infant toilets' are in need of refurbishment. The school has rightly identified these two areas as the most urgent priority and is using capital grant funds to pay for the necessary work. Alterations in the building to provide a space for a library have reduced the amount of internal storage and there is no secure external storage for physical education equipment. Consequently, various items are stored around the perimeter of the hall, which impedes more energetic activities. The caretaker takes pride in the school grounds, and together with the cleaner keeps the school buildings very clean and tidy. Together with other parents and staff, he willingly gives of his time to improve the school site. The latest community feature is the attractive millennium "Peace Garden" that was designed by former pupils and the headteacher. The school development plan includes priorities for improvement, but this does not take enough account of outcomes from health and safety surveys.
58. The learning resources for mathematics and English are good; there is a good range of books to support pupils' learning and staff have worked hard to provide additional resources, such as extra home-made resources for mathematics. In other subjects the resources are satisfactory and well organised. All subject co-ordinators have 'shopping lists' of books, artefacts or equipment, which would enrich pupils learning if they were available in the school. Budget restraints means that each subject has to take its turn and when it becomes a major focus within the development plan there may be funds available.

59. The effective management of the school's development has ensured appropriate forward momentum and is continuing to promote noticeable progress in almost all areas. Ably led by the headteacher, governors and staff are contributing enthusiastically to raising standards through increasing the efficiency with which new documentation and changing requirements are implemented. When all factors are considered, this inspection shows that the school continues to give good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

60. In order to improve the standards of attainment and progress of all pupils, the governors, headteacher and staff should, as generally identified in the school improvement plan:

- Improve the teaching of geography by:
 - making more regular assessments of what pupils know, understand and can do;
 - providing a range of work in each lesson that makes best use of the good knowledge that staff have about individuals in their groups;
 - improving lesson planning to take full account of the wide range of prior attainment in teaching groups, as already seen in many English and mathematics lessons;
 - extending the provision of appropriate in-service training and opportunities to observe good practice;

This can be seen in paragraphs: 7, 25, 26 and 104 to 112.

- Make better use of assessment information and marking of pupils' work, in subjects other than English and mathematics, to improve teachers' short-term planning and practice, so that in all classes the tasks and activities are matched more closely to pupils' individual needs, especially the higher attaining pupils;

This can be seen in paragraphs: 8, 18, 19, 21, 22, 23, 26, 28, 33, 39, 41, 74, 76, 84, 87, 88, 92, 98, 100, 102, 110, 116, 121 and 132.

- Make more effective use of classroom support assistants during lesson times, so that their skills are fully utilised to the benefit of all pupils;

This can be seen in paragraphs: 22, 56 and 75.

- Continue to develop the role of the co-ordinators, as stated in the previous report, so that there is increased opportunity for them to measure pupils' standards of attainment and progress in learning during lesson time, and to share best practice;

This can be seen in paragraphs: 20, 51, 93, 97, 103, 112, 117 and 133.

- Complete the process of reporting to parents and carrying out risk assessments so that all statutory requirements are met;

This can be seen in paragraphs: 44 and 54.

OTHER ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL:

- Improve teachers' timetables so that they more accurately reflect their short term planning of curriculum content and practice;

This can be seen in paragraphs: 24, 25, 37 and 91.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed **N.B. One lesson was not graded for quality of teaching**

| |
|----|
| 50 |
|----|

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

| |
|----|
| 47 |
|----|

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

| | Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|------------|-----------|-----------|------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| Number | 1 | 9 | 23 | 15 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Percentage | 2 | 18 | 47 | 31 | 2 | 0 | 0 |

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

| | Nursery | YR – Y6 |
|---|---------|---------|
| Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils) | 25.5 | 197 |
| Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals | | 23 |

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

| | Nursery | YR – Y6 |
|---|---------|---------|
| Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs | | 3 |
| Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register | | 22 |

English as an additional language

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year

| | No of pupils |
|--|--------------|
| Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission | 6 |
| Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving | 5 |

Attendance

Authorised absence

| | % |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data | 4.5 |
| National comparative data | 5.6 |

Unauthorised absence

| | % |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data | 0 |
| National comparative data | 0.5 |

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

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

| | Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
|--|------|------|-------|-------|
| Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year | 2001 | 13 | 18 | 31 |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results | | Reading | Writing | Mathematics |
|--|----------|----------------|----------------|--------------------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above | Boys | 12 | 13 | 13 |
| | Girls | 14 | 17 | 17 |
| | Total | 26 | 30 | 30 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School | 84 (82) | 97 (82) | 97 (85) |
| | National | 84 (83) | 86 (84) | 91 (90) |

| Teachers' Assessments | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|----------------|--------------------|----------------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above | Boys | 12 | 12 | 12 |
| | Girls | 17 | 17 | 15 |
| | Total | 29 | 29 | 27 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School | 94 (73) | 94 (85) | 87 (85) |
| | National | 85 (84) | 89 (88) | 89 (88) |

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 | 2001 | 11 | 15 | 26 |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|--|----------|----------------|--------------------|----------------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above | Boys | 8 | 7 | 9 |
| | Girls | 13 | 12 | 14 |
| | Total | 21 | 19 | 23 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above | School | 81 (76) | 73 (72) | 88 (100) |
| | National | 75 (75) | 71 (72) | 87 (85) |

| Teachers' Assessments | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|----------------|--------------------|----------------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above | Boys | 7 | 7 | 8 |
| | Girls | 14 | 13 | 14 |
| | Total | 21 | 20 | 22 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above | School | 81 (72) | 77 (66) | 85 (93) |
| | National | 72 (70) | 74 (72) | 82 (79) |

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

Ethnic background of pupils

| | No of pupils |
|---------------------------------|--------------|
| Black – Caribbean heritage | 2 |
| Black – African heritage | 3 |
| Black – other | |
| Indian | |
| Pakistani | |
| Bangladeshi | |
| Chinese | |
| White | 191 |
| Any other minority ethnic group | 1 |

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

| | Fixed period | Permanent |
|------------------------------|--------------|-----------|
| Black – Caribbean heritage | | |
| Black – African heritage | | |
| Black – other | | |
| Indian | | |
| Pakistani | | |
| Bangladeshi | | |
| Chinese | | |
| White | | |
| Other minority ethnic groups | | |

This table gives the number of exclusions of pupils of compulsory school age, 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) | 8 |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher | 24.6 |
| Average class size | 28 |

Education support staff: YR – Y6

| | |
|---|-------|
| Total number of education support staff | 7 |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week | 143.5 |

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

| | |
|--|-------|
| Total number of qualified teachers (FTE) | 1 |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher | 25.5 |
| Total number of education support staff | 1 |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week | 20.5 |
| Number of pupils per FTE adult | 12.25 |

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

| Financial year | 2001/2002 |
|--|-----------|
| | £ |
| Total income | 503 343 |
| Total expenditure | 510 839 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 2270 |
| Balance brought forward from previous year | 998 |
| Balance carried forward to next year | -6 498 |

Recruitment of teachers

| | |
|--|-----|
| Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years | 0 |
| Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years | 1.5 |
| Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE) | 0 |
| Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE) | 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 | 247 |
| Number of questionnaires returned | 61 |

Percentage of responses in each category

| | Strongly agree | Tend to agree | Tend to disagree | Strongly disagree | Don't know |
|--|----------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|------------|
| My child likes school. | 72 | 24 | 2 | 2 | 0 |
| My child is making good progress in school. | 52 | 39 | 2 | 0 | 7 |
| Behaviour in the school is good. | 62 | 30 | 2 | 0 | 6 |
| My child gets the right amount of work to do at home. | 43 | 26 | 15 | 2 | 14 |
| The teaching is good. | 72 | 24 | 2 | 0 | 2 |
| I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on. | 44 | 38 | 15 | 3 | 0 |
| I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem. | 80 | 18 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best. | 75 | 23 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| The school works closely with parents. | 54 | 39 | 7 | 0 | 0 |
| The school is well led and managed. | 64 | 31 | 2 | 0 | 3 |
| The school is helping my child become mature and responsible. | 77 | 18 | 2 | 0 | 3 |
| The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons. | 52 | 30 | 5 | 2 | 11 |

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

61. Provision for children under five at the foundation stage has been maintained at the good level indicated in the previous report. Children under four are educated in the purpose built new nursery unit, which gives them a wonderful start to their schooling. Reception age children are suitably identified and they are taught in a reception class that also has an outside safe-area that allows for full development of physical skills. At both locations, the larger proportion of children make good progress in preparation for joining the infant stage of their education. In the nursery, children attend part-time, either in the morning or the afternoon each day. One teacher teaches all children, with very good support from one, appropriately qualified classroom assistant. At other specific times, additional adult help is available. This arrangement works very effectively and the overall provision for these children, which includes teaching, is very good. Two part-time teachers who job-share provide overall good provision in the reception class. A classroom support assistant, who has a good effect on children's learning, but is not always used to best effect, competently supports them.
62. Children at the foundation stage have a wide range of attainment. On admission to the nursery at age three, the larger proportion of children have levels of skill, knowledge and understanding that are close to those expected for their age overall, although their communication, language and literacy skills are below expected levels for this age and their physical skills are better than expected. The larger proportion make good progress in all the areas of learning and their progress is monitored and recorded very effectively. By the time they are five, about two-thirds of the children attain levels that match those expected for five year olds, although the remaining proportion still require regular additional support because they do not attain these levels. The few children with special educational needs receive good support, and they enjoy all of the opportunities offered in the nursery unit and reception class. The few who are from different ethnic minority groups have equal access to provision and make progress at similar rates to all other children. There is no significant difference in the rate of progress of girls to that of boys.

Personal, social and emotional development

63. The development of children's personal, social and emotional skills is suitably emphasised during all learning and recreational activities. By the time they are five, the larger proportion of children attain levels that are above those expected for that age. The teaching is good overall, and very good in the nursery unit, so that the children are successfully encouraged to be independent in caring for themselves and their work. They are given some appropriate responsibilities, such as delivering the register to the school office, tidying away their work, and helping to clean up after messy activities. There are good, and sometimes very good opportunities for imaginative play and for class and group discussion, where children can express their views and feel valued, such as when they use the 'thinking stool'. The teaching staff have very good knowledge of the children through a very good understanding of the assessment of their skills and social development. They show care and concern for the children in all aspects of their education and welfare. Children have a clear understanding of right and wrong, and the school's focus on a whole school policy to promote a consistent approach to behavioural management has given them a very good understanding of the behavioural expectations in other parts of the school. The reception age children show a good level of maturity in group work, and in talking to other children, staff and visitors.

Communication, language and literacy

64. The development of communication through language and literacy has a very high profile for children under five because of their lower than expected skills in these areas when they enter the

nursery unit. By the time they are five, the larger proportion of children attain levels that are expected for that age, which represents good progress with learning. Children's progress with their reading is also good. Books and other reading materials are regularly presented as a source of interest, and teaching staff provide many opportunities for the children to enjoy a wide range of interesting texts. The quality of teaching is good overall, and very good in the nursery unit. Children are suitably introduced to the characters and background to the reading scheme books. They become familiar with frequently used simple words, and learn to recognise and read them. They make good progress with learning letter sounds and know that the illustrations hold clues to help them read the text. They make good gains in reading and writing, and use their very good listening skills to enjoy the stories that are regularly read to them. Speaking skills are developed effectively through frequent discussions, role-play and by teaching staff answering questions in sentences, speaking clearly and with suitable variety of volume. Reception age children build simple words from the sounds that letters make. They record their work with progressive neatness, recognising the link between reading and writing. The larger proportion write their names unaided, using capital letters appropriately. Progress in learning is good because the teaching staff have a consistent, carefully planned and agreed approach to children's language and literacy development. Also, they use their very good knowledge of the children to match work to learning needs. There is effective use of the wide range of learning resources, especially in the nursery unit. Children experiment with pencils and crayons to make marks on paper that lead to correct letter formation. Computer software that the children know and can use, adds interest, fun and anticipation when they are learning letter sounds. The picnics, 'indoor camping ground' and listening centre corners provide very good stimuli for speaking and extending language, as when the children take on the role of 'camp site organiser' to consider applications for entering the 'camp'. The children are very responsive to the good and sometimes better teaching in language developmental activities. Learning in both groups benefits extensively from the very good relationships that children have with the adults who work alongside them.

Mathematical development

65. By the age of five, most children have better than expected skills in mathematics. Teaching is good overall and very good in the nursery unit and the larger proportion of children make good progress because of the carefully planned range of activities that challenge their mathematical thinking. There are many opportunities for children to learn and understand mathematical words, such as 'further than' and 'added to'. They use them appropriately in many situations, for example, when counting teddies or when using the floor-robot. The larger proportion of children in the reception class count to 28, which is the number in their class, and use recently learned sequencing skills to write numbers that can be recognised. Children know the names of familiar solid shapes, and staff are careful to use the correct vocabulary when looking at shapes in books, and when cutting out paper. Good use is made of computers to move shapes about on the monitor screen, such as when children choose shoes for different size of feet. Children's learning is suitably extended when they work successfully together on the task and share ideas by taking turns to speak and listen. They share willingly, respect the equipment they use and listen carefully to adults. The children especially enjoy the enthusiastic teaching, and this helps them to learn and use their learning to best effect.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

66. The larger proportion of children have knowledge and understanding of the world that is above that expected for this age. Teaching of this early learning goal is good overall, and very good in the nursery unit; planning is thorough and relates the area to other curriculum areas, such as those mentioned above. The nursery unit staff provide many good quality activities for children to experience all aspects of this area of the curriculum and the children's natural curiosity prompts them to learn more. They talk confidently about their families, homes, and important events such as Christmas time at school. They understand that the world extends beyond the area in which they live. For example, their work related to the Chinese New Year led to discussions and further

interest about this far away country. Photographic evidence shows children actively involved in water based activities, such as fishing, washing and measuring. In design and technology, children use a good range of construction toys to make models of buildings and vehicles. In food technology, they make good gains when learning that some materials mix freely together to bake bread. This work was successfully linked to the learning about early history. This was the result of a visit to a local supermarket where the children watched bread being made in bulk and then stacked to be bought by their mothers and other shoppers. Children's learning of computer skills moves off to a good start. They have good control of the 'mouse', understand how to "click" and drag to move pictures around the screen, and how to click on letters to identify initial sounds of words. They use the floor-robot with growing skill. Children play with dolls and talk about the display of cooking pots that represent a suitable range of other cultures.

Physical development

67. The larger proportion of children have above expected level for their age in their physical development. They move confidently around the classroom and move in an orderly manner about the school, as when they come in from breaktimes. Teaching is good overall, and very good in the nursery unit. Lessons are well planned and ensure that there is a wide range of opportunity to work with different media, and show control of a variety of objects. For example, children's learning about controlling paintbrushes and scissors is good. They cut and shape paper based materials with increasing accuracy. Teaching in physical education lessons is sometimes very good, and the children develop a good awareness of using their bodies to create movements that show good levels of co-ordination and control. This knowledge is used effectively in outdoor play to avoid collisions and respect the needs of others. The children use large and small equipment safely, often creating different kinds of activity pathways, as when they use plastic barrels and tunnels as part of structured play activity. The outdoor play area has grass and hard surface areas for nursery unit children, but those in the reception class are generally restricted to a hard surface area that is need of improvement. It lacks climbing equipment and a safe landing surface. There is a good supply of large and wheeled toys that offers suitable opportunities for more creative outside play.

Creative development

68. By the age of five, most children attain above the expected level in their creative development. Teaching is good overall, and very good in the nursery unit, and children make good progress in their learning of creative skills. The classroom environments are colourful and some of the children's creative work in drawing, painting and simple writing adorns the display boards. Music is used effectively so that children interpret their responses to it through comment, personalised movements and playing of percussion instruments. Children use a wide range of art materials imaginatively. For example, they use water based paints attractively to express their impressions of events in their lives as part of the topic 'About Me'. They have a good understanding of repetitive patterns and express their understanding using a developing range of subject related vocabulary. Their silver and black paintings clearly depict winter scenes. They know the names of some musical instruments and perform effectively together, as when playing rhythmic beat on percussion instruments and singing familiar songs and rhymes. They enjoy dressing up and taking on the roles of other people in the creative play areas. All of these examples illustrate the high quality of experiences on offer that successfully develop all six areas of learning for all groups of children in the nursery unit and the reception class.

ENGLISH

69. Standards of attainment are good throughout the school and have improved since the previous inspection. While recent test results show girls to be performing better than boys, this was not particularly evident during the inspection. Speaking and listening skills of both genders are very

good. In reading and writing, standards for seven-year-olds are now good. For pupils in Years 3 to 6 particularly, the additional emphasis that the school has placed on writing, following their analysis of test results, has been of significant benefit. Teachers are using the National Literacy Strategy effectively and their expectations of the pupils are generally good. Pupils are systematically taught a wide range of literacy skills. Across the school, the few pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds achieve and progress in line with all other groups of pupils.

70. By the time they are age seven, pupils have a wide vocabulary and are keen to talk about their experiences. Similarly by the age of eleven, pupils are very good listeners and confident speakers. Teachers show a secure knowledge and understanding of how to improve pupils' speaking and listening, and plan for them to use and develop these skills. The oldest pupils are able to express themselves well, explaining their ideas clearly and justifying their points of view. A feature of most lessons is the good quality of questions asked by teachers to draw out pupils' understanding. Pupils respond enthusiastically to the teachers' questions, particularly where these enable them to give extended answers. In lessons where pupils are given time for brief, paired discussions, this is an effective approach, allowing pupils to listen to the views of others and test out their own opinions with a partner before offering an answer.
71. Standards in reading are above average by Year 2 and Year 6, particularly the number of pupils reading at the higher levels by the age of eleven. This is developed through a very effective system, which allows individual pupils to progress at a good rate, and is strongly supported by parents and other family members hearing pupils read at home. Reading diaries successfully encourage a dialogue between home and school, particularly for the younger pupils. Pupils in Year 2 know the difference between fiction and non-fiction books, confidently explain terms such as glossary, and can use contents or index pages to find information quickly and accurately. These skills were used to good effect in an English lesson linked to their recent visit to Conisbrough Castle, where pupils found information about different features of castles from a wide assortment of books. Pupils use a good range of approaches when reading, such as using their knowledge of letter sounds to help them build up unfamiliar words. Reading skills continue to be developed through Years 3 to 6 and pupils maintain their good progress. They have a good knowledge of reference skills, including how libraries are organised, using these skills efficiently and accessing the school library for independent research.
72. Standards in writing are broadly average at age seven, with about a quarter showing high attainment. With the greater emphasis on writing, pupils in Years 3 to 6 have noticeably improved, and standards are above average by age eleven. Pupils in Year 2 understand the features of story writing and their stories have a definite beginning, middle and end and show an awareness of the expected audience. Most pupils are writing simple sentences using full stops and capital letters accurately. The higher attaining pupils use more complex sentences and more interesting vocabulary. A lesson on synonyms in Year 2 enabled pupils to extend the range of words used in their writing. Pupils spell most common words correctly and make good attempts at spelling unfamiliar words, but are less effective at applying regular spelling rules. Their knowledge of how letters go together to make sounds does let them down at times and they make unnecessary errors. As they progress through the school, pupils punctuate their work accurately.
73. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 have further opportunities to explore a range of styles through shared writing and they apply these skills to their own work. For example in a Year 4 lesson, pupils developed their understanding of writing discussion text by developing arguments for and against a particular issue. This was well supported by the teacher who provided good prompts for those pupils who needed extra help. By the end of Year 6, pupils have been given the opportunity to write for many different purposes and they show that they understand grammatical structures. In a good, shared writing lesson in Year 6, pupils worked at producing a succinct commentary advertising the attractions of the City of York following their recent visit. This was carefully planned to involve pupils in preparing concise statements suitable for use in a computer presentation.

74. Most pupils have developed a broad vocabulary, which they use in a range of writing, including letters, poetry, play-scripts, instructions and stories. A general weakness in all classes is the quality of handwriting and presentation. Not all pupils have developed a flowing joined script by the time they are eleven, and heavy scoring out found in some classes, spoils pupils' written work. The good work seen in their handwriting practice books often does not transfer to their daily work. Not all teachers are setting high enough standards or being sufficiently critical when it comes to the presentation of pupils' work, which does not reflect school aims. The good literacy skills that pupils show are successfully used and developed in other subjects. Classrooms and public areas have good displays of pupils' writing across a range of subjects including science, history and geography. Information and communication technology is often used in displays, helping pupils with drafting and redrafting their work.
75. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress towards their targets. These pupils are included in all lessons and are well motivated to succeed through appropriate targets being set, working through additional funded support programmes, and the help that they receive from classroom support assistants. However, classroom support assistants are not always used effectively, especially during the lesson introductions. Too often they are merely listening to the teacher along with the pupils and are not engaged in activities such as monitoring or assessment that would provide the teacher with useful additional information.
76. The quality of teaching overall is good, and shows why standards are rising. Teachers throughout the school have a secure knowledge of the National Literacy Strategy and plan the work in line with its framework and guidance. Most teachers share the learning objectives for the lesson at the start, so that the pupils know what the lesson is about and what they are expected to do. They often return to these at the end to assess the gains pupils have made in their understanding. As a result of the good teaching, pupils generally apply themselves well to this work and make good progress in their learning. For the highest attainers, while standards are improving, teachers do not always expect enough of them in their writing. Work set in these situations does not always take enough account of pupils' prior levels of attainment. Marking is regular and supportive of pupils' efforts, but not enough identifies regular errors or sets sharp, short-term individual targets for improvement.
77. Where teaching is less successful, this is often because pupils' behaviour is not managed appropriately during independent work and too much chattering prevents pupils concentrating sufficiently and completing their tasks. Not enough use is made of the competent classroom support assistants and other helpers, which is a waste of a valuable resource.
78. Subject management is good. Co-ordination is enthusiastic and a good model for other teachers. Much of the monitoring comes through helping teachers with planning and scrutinising pupils' completed recorded work, and marking has correctly been identified as an area for improvement. The role in developing and analysis of test results has provided a clear direction for the subject. Writing was identified as a weakness and the action taken to address this has been very successful. Resources are good overall, but the range of fiction books from other cultures is too limited. The library carries a suitable range of non-fiction books, which pupils use regularly for personal research. The greater emphasis being placed on writing is reflected in displays throughout the school. These show examples of good quality and set high standards, encouraging pupils through celebrating their work.

MATHEMATICS

79. For the larger proportion of pupils, the standards observed in mathematics during the inspection were above average compared with those expected from most seven and eleven year olds. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those few from ethnic minority

backgrounds, make good progress. The above average standards reported at the time of the previous inspection have been maintained, using the average points score table. Current standards are better than the results of the National Curriculum assessment test results for 2001, which were below average for both seven and eleven year olds. This improvement is due to the school recognising the lower than average proportion of pupils gaining the higher levels at both Years 2 and 6, and working hard to remedy this. There are no significant differences in the work seen from boys to that of girls.

80. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of all aspects of mathematics. Their numeracy skills are good and the great majority of pupils have a quick and accurate recall of more simple multiplication bonds. Pupils are beginning to relate these to division of numbers and this is a skill that might be expected from older or more able pupils of this age. They use their understanding of the meaning of different digits in numbers to add mentally and accurately to a two-digit number, dealing with the tens and units separately. This illustrates their good understanding of place value in numbers up to 100. They can use addition and subtraction competently when solving problems, although their initial understanding of the problems and their ability to work out strategies is weaker.
81. By the end of Year 6, pupils' knowledge and understanding of number are good. Pupils can calculate using all four operations with numbers to two decimal places, and they apply these skills competently when solving problems. Pupils at all levels of achievement have built a secure knowledge and understanding of fractions and decimals, and apply these to good effect in problem solving. A strong feature in pupils' learning is their ability to use and apply their number skills effectively in different mathematical situations. For example, in a Year 6 lesson, all pupils readily built sequences of numbers based on how many dominoes it took to build bridges of different sizes, with an increasing number of supports and arches. They recognised the number patterns created and competently used their knowledge and understanding to predict how many dominoes it would take to build a bridge with 147 arches. A small number extended this to an unknown number, leading them into basic algebraic notation and functions. This level of more advanced work is expected of older pupils.
82. The larger proportion of pupils have a good understanding of shape. They successfully calculate the areas and perimeters of a range of irregular shapes made up of rectangles. They accurately partition the shapes into rectangles, calculate the areas of each and total these. Likewise, they have moved successfully beyond counting units when finding the perimeter of shapes. They apply a formula and calculate the answer. Pupils handle data confidently and find the mean, median and mode of a sample of data. For example, they interpret from a diagram that charts graphically the height of some of the world's most famous footballers. Progress through the junior age classes is uneven. Currently it is better in Years 4 and 6, where teaching is regularly of a high quality. Whilst working across the mathematics and numeracy curriculum, pupils show that they have very good skills in using and applying their knowledge and understanding to solve problems and work out strategies to answer questions.
83. Pupils work hard at mathematics. They enjoy the challenges set by their teachers and find mathematics stimulating and enjoyable. Their behaviour in lessons is good and pupils generally pay full attention to their teachers at all times. When the pace of the lesson is rapid and new ideas are being introduced at a quick pace, pupils' high levels of concentration enable them to keep up with the teacher and there is good learning. This has a positive impact on the standards achieved. Where lessons are less interesting and the pace is slower, pupils are less enthusiastic and learning is only satisfactory. Pupils work comfortably together and share ideas to good effect.
84. Overall, the quality of teaching is good throughout the school. This is the same as judgements reported at the time of the previous inspection. The quality of teaching seen during the week of the inspection varied from satisfactory to excellent. Good use is made of the National Numeracy Strategy. Opening activities are effective at focusing in on the main learning objectives of lessons

and in directing pupils' attention appropriately. Lesson planning is satisfactory and generally ensures that the activities support the learning objective. However, some learning objectives focus too much on what pupils will do rather than what they will learn. In some classes, higher attaining pupils do not receive sufficiently challenging work and their standards remain similar to average attaining pupils. Teachers mostly move pupils on at a quick pace, whilst ensuring that they are capable of taking the next steps in learning, but some lessons are conducted at a slower pace and fail to enthuse pupils sufficiently. A wide variety of methods, such as whole-class discussion, group work and individual tasks, are used to suit the different activity at separate parts in the lesson. Teachers have good subject knowledge, confidently and clearly explaining procedures and how to solve questions. Teachers' good subject knowledge of problem solving techniques and conducting mathematical investigations is also used effectively to extend learning. Behaviour management techniques are good and teachers appropriately settle classes before talking to them. Pupils with special educational needs are supported effectively by learning support assistants and this enables them to fully access the teaching and learning that takes place.

85. Curriculum co-ordination is good and there is clear determination to improve provision and standards through sharing good skills and providing good levels of support for other less informed staff. Assessment procedures provide good information about the progress that pupils are making. This data is used effectively to set targets for groups of pupils and to identify weaknesses. Computers are used satisfactorily to support pupils' progress in this subject.

SCIENCE

86. The above average standards reported at the time of the previous inspection have been maintained. The knowledge, skill and understanding associated with the learning of science of seven and eleven year olds are above average. The skills of scientific enquiry and investigation are generally less well developed, but are nevertheless close to national expectations. Pupils with special educational needs make appropriate progress and those few with ethnic minority backgrounds make progress at similar rates to all others.
87. Pupils in Years 1 and 2, including those with special educational needs and those few from ethnic minority backgrounds, continue the good progress they made in the foundation stage. Year 1 pupils find out about sound travelling by using a string telephone, identifying whether sound is pitched high or low. They sort materials with good accuracy, for example, by recording whether objects are made from wood or metal, and they record the growth of plants. They know about the different types of food and the importance of cleanliness in food preparation. By the time they reach the end of Year 2, pupils know what plants need for healthy growth, and know that living things 'make new ones' by making seeds, laying eggs or having live babies. Seven year olds can divide animals into different groups, such as mammals, birds and reptiles. They talk confidently about different materials, distinguishing natural from man-made and why some materials are suitable for different purposes, such as wood being hard, strong, and "you can cut and shape it". They recognise cause and effect in physical processes, as when they describe what would happen in different arrangements of simple electrical circuits, and knowing that forces must be applied to make objects move or change direction. Whilst they employ a number of different ways of recording their findings following practical work, their opportunities for testing out their own ideas, making predictions, and saying whether happenings were as they expected, are too limited.
88. All groups of pupils in Years 3 to 6 build on their knowledge and understanding and they continue to make good progress in their learning about life and living things, materials and physical processes. Their progress in the skills of scientific enquiry and investigation is satisfactory overall, because not all teachers give them sufficient opportunities to test out their own ideas and presenting their results in a range of styles, such as creating tables, charts and graphs. Neither do they use information and communication technology with enough regularity. By the time they are eleven, the larger proportion of pupils successfully identify major organs in the human body and flowering plants, and describe important processes such as digestion and fertilisation. They can describe some reversible and irreversible changes of materials, and know how processes such as

filtering and evaporation can separate mixtures and solutions. Pupils know about different light sources, how shadows are formed and how a range of forces, such as gravity, friction and magnetism, affect movement.

89. Across the school, pupils' attitudes are good overall. Almost all pupils show genuine enthusiasm for the subject, although in some classes a few pupils become a little over excited and silly. The two lessons observed in Years 1 and 2 were good, with the pupils demonstrating good attitudes and behaviour. The oldest pupils showed very good levels of behaviour when working independently in the school grounds.
90. Overall, the quality of the teaching of science is good. Almost all teachers demonstrate good knowledge and understanding of the subject and employ effective teaching methods. The management of pupils is generally good and often very good in some classes. In better lessons, teachers' planning is well-focussed and pupils are given interesting practical experiences. For example, pupils in Year 1 sorted their collection of toys by the differing forces that made them move, and measured the distance that different toys travelled. Pupils in Year 2 were given a challenging task to measure the elasticity of a wide range of elastic bands, and they achieved a good success rate.
91. The teaching in Years 3 to 6 was never less than satisfactory and sometimes good. All lessons contained a practical element; for example, pupils were observed testing materials for thermal insulation. Another class group were working outside to observe and record living things found in different places in the school grounds. Inspection evidence shows, however, that practical work is not always a feature of lessons and that teachers rely too much on the presentation and recording of facts to promote pupils' learning. This is especially the case in Year 6, where there is an imbalance between the need to revise previous work in preparation for national tests and the need to continue with the planned programme of study.
92. There is structured scheme of work in place, which is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection. This scheme provides challenges for a range of abilities but, whilst teachers generally have good expectations for the different achievement levels of their pupils, they do not always ensure that their planning of individual lessons provides sufficient challenge for higher attaining ones. The quality of presentation in pupils' books is variable, and ranges from very neat to untidy. There is not enough encouragement or written evaluation in teachers' marking to promote higher standards of presentation, or to make pupils aware of areas where they need to improve.
93. The subject is managed satisfactorily overall. Monitoring of standards across the school, however, has not been rigorous enough. There has been no thorough analysis of attainment and, although samples of pupils' work have been examined, this has not led to an informed view of standards across the school, and the relative strengths and weaknesses within the subject. Teachers are using new personalised class record books to note pupils' achievements and levels of attainment, but this is a very recent initiative and currently there is no consistent agreed procedure for the use of these assessments. The school is currently evaluating a number of different assessment materials in an effort to improve the situation. Learning resources are adequate and effective use is made of the school grounds.

ART AND DESIGN

94. Only one lesson was seen during the inspection and this was of good quality, but additional evidence from a wide range of sources shows that overall standards have improved since the previous inspection. The larger proportion of pupils reach expected standards in Year 2 and makes steady, satisfactory progress in developing their skills, although some observational drawing is of very good quality. Throughout Years 3 to 6, progress with learning improves as they develop

their understanding and techniques and, by Year 6, standards are above national expectations. Pupils with special educational needs and those few from minority ethnic backgrounds make appropriate progress, mainly because of the equality of opportunity offered to all pupils. There is no significant difference between the achievements of girls to boys.

95. The evidence indicates that the quality of teaching and learning is good overall. In a Year 6 lesson on botanical painting, pupils were competently taught as the teacher skilfully introduced the use of crayon to a watercolour wash to highlight the veins on a leaf. Pupils concentrated hard on the task, applied their newly acquired skills and the results were of a generally high standard. Previous work shows pupils have also experimented successfully with shading techniques and looked at the work of artists such as Van Gogh, to good effect.
96. Art and design supports other subjects effectively and there are good quality displays around the school. Pupils have a particular talent in observational drawing, and drawings of Conisbrough Castle in Year 2 following an historical visit, were very detailed. Pupils in Year 4 have supported their work in geography with very good landscape drawings and paintings from their visit to Boggle Hole at Robin Hood's Bay. Pupils in Year 6 exhibited some very good drawings of buildings following a visit to the City of York. Across the school, pupils use sketchbooks and these show a firm development of skills and techniques. However, not all of these sketchbooks are used effectively as planning books, or to practise technique, and do not provide a useful record of progress and development of skills because they often contain only finished pieces. Pupils look at the work of a range of Western European artists, such as Van Gogh, Monet, Klee and Kandinsky, but there are too few examples of pupils studying women artists or art and design from other cultures, which limits their cultural development.
97. The range of three-dimensional work is not sufficiently wide and there is too little use of computer art and design packages as a way of creating original creations. However, good work is being done to develop textiles, and pupils in Year 6 have produced some attractive wall hangings. Good use is made of parents and visitors to support this subject, as seen in a display of work carried out jointly by pupils in Year 3 and their relatives. The breadth and content of the curriculum has been improved since the previous inspection. There is now good continuity and development of skills, and long-term planning is secure. Co-ordination of the subject is satisfactory overall. There is effective monitoring of teachers' planning, but there has been no opportunity to monitor teaching or work alongside colleagues during lesson time. Learning resources are adequate and consumables are replaced as necessary.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

98. Standards of attainment for seven and eleven year olds are generally in line with national expectations for pupils of these ages. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those few from ethnic minority backgrounds, make satisfactory progress with their learning. Boys make similar progress to that of girls. At the time of the previous inspection, achievement was also judged to be average. Although overall standards are satisfactory, there are some areas for development in the designing and evaluating parts of the whole process.
99. Pupils in Year 2 were observed constructing mechanisms that would be built into their model castles. They used card boxes to construct the castle structure and rods, bobbins and string to make winding mechanisms to raise and lower the drawbridge or portcullis. Pupils showed a secure understanding of this process and had some firm ideas about how they were going to construct the structure and build in the winding mechanism. They also tried different ways to make a portcullis, with some using small wooden sticks and others using strips of card. They used glue to join the pieces together. Pupils' ideas were good, but the planning and designing process lacked structure. Their designs lacked the focused detail that is needed if they are to be a firm

guide for construction. This is mainly because there was insufficient guidance from teachers in organising the recording of their ideas.

100. This is also a feature of the design process further up the school. Pupils in Year 5 were given a blank sheet of A4 paper and asked to design thrones for a king or queen. These lacked focus and detail and were of an unsatisfactory standard. Designs for making a structure or shelter for a playground by pupils in Year 6, although satisfactory and adequately supported the making process, were not sufficiently organised in their presentation. Designs included the materials to be used, diagrams of the finished structure, methods to be used and some minor evaluation. However, the evaluation did not comment sufficiently upon the pupils' ideas of strengths and weaknesses of their work.
101. A particularly impressive model was seen in Year 4, where the class has built a large-scale model of Robin Hood's Bay appropriately linked with their geographically based visit. They creatively used a frame of chicken wire supported by paper and the whole structure was covered in mouldable plastic. They then painted the model and achieved a realistic finish. Model houses are accurately placed in position. The pupils have interesting plans to improve and develop the models even further.
102. Teaching is satisfactory overall, but there are some weaknesses in the provision of the full range of activities that enable pupils to progress better than satisfactorily. Opportunities for pupils to plan, design and evaluate their results are not sufficiently supported because of a lack of guidance. Both teachers and classroom assistants support the pupils effectively, by expecting them to work hard and intervening to help or deal with difficulties that the pupils experience when constructing their models. As a result, pupils throughout the school are enthusiastic and enjoy these kinds of practical activities. They persist with developing new skills and extending others, and try hard to succeed. Pupils work co-operatively when sharing tools or collaborating in a small group. They recognise and celebrate the success of others.
103. The co-ordinator has only recently taken over the responsibility. Design and technology was a focus for development in last year's school development plan, but this did not take place because the previous curriculum co-ordinator was seconded to another school. There are, therefore, some areas for the school to identify and address. The leadership and management of the subject are developing and an audit of resources has already started. The quality and range of resources are satisfactory but lists to aid teachers' planning are not in evidence. There is a suitable scheme of work, which is based on National Curriculum guidelines and this is used effectively to support and add interest to work in other subjects, such as history, geography and the school's healthy eating initiative. So far, there has been no opportunity created for monitoring teaching and learning in the subject during lesson time. There is no evidence of the use of information and communication technology to support the design processes.

GEOGRAPHY

104. The standards attained by seven years olds reported at the time of the previous inspection have been maintained and meet national expectations. The level of skills knowledge and understanding of eleven year olds has declined and standards attained by those in Year 6 are now below national expectations. There is no significant difference between the achievements of boys to girls.
105. Much of the geography learnt in Years 1 and 2 is based on the neighbourhood of the school and the local community. Pupils go for walks near the school and observe the road layouts, the buildings and the traffic, which satisfactorily develops their knowledge of local geographical features. They also learn something of distant localities. Pupils in Year 2, for example, learn about other countries of the world through stories. Using the story 'Handa's Surprise' as a starting point, they compare life in Dinnington with a village in Kenya and record similarities and

differences. By the end of Year 2, they have views on places and people and know that people change their environment by building, making roads and adding “ things like theme parks” and can spoil the countryside by leaving litter. They know that places in Africa can be ‘hot, dry and dusty’ and that different forms of transport are needed to travel to different places. They also know that the local coal mine, which they have visited, changed the town when it opened and when it closed. The first hand experiences, such as the walks and the visits, are an important element in their learning and helps all six and seven year-olds, including those with special educational needs and the few with an ethnic minority background, to make satisfactory progress.

106. The school is committed to providing exciting fieldwork opportunities for its pupils and a strong feature of the school is its residential visits. Pupils in Year 4 visited Boggle Hole for two days, and created an attractive wall display to show their new learning. During the inspection, pupils were carrying out follow-up work for the visit and studying the cause and effect of coastal erosion. Pupils demonstrated very good knowledge of this aspect of geography. Pupils in Year 5 visited the Earth Centre, where they learnt some environmental aspects of geography. Despite these stimulating experiences, pupils in Year 6 have not built up their geographic vocabulary, their knowledge of places, their skills in making or interpreting maps or their understanding of geographical processes. The locational knowledge of these eleven year olds is too limited and below expectations. For example, they can locate England and Scotland on a map of the British Isles, but cannot point to Wales.
107. Pupils in Year 6 do not recognise the term ‘settlements’ and, even with sympathetic prompting, cannot suggest reasons for the location of settlements, except one lower ability child, who tentatively suggested ‘near a river’. They cannot say why some settlements grow and change. They can name some of the way us in which people change the environment, such as quarries, farming and building. They remembered learning about ‘recycling’ and organic foods at the Earth Centre but could not say how this might benefit the environment. They know that countries closer to the Equator are hotter, but do not know about the tropics, and cannot suggest any differences between life in this country and life in a place such as central Africa.
108. It was not possible to observe any geography lessons in Years 1 and 2 during the inspection, but evidence from a wider range of sources shows that the quality of teaching in these years is at least satisfactory and all pupils make satisfactory progress. In Years 3 to 6 there is a variation in the quality of different aspects of teaching. One of the three lessons observed concentrated on the computer skills needed for a geographical presentation, which successfully promoted the use of information and communication technology, but the geographical content was minimal. One of the other lessons was a very good model of geography teaching. Pupils were role-playing different people having varied interests in coastal erosion. The teacher used probing questions and set up situations where the pupils had to respond in role. They made corporate decisions in their groups and used very good geographical vocabulary in their enthusiastic responses.
109. Relationships between staff and pupils within classes are very good, which promotes enjoyment in learning. As a result, pupils’ attitude towards their learning is good overall. In the lessons seen and during conversations, pupils are polite and responsive, anxious to please and have very good relationships with each other. The larger proportion show very good behaviour, although there are small pockets of pupils who chatter unnecessarily to the annoyance of staff and classmates. These few disturb the rate of learning of others in their group.
110. The quality of teaching is unsatisfactory overall, although there are examples of good teaching in some parts of the school. Overall, teachers have firm knowledge and understanding of the subject and the teaching skills necessary to raise standards in the subject, but there are significant weaknesses in planning and assessment. From analysing a wide range of evidence, it is evident that teachers are providing some wonderful experiences, but are not ensuring that pupils are consistently acquiring essential skills, knowledge and understanding. These weaknesses result in the overall quality of teaching across Years 3 to 6 being unsatisfactory, and too many pupils,

including those with special educational needs and those few with ethnic minority backgrounds, making unsatisfactory progress, especially towards the top end of the school.

111. The school has its own scheme of work that is designed to cover the National Curriculum programme of study and to ensure that learning is supported by exciting fieldwork. Suitable modifications have been made to incorporate some units of work from a nationally recognised scheme of work. Unfortunately, the way the two schemes integrate has not been fully worked out, which accounts for some of the lack of learning that has taken place. The newly introduced class record books, for example, are based on the national scheme, but too many teachers are still following much of the original scheme. Another weakness is the lack of geographical focus in the follow-up work after visits. There are examples of good writing and artwork, but opportunities to systematically provide learning experiences are missed. In Year 6, for example, a project entitled 'In the News' from the school's scheme of work is designed to develop pupils' knowledge of places and their mapping skills. The pupils did lots of work, some of which was good, but the geographical content was minimal. During the inspection, pupils were beginning to do some suitable work connected to their visit to the City of York and some mapping work was planned. As a result, their knowledge of local geography is likely to improve, but not sufficiently to change the overall judgement on standards.
112. Leadership and management of the subject are unsatisfactory. Samples of work are examined from across the school, but the data collected is not used effectively and monitoring of the subject is not rigorous enough. There is a lack of awareness of the inconsistencies in teaching overall and the weaknesses in planning and assessment, which has resulted in not enough action being taken to raise standards in all aspects of this subject. The use of information and communication technology in the subject is weak, but is developing gradually. Pupils do a little research on the Internet, and those in Year 6 are being successfully introduced to 'PowerPoint', so that they can prepare presentations. They are beginning to use appropriate software to develop pupils' mapping skills. Other resources are adequate and are sufficient to support the planned schemes of work.

HISTORY

113. The standards of attainment reported at the time of the previous inspection have been broadly maintained. The knowledge and understanding of history of both seven and eleven year olds meets national expectations. Girls and boys do equally well. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those few from ethnic minority backgrounds, make satisfactory progress with their learning.
114. Pupils' interest in history is stimulated by visits to many interesting places. In Year 1, for example, following a visit to Scarborough, pupils made a simple timeline showing differences between the time of great grandparents and the present. During the inspection, they were observed discussing the differences between holidays in the distant and more recent past and recording these using photographs. By the end of Year 2, pupils show an increasing awareness of the passing of time and can talk about why and how life was different in the past, such as the lack of electricity in Victorian homes. They know that we can find out about history from stories, pictures and by talking to people. Pupils have learnt about historical figures, such as Florence Nightingale, and know some of the reasons why she is famous, such as her campaign to "clean up the soldiers' hospitals". They remember visits, such as the one they made to Conisbrough Castle. They talk confidently about the Battle of Hastings and how "William and his men from France weren't happy in this country and built lots of castles to live in". They also know that life was different in the 1950s; "nappies were like towels and prams were so big you had to leave them outside".
115. All pupils continue to make satisfactory progress in Years 3 to 6 and their learning continues to be enriched by educational visits. Pupils in Year 4 remember their visit to Doncaster Museum when they learnt about the early Romans. They know about the Romans original defeat, how they

returned for “about 300 years” and built roads, temples and baths. They also know about the Tudors and are keen to recite a rhyme that helps them remember the fate of Henry VIII’s six wives. By the time they are eleven, pupils know that when finding out about history it is important to distinguish between fact and opinion. They know that personal diaries and artefacts, such as antiques and paintings, can be used for research as well as other methods, such as talking to older people and “scanning Egyptian mummies”. They have a suitable understanding about historical periods and their sequence. They know some facts about the early Romans and the Vikings, but are most articulate when discussing their study of Britain at the time of World War II and the visit they made to Eden Camp. They know about Britain’s allies and enemies and about rationing, air raid shelters and evacuees. At the time of the inspection they had recently visited the City of York and were beginning their follow-up studies.

116. It was only possible to observe two history lessons during the inspection, one in Year 1 and one in Year 3. By analysing a wide range of alternative sources, evidence shows that the quality of teaching in history is at least satisfactory and often good. The regularly planned visits are a strong feature of provision across the school. As a result, pupils’ attitude to learning about history is good overall. They talk about their visits with enthusiasm and show high levels of respect for adults when they are sharing their knowledge and understanding of historical events. There are firm reports of pupils showing very good behaviour when they make visits, and this is reflected in the way in which they listen to each other’s comments during discussions. However, teachers do not always follow up these visits with activities that consolidate and extend pupils’ knowledge, so that they can build up an understanding of the broad sweep of history and begin to present organised work that links information from a variety of sources. Teachers are providing wonderful experiences, but sometimes there are missed opportunities to raise standards. Teachers use historical topics for pupils to practise literacy skills, including a little use of the Internet and CD-ROMs for research. Pupils also use word processing programs to produce interesting written accounts. Teachers have generally good expectations of their pupils and expect those with more ability to produce work of higher standard. However, there is not enough evidence to show that tasks are structured to provide different challenges for different levels of pupils’ prior achievements.
117. The school has adopted the scheme of work provided by a nationally recognised body, and this is an improvement in provision for pupils aged five to seven. Effective subject co-ordination has ensured that the units of work for each year group are supported by good quality educational visits. There is widespread consultation with teachers to try to ensure a balance between, local studies, British history and world history. There is one significant problem of continuity between Years 2 and 3 when it is not clear how the older pupils build on their skills and knowledge of local history. It has not been possible to carry out effective monitoring of teaching and learning during lesson time, but the school has begun to build up a collection of pupils’ work to confirm standards and progress with the scheme of work. This work is not compared to National Curriculum levels and as the data from the newly introduced class recording system has not yet been analysed. Consequently, it is difficult to form a view on standards across the school and to ensure a progression in the skills and knowledge of individuals. Resources are adequate and these are sometimes usefully supplemented by loans from the museum service and from home sources.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

118. Standards of achievement in information and communications technology are as expected for pupils aged seven and eleven. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those few with ethnic minority backgrounds, make satisfactory progress. This is similar to judgements made at the time of the previous inspection. National expectations in information and communication technology have significantly increased since that time and the school has managed to keep pace with expectations. This, therefore, represents a good level of improvement since the previous inspection in real terms.

119. Throughout Years 1 and 2, pupils use information and communication technology to support learning in other subjects, whilst learning and improving their computer skills. Pupils use word-processing to write accounts of their experiences in other subjects, such as a history-based trip to City of Lincoln. When checking their work, pupils use the spell checker to make sure that their writing is as accurate as possible. They manipulate a keyboard with confidence and demonstrate their skills of word processing by changing font to enhance the style of their work. They use the 'mouse' automatically to carry out commands. They are familiar with the layout of the keyboard and satisfactorily locate letters and a small range of command keys, such as the delete key. Standards in 'control' are satisfactory. Pupils can give a programmable robot a series of single commands to move it along a pathway, which is an activity that is appropriate for this age of pupils. There has been increased use of listening centres, which has had a good effect on pupils' listening and reading skills especially.
120. The pace of learning throughout Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory. Pupils in Year 4 successfully write a series of 'logo' commands to create a shape on the screen, such as regular polygons, or they plan routes to a prescribed pathway. Experiences in control are limited to this type of work because the school does not yet have the software to extend beyond this. The school is aware of this shortcoming and hopes to improve the situation soon. Word-processing is developed satisfactorily. Pupils change the style, colour and size of their print to suit the purpose. For example, a poem on colour was printed out in different colours that corresponded to the colours being written about in different verses. Pupils develop satisfactory research skills by accessing the Internet to find information and to help with their research. Pupils in Year 6 competently prepared a PowerPoint presentation based on their visit to the City of York. They successfully prepared slides, which informed about their visit using moving text and sound. They assessed and evaluated their work and revised it to improve the quality of the slides they produced.
121. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Teachers have a wide range of knowledge and understanding, which is good overall and, in the main, planning ensures good opportunities for the inclusion of all groups of pupils. As a result, they enjoy their work in information and communication technology and respond positively to the tasks set for them. They have very good attitudes. They persist at tasks, and quickly learn from their mistakes. Teachers encourage good behaviour and respect for the computers. In response, pupils show care and consideration for each other's work and for the equipment they are using. Teachers are fully informed about the information and communication technology curriculum and have appropriately assessed the standards that pupils reach. However, this understanding is not sufficiently used to set future targets for pupils to achieve, which could be used to monitor their on-going progress. As a consequence, pupils capable of the very highest levels of achievement are not sufficiently challenged to reach their full potential.
122. There are computer workstations in each of the Year 1 and Year 2 classrooms and these are available to the pupils throughout the week. Arrangements in Years 3 to 6 are satisfactory, but there are difficulties. Pupils have timetabled access to a bank of 14 portable notebooks at certain times during the week. This is satisfactory and enables whole-class teaching of computer skills. However, there is no back-up facility in classrooms, and when the notebooks are being used by another class, pupils do not have the opportunity to access a computer should they need it. The subject is co-ordinated satisfactorily and there is a clear vision of how the subject can support pupils' learning. The curriculum is organised satisfactorily, with information and communication technology supporting a good range of other subjects and computer skills being satisfactorily taught.

MUSIC

123. Across the school, the larger proportion of pupils from all groups make good progress in learning and achieves standards above those normally seen and heard for pupils of these ages. This

includes pupils with special educational needs and those few from minority ethnic backgrounds. Standards have been maintained at the good level reported by the previous inspection. The choir's singing is a significant strength of the school and this gift is shared with the local community and appreciated by listeners from a wide range of settings.

124. Although pupils aged five to seven were not heard singing, they were observed playing an unusual range of percussion instruments that included metal spoons and cooking pots. This is typical of the ways in which their knowledge, skills and understanding are raised to a good level. The greater proportion use subjects specific vocabulary with growing confidence and ask searching questions in order to increase understanding of beat, rhythm and tempo. They choose and play percussion instruments to accompany simple compositions they have created and evaluate their performances realistically. Seven year olds play the descant recorder, but none were heard performing.
125. In the seven to eleven age group, singing is often very good and at times very moving. The larger proportion of pupils sing tunefully, using harmony to supplement the changing themes and rhythms that they create. In Year 3, pupils demonstrated differing numbers of 'beats' in a 'bar'. Across this age range, pupils confidently discuss their preferences for singing at different speeds, and use appropriate vocabulary, such as singing in a 'round', and one girl in Year 4 knew 'ostinato' was a repeat of phrase, which clearly illustrated her high level of knowledge. Pupils in Year 5 showed that they can sing with good harmonising from choir members, but the behaviour of a minority prevents full development of this skill. Pupils in Year 6 mark beats rhythmically and repeat musical patterns confidently. Their singing is tuneful, clear and in harmony. They identify changes of melody and note count. In assembly, pupils respond to music by singing hymns with enthusiasm and very good control. There are a number of recorder groups but these were not heard to play. Video evidence confirmed the good quality of singing and playing when pupils are involved in shows at special times, such as Christmas and when they perform for external groups.
126. The quality of teaching is good overall, and ranges from satisfactory to very good. Some staff have high levels of personal skill and they share this to the benefit of pupils across the school. As a result, the larger proportion of pupils obviously enjoy musical activity and perform with enthusiasm and confidence. They listen attentively to others and offer sensible and honest criticism that helps their friends improve. Attitude and behaviour are very good overall and are a reflection of the high expectation levels of those who provide musical opportunities. Pupils value the instruments that they use and work respectfully with adults. Some pupils borrow musical instruments, such as guitars, from school resources with regularity and these are treated with the utmost care and consideration. Pupils share instruments without complaint and eagerly wait for their turn to play.
127. In the better lessons, teachers have secure knowledge of music, use technical vocabulary to good effect and plan their lessons to match pupils' needs. Teachers and support staff bring in their own instruments and this adds considerably to the overall performance, as well as providing accompaniment that gives so much pleasure to the listeners. Pupils respond by singing and joining in lessons enthusiastically, their eyes reflect their enjoyment, and they give of their best. In less effective lessons, lack of teacher expertise results in pupils becoming restless with the slow pace and their listening skills begin to wane. Specialist visiting support teachers provide good opportunities for pupils aged seven to eleven to learn musical instruments, such as violin, guitar, clarinet and flute. No pupil is prevented from trying and those who wish to continue are expected to practise at home. More girls than boys take up this opportunity and so there are a greater number of girls in each class that form part of the higher attaining groups.
128. Co-ordination of the subject is very good and is enhanced by good subject knowledge. There is clear understanding of strengths and areas that need further development and staff expertise is successfully utilised. Resources are adequate in quantity, with an appropriate range that includes multi-cultural instruments. Recent acquisition of two electric pianos has had a positive effect on standards. The school provides many opportunities for pupils to go out into the community to

perform and to appreciate other forms of music. For example, pupils have sung for the local radio and participated in the town carnival. They have been taken to musical shows and pantomimes. This illustrates the commitment by staff, governors and parents to offer pupils these extensive opportunities to improve.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

129. Standards of attainment are similar to those seen at the time of the previous inspection. The larger proportion of pupils, generally make satisfactory progress throughout the school and attain appropriate levels at the ages of seven and eleven. Pupils with special educational needs and the few with ethnic minority backgrounds make progress at expected levels. Extra-curricular provision is good and covers a suitable range of activities, including cricket, rugby and netball. Involvement in competitive matches plays an effective part in raising standards for the oldest pupils, and the school is successful in local competitions.
130. During the inspection, lessons were observed in athletics and dance, but evidence was also gained from a study of guidance and planning. A gymnastics lesson was observed in Year 1 and the larger proportion of pupils showed satisfactory standards with their movements and bodily control. Pupils in Years 4 and 5 were observed practising jumping, throwing, dribbling and running, and the larger proportion showed satisfactory standards in these skills. Pupils in Year 6 followed a carousel of activity that focused on running and jumping and they showed satisfactory standards overall. Swimming provision for Year 3 gives pupils an appropriate understanding of water safety and almost all can swim the required 25 metres.
131. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. As a result, pupils generally work co-operatively and follow instructions carefully, but these good attitudes often made too little improvement to their performance during the lessons. Their behaviour is good and they show great willingness to learn more so that they can improve standards. They share equipment without friction, using it sensibly and they compliment good effort made by classmates. Good teaching was seen in a dance lesson for pupils in Year 2. The teacher made very good use of carefully chosen music to provide the stimulus to create changes in pupils' movements. Good examples were identified and their characteristics were suitably pointed out to others. This gave good pointers to all pupils and led to improved standards.
132. Where teaching was unsatisfactory, or where there were weaknesses in lessons that were judged to be satisfactory overall, these were as the result of teachers not offering direct coaching to all groups, or creating insufficient opportunities for pupils to evaluate their own and other pupils' efforts. The weakest aspect of the teaching observed was in athletics across classes from Year 3 to 6. The organisation did not always actively engage all pupils and there were too few opportunities for them to develop their skills, for example, in jumping, throwing and sprinting beyond satisfactory levels. Neither the teachers nor the classroom support assistants have the level of subject knowledge that would allow them to give the coaching points needed to improve pupils' performance. Suitable links are made with mathematics, as when pupils measured the distance thrown or the time taken to run a given distance, but the levels of success are not recorded and pupils cannot then see where they might have made improvement.
133. Since the departure of the co-ordinator, the subject has been managed temporarily by the headteacher. There is some informal monitoring, but this does not provide the level of expertise needed to improve standards further. Currently, the system for assessing and recording pupils' attainment and progress in learning follows the statements in the subject guidance, which are used when reporting to parents. This states what pupils can do, but not enough use is made of this data when work is planned for pupil groups that regularly show a wide range of prior achievement. The resources are satisfactory and the staff support a good range of extra-curricular activities, some of which are provided by parents, friends of the school and outside agencies. Residential

visits provide good opportunities for a wider range of activities that successfully aid pupils' learning.