

INSPECTION REPORT

SOUTH OTTERINGTON CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Northallerton

LEA area: North Yorkshire County Council

Unique reference number: 121603

Headteacher: Mr C Dolman

Reporting inspector: Andrew Clark
21596

Dates of inspection: 7th – 9th October 2002

Inspection number: 250954

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils:	5 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	South Otterington Northallerton North Yorkshire
Postcode:	DL7 9HD
Telephone number:	01609 776273
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr D Cartridge
Date of previous inspection:	27 th April 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21596	Andrew Clark	Registered inspector	English; Art and Design; Music; the Foundation Stage.	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements. How well are the pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
19443	Nancy Walker	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents.
18819	John Atkinson	Team inspector	Science; Geography; History; Religious Education; Special Educational Needs; Equal Opportunities.	
20326	Peter Clark	Team inspector	Mathematics; Information and Communication Technology; Design and Technology; Physical Education.	How good are the curricular and other opportunities?

The inspection contractor was:

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

South Otterington CE Primary School is near Northallerton. The school opened in 1993 and serves five local villages and outlying areas. The school caters for children from five to 11 and there are currently 104 boys and girls on roll. The school is smaller than average. The pupils are from predominantly white British backgrounds. There are no pupils with English as an additional language. The pupils' families are from a range of occupations, including professional, skilled and rural. The percentage of pupils eligible for a free school meal, at six per cent, is below average. A small percentage of pupils, three per cent, are on the school's register of special educational needs for moderate learning and physical difficulties. There are no pupils with a statement of special educational need. The achievement of pupils on entry to the school is often well above average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very good school. Pupils of all abilities achieve well and reach very high standards. This is a result of very good teaching and provision for the pupils' personal development. The school is very well led and managed and it provides very good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils' work is of a very high standard.
- The quality of teaching is very good and pupils are enthusiastic learners.
- The pupils become mature and responsible because of the very good spiritual, moral and social development the school encourages.
- The pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good.
- The headteacher leads the school very well, with strong support from a very committed staff. The governing body is effective and fulfils its statutory requirements very well.
- Parents make an excellent contribution to the work of the school.

What could be improved

- The pupils' skills and use of information and communication technology throughout the curriculum.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made good improvement since it was last inspected. High standards have been maintained and aspects of writing have improved. The range and use of homework is now good. The daily acts of collective worship make a significant contribution to the pupils' spiritual development.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	A	A	A*	A*
mathematics	A*	A	A*	A*
science	A	C	A*	A*

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

The standards of work are very high and all pupils achieve well because of the very good teaching and learning. The 'A*' indicates that the pupils are amongst the top five per cent in the country. The standards of work by the end of Year 2 are also well above average.

In the work seen for the current pupils in Years 2 and 6 standards of speaking and listening are very good. Pupils are articulate and eager to express their ideas. Pupils of all abilities read fluently and expressively. They make very good use of their reference skills. The pupils write in a lively and interesting way although handwriting is not always as fluent as it could be. Standards of numeracy are high. Pupils use a good range of strategies to make quick and accurate mental calculations. This is a direct result of brisk and challenging teaching. In science, pupils have a very good knowledge of how to conduct an experiment and make predictions. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. Teachers set appropriately challenging targets for these pupils and support them very well.

Pupils' attainment in information and communication technology is similar to that normally expected, but not as high as for most other subjects in the school. This is partly because technical difficulties hinder the implementation of the subject. Pupils make some good use of computers in other subjects, art for example. However, the use of computers is not yet consistently planned for.

Standards in art and design are very good by Year 2 and Year 6. They are good for design and technology, geography, physical education and religious education. They are sound for history. There was not enough evidence to make an overall judgement on music, but standards of singing are satisfactory.

Both boys' and girls' achievement is good because the curriculum and teaching challenges all pupils. The school's results in national tests are often better for boys than for girls, which is the reverse of national trends. However, there is no discernible difference for the present pupils.

The school sets challenging targets for English and mathematics and these are met and often exceeded as a result of effective teaching and curriculum planning.

The children make a very good start to their education in the reception class. Many children exceed the goals expected for their age by the time they enter Year 1. Standards are very good in personal and social development, communication, language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development. They are good for physical development.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are enthusiastic and interested in their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils play and work together very well. There have been no exclusions.
Personal development and relationships	Personal development is very good and relationships are excellent. Pupils respond very well to opportunities to take responsibility and show initiative.
Attendance	Very good. Overall attendance rates are well above average. Pupils settle to work quickly.

Pupils' behaviour and attitudes are very good throughout the school. Pupils move freely and easily around the school, sometimes changing class, without any difficulty or time wasting.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The overall quality of teaching and learning is very good and makes a significant contribution to the standards pupils achieve. The teaching in Reception lays a firm foundation for future development with an effective focus on developing basic skills through a wide range of practical, first hand experiences. Throughout the school, the teaching of English and mathematics is very good and basic skills of numeracy and literacy are developed well. For example, the pupils' spelling, punctuation and grammar are developed well through all subjects. Sometimes, in the few satisfactory lessons observed, pupils are not motivated enough by the pace and rigour of the lesson and do not complete as much as they could. In the very best lessons, teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to decide which skills and techniques to use and how to use them. There are some very good examples of teachers' helping pupils to improve their work through comments and marking. The teachers make good use of pupils' work at home to improve their knowledge and understanding in most subjects, and to develop their basic skills. Pupils with special educational needs are taught well. There are also many opportunities to challenge the gifted and talented pupils. Teachers are skilful at questioning pupils to develop their knowledge and speaking and listening skills.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. The school is very inclusive and provides a rich and balanced curriculum for all its pupils. There are very good out-of-school activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	This is good. The few pupils with special educational needs are identified early and closely monitored. They are fully included in the curriculum
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Not applicable at this time.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. There is a clear moral framework. The staff are good role models. Teachers create times for the pupils to think and reflect, and acts of collective worship contribute well to spiritual development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	This is good overall. There are very good procedures to promote good behaviour and attendance. The use of assessment to develop pupils' future learning is very good in English and mathematics. It is less well used in other subjects.

There is an excellent relationship with parents. The school provides a high standard of information about pupils' progress and parents support the school very well in many ways. The curriculum is broad and enriched by visits and visitors. More emphasis needs to be given to information and communication technology. Staff are very caring and procedures to promote pupils' well being are good.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher sets extremely high standards in teaching and leadership. All staff work closely together to plan and manage future improvement. The headteacher makes extremely good use of relationships with other small schools to enrich the learning opportunities for pupils.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very good. Policies and procedures are matched well to the school's needs and are monitored closely. The governors are very active in close financial management and improving levels of staffing and accommodation.
The school's evaluation of its performance	This is good. Subject leaders analyse patterns in performance very well. The headteacher reviews the school's overall provision well.
The strategic use of resources	Very good overall. Teaching and support staff are used very well. Resources for most subjects are good, but there have been significant problems with computers.

The accommodation is very attractive and well maintained. At present, one class is based in the hall, but a new extension to the building begins shortly. The pupils manage the constraints of working in the hall extremely well. There is a good match of teachers to support staff. Both staff and governors go to great lengths to ensure the school achieves the best value it can in all purchases.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The quality of teaching.• Leadership and management.• Their children's personal development.• Behaviour.• The information they receive.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The use of homework.

The inspection team fully endorses the parents' positive views. The concerns over homework were expressed by a minority of parents, with differing views as to whether there is too much or too little. Overall, the inspection team found that the school uses homework well to develop basic skills and to motivate and interest pupils.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

- 1 The standard of pupils' work is very high. In the most recent national tests, standards were well above average in comparison with national results for all schools and for similar schools. They are in the top five per cent in the country for English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6. The trend of improvement is good because it has maintained high standards overall over the past few years. There have been some variations because the number of pupils in some Year 2 and Year 6 classes has been very low and this affects the results. However, overall these variations are not significant.
- 2 A key feature of the very good standards is that a high proportion of pupils is working at higher levels than are normally expected for their ages. This is evident throughout the school. In 2002, over half the pupils were working at higher levels than normally expected and the remainder was at expected levels. Although the pupils enter school with often very good attainment, it is a direct reflection of the school's good provision that they leave with such high standards. The only area in 2002 where fewer pupils attained the highest level was in writing at Year 2. They did achieve very well, however, with the majority of pupils reaching standards that represent good levels for their age.
- 3 There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls in school currently. However, boys in Year 6 in the past have tended to attain higher results than girls in the national tests. This is the reverse of the national trend. It largely seems to relate to pupils' ability on entry to the school and the variations in numbers of girls and boys in school. The school closely analyses test data by gender.
- 4 There is no evidence that girls are underachieving and strong evidence that the curriculum and teaching and learning are appropriately challenging to all pupils.
- 5 The children often start school with levels of communication, language and literacy and numeracy, which are above average, and this is maintained through the reception class. In all aspects, pupils achieve well because of the very good teaching and learning that emphasise basic skills through challenge and motivation in all areas of learning. As a result, a high proportion of pupils exceed the early learning goals expected for them by the time they start Year 1. They do very well in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative and physical development.
- 6 The pupils' work in English is of a very high standard. By Year 2, pupils read fluently and often with good expression. By Year 6, they select challenging books by choice and have a good understanding of character and plot development. They use reference skills well. Teachers set good role models through their own reading and parents make a good contribution by regularly hearing pupils read at home. Pupils' writing is rich and interesting. They spell and punctuate their work well. Occasionally, standards of handwriting do not reflect the high standards in other subject areas. The school is addressing this. The pupils' speaking and listening skills are consistently good.

- 7 Work in mathematics is also of a high standard. Most pupils are very quick to calculate mentally and apply themselves well to solving mathematical problems. They have a good knowledge of shape, measure and data handling, although they do not make enough use of information and communication technology in the subject.
- 8 Standards in science are very high and have improved significantly for pupils in Year 1 and 2. This is because of the good attention given to scientific investigations and experiments since the last inspection. By the time they leave school, pupils show good skills in conducting an experiment and recording their data. They show maturity and responsibility in working on increasingly complex experiments.
- 9 Standards in information and communication technology are similar to expected levels. They are not as high as other subjects partly because of problems with resources. This has limited the teachers' ability to fulfil the good action plan for the subject.
- 10 The few pupils with special educational needs also achieve well. They make good progress towards targets, which are fully appropriate for them. An important feature of their achievement is that they are fully involved in all lessons of the National Curriculum.
- 11 Pupils achieve well in all subjects. Standards are very high in art and design because of the breadth of the curriculum and stimulating activities. Some high standards were also observed in aspects of physical education and overall standards were above those typically found. Standards in design and technology, geography and religious education are above expected levels. In history, standards are similar to expected levels by Year 2 and Year 6. There was not enough evidence to make an overall judgement on music, but the lesson observed in Years 4 and 5 indicated satisfactory standards. In almost all subjects, standards have improved since the last inspection, except for geography, where they maintained high standards by Year 6.
- 12 The school sets challenging targets based on the pupils' previous attainment. The targets for attainment for the current Year 6 pupils are slightly below last years but still high. With the very good teaching and learning and curriculum, the school has the capacity to achieve them.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

- 13 Pupils have very good attitudes towards school life and this is an improvement since the last inspection. They are very happy to come to school and parents confirm this. They are enthusiastic and keen to play a full and active part in lessons and in other activities, such as assemblies and after-school clubs. They enjoy their work, apply themselves very well and work very hard to produce a good amount of quality work. Pupils' attitudes are further reflected in the way they respond to homework tasks, completing them on time and often carrying out further research at home. Pupils' very good attitudes enable them to take full advantage of the high quality teaching and so they make good or better progress in all areas of their development. For example, during swimming lessons, pupils put tremendous effort into their physical activity for the entire 30 minutes in the pool. This is hard work for some and yet they persevere and continue to push themselves and, as a result, they achieve very high standards for their age.
- 14 Behaviour is very good both in lessons and around the school, and the school has never had cause to exclude a pupil. There is very high consideration for others, which

results in pupils being polite and well mannered. They follow the school routines very well and move around in a very orderly and sensible manner and so a very pleasant environment for learning exists. Nevertheless, in satisfactory lessons, pupils' enthusiasm sometimes turns to excitement and minor silliness creeps in.

- 15 There are excellent relationships within school, both between pupils as well as with their teachers. There is an extremely high level of mutual respect for one another and they clearly enjoy each other's company and play very well together. They engage in conversation and good-humoured banter, particularly with the headteacher. Pupils put 'friendships' and 'kind teachers' at the top of their list for the reasons why they like this school.
- 16 Pupils also develop very well as individuals and grow in confidence and self-esteem. They use their initiative well, for example in researching topics in lessons and checking their work to see how they can improve it. A very good example of this was seen in an art lesson where pupils were creating high quality paper sculptures to represent David Hockney's style of paintings. They work very well individually as well as in small groups, each playing their part in a team effort and they cope very well with responsibility. They grow into mature and sensible young people and they are a credit to themselves, their parents, and the school. Parents recognise and appreciate the part the school plays in achieving these very high standards in pupils' personal development.
- 17 Attendance is very good. It is very difficult for small schools to achieve attendance figures that compare with national averages because each pupil represents such a large proportion of the whole percentage and so, in turn, even one pupils' absence has a marked effect on overall figures. Despite this, South Otterington consistently achieves attendance figures that are above other schools, and this is commendable. Punctuality is not as good at the start of the day. A small number of pupils often arrive a few minutes late in the morning. However, after breaks and lunchtimes, all pupils return to lessons quickly and without fuss and lessons start on time.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

- 18 The quality of teaching and learning is very good. It has improved since the last inspection. A high proportion of teaching observed during the inspection was very good throughout the school and only a small proportion was satisfactory. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed. The other evidence, including discussions with pupils and scrutiny of their work, indicates a good level of consistency in the quality of teaching throughout the school. The headteacher sets a very good example with the quality of his own teaching. As a result, the pupils are eager and enthusiastic about their work and are conscientious learners.
- 19 The teaching of English is very good. Teachers make good use of the National Literacy Strategy to give pupils a good understanding of spoken and written language. This often leads to imaginative and adventurous writing. Basic skills are well taught. For example, the standard of pupils' spelling is high because the pupils are taught good strategies to learn words and to find how to spell independently. Sometimes the teachers do not place enough emphasis on neat handwriting and general presentation, particularly in the middle years of the juniors. This leads to some inconsistencies. Teachers place a strong emphasis on opportunities for pupils to speak and listen in meaningful ways and this contributes to high standards.

- 20 Mathematics is very well taught. There is often a very good pace to oral work to develop mental strategies and the teachers ask challenging questions. Pupils are encouraged to think for themselves and to solve problems. This contributes significantly to their overall attainment. In satisfactory teaching there is not enough challenge to some activities to enable pupils to build on their earlier learning. Teachers develop pupils' understanding through links with other subjects such as literacy.
- 21 The teaching of information and communication technology is satisfactory, but is not up to the standard of most other subjects. This is largely because the subject has had a low profile due to considerable problems with the networked computer system throughout the school. The teachers make satisfactory use of the pupils' skills in information and communication technology in some subjects such as English, but this area is not well developed.
- 22 The teachers' planning is a strength in lessons. They skilfully match work to the pupils' needs. For example, in art and design in Year 1 and 2, the more able and older pupils are encouraged to think for themselves and to select their own resources, whilst the younger and less able pupils are more closely guided and given extra support. The contribution to teaching and learning made by teaching assistants is very good. They are well informed and very challenging in their own questioning. They work closely with the teachers at all stages of planning and delivery of the lessons. A strong feature of the lessons is that teachers share the purpose of lessons very effectively with the pupils. As a result, they have a clear idea of what they are working towards and lessons have depth and meaning for them.
- 23 Pupils with special educational needs are well taught. They are fully integrated into all lessons and specific tuition is generally built into the lesson. The individual education plans are very specific, stating precise targets that the pupils work towards in appropriately small steps. There are few pupils with such needs, but record keeping is very effective and this enables external agencies, such as educational psychologists, to make the most appropriate contribution when they are required.
- 24 The teachers' subject knowledge is frequently very good and this contributes to the enthusiasm and commitment to hard work that most pupils show. For example, in science, pupils answer questions accurately and are efficient in their practical work. One reason for the good subject knowledge is the very strong commitment to teamwork that the staff show, particularly in their planning. The demands on a small staff with no free time are considerable, and the outcomes are a direct result of considerable hard work.
- 25 The teachers use a wide range of different methods in their work and this contributes to the pupils' personal development. For example, in English, science and art and design pupils often collaborate closely on activities, which may last for several lessons. This teaches the pupils to share responsibility and to delegate and take the lead. In other lessons, pupils sustain good periods of concentrated individual learning. Generally the pupils work with minimal supervision because the task they have to complete is very clear to them. Very occasionally, however, the teacher does not make it clear what is expected of the pupils and does not supervise them closely enough. As a result, the work rate suffers. The headteacher is aware of the specific situation and provides good support. Teachers make very good use of resources in most subjects. In history and religious education, for example, the teachers provide interesting and motivating artefacts for pupils to handle. They make very good use of visits and trips.

- 26 The teachers make good use of homework. For example, the Year 6 pupils undertook research to find facts about Shakespeare for the start of their literacy lesson. The teacher's very probing questions meant the pupils made very good use of the information to develop their own knowledge and understanding.
- 27 The very high expectations of teachers throughout the school have a significant impact on learning. They expect all pupils to think for themselves and to approach their work in a mature and logical fashion. They often provide bright and stimulating materials for pupils to work with. They use textbooks selectively and rarely spoon-feed the pupils by involving them in activities that demand little or no thought. The constant challenge, appropriately matched to the pupils' achievement and capability, is a key feature in the school's success.

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

- 28 The school rightly prides itself in being socially inclusive and, in doing so, provides a rich, very well balanced curriculum to which all pupils have high quality, equal access. The curriculum provides very effective opportunities for pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development that will broaden their horizons and make them more aware of the wider world. Statutory requirements are met in all subjects with particular strengths in English, mathematics, science, art and design, design and technology, geography and physical education. The standards being achieved today are far better in most subjects than they were in 1998, and this reflects the very good cohesion involving total staff teamwork when planning the whole school curriculum. A comprehensive programme has been introduced for the raising of standards in pupils' writing, resulting in well-focused activities that have guided the very good improvement since the previous inspection. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage in the reception class is very good, a good improvement since the last inspection, and enables all children to make a very good start to their full time education. Higher attaining pupils and those with gifts and talents are well provided for in most year groups, and receive a very good curriculum enabling them to accelerate their learning in Year 6.
- 29 The curriculum has been planned very effectively within a two-year rolling programme. Very good teachers' planning reflects the requirements of the National Curriculum 2000, and is very well supported using national guidelines in most subjects. The school's strategy for teaching literacy and numeracy has been very well implemented throughout the school. The English curriculum is very rich, providing well-planned opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills. For example, pupils in a Years 1 and 2 science lesson discussed their relative heights in centimetres and their respective ages, that triplets born on the same day have varying heights at the age of six, and that the oldest is not always the tallest. Pupils discussed their observations with confidence and clarity. The school's strategy for teaching numeracy is also very good, and has an impact in particular on pupils' numeracy skills. For example, in design and technology lessons, Year 6 pupils had to use scale accurately when creating a three-dimensional model for their 'ideal playground,' with its associated equipment and play areas.
- 30 A particular strength of the curriculum is the way in which all-round education is fostered. The school works very closely with other primary schools within the local cluster and staff meet regularly with colleagues from elsewhere. Liaison with the receiving secondary schools is also good. During their time in school, pupils become

mature people who think carefully about how their thoughts, words and actions affect other people. The school is aware of the need to press ahead with the priorities contained within the information and communication technology action plan, to consistently promote its use to support learning across the curriculum and, in doing so, make more efficient use of the computers throughout the school.

- 31 Artists, writers, musicians and other performers make a very good contribution to the pupils' awareness of their own and other cultures. For example, a local craftsman undertook the installation of a large stained glass panel containing a selection of pupils' artwork.
- 32 The curriculum is suitably enhanced by a very good range of extra-curriculum activities for pupils to develop their abilities, particularly through sport, art, music and French. Visitors are welcomed to the school and pupils in Year 6 take part in a residential visit to Whitby as well as field trips to local places of geographical and historical interest. There is very good provision for personal development, health, safety and citizenship that provides a very useful range of well-planned experiences for all pupils of all abilities. There is an agreed policy for sex education and very good provision for drug awareness and the dangers of drug misuse.
- 33 The provision for pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. It leads to pupils becoming sensitive and considerate young people with a good understanding of their role in the community; for example by raising money for local, national and international charitable causes. They have respect for other people's opinions, values and beliefs and give credit to the achievement of others, for example in assembly where there is a regular celebration of pupils' achievements and improvements. The overall impact is the creation of a very positive school ethos enabling pupils to grow in confidence and maturity.
- 34 Pupils' spiritual development is very good and achieved through carefully planned opportunities for pupils to consider how and why attitudes develop and how they can share with others as well as receive. Throughout the school there is a very strong sense of community, which actively supports regular reflection on issues that impinge upon the pupils' lives. New and younger pupils are always made to feel welcome by being involved in the life of the school. Pupils are provided with opportunities to celebrate their own and others' faiths and beliefs as they learn about Christianity and other world religions, such as Judaism and Islam. The school emphasises that pupils should be proud of their achievements and this leads to pupils having confidence in their ambitions for the future and an appreciation of the richness of life around them.
- 35 The very good relationships between adults and pupils are instrumental to making very good provision for pupils' moral development. They encourage respect, consideration and tolerance and staff provide very good role models. They consistently place a strong emphasis on personal responsibilities and take advantage of the opportunities to make pupils aware of the differences between right and wrong. Adults reinforce good behaviour through the effective use of rewards and consequences. Pupils demonstrate very good standards of personal behaviour, honesty and courtesy because they value the importance of these qualities. A major outcome of this is that pupils have a heightened sense of fairness and justice.
- 36 The provision for pupils' social development is very good. The school nurtures the importance of sharing and caring in all of its activities. Therefore, pupils are sensitive and responsive to the needs of others and demonstrate this in the way that they look after and involve pupils who face difficulties or challenges. As a result, the school is a

very caring community where all pupils are valued and their self-esteem is high. They work very well collaboratively and respond to the independence given to them in a very mature manner.

- 37 The school's provision for pupils' cultural development is good. It is promoted through the range of visits that are well planned to support many subjects of the curriculum. Aspects of pupils' knowledge and understanding are developed through music, art, geography and history. These visits provide opportunities for pupils to learn about the heritage and cultures of this country and the local area of the school. Pupils enjoy the creative ability of authors, poets, musicians and theatre groups who work with the pupils to instil an enthusiasm for their particular artistic talents.
- 38 The school's very good links with the local community enhance pupils' learning, both academically and in their personal development. For example, groups of senior citizens have been visiting the school since it opened nine years ago to join the pupils for lunch on one day each month. Consequently, pupils develop in their social interaction skills and build an appreciation of the roles that we all play in society. Another valuable link which the school has is one with a great grandparent in the area, who they invite into school to help pupils with their understanding of history by talking to them about life 80 years ago, and by showing them toys and household items from those days.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

- 39 The school continues to provide a good level of care for all its pupils. All staff are very kind to pupils, they take a very keen interest in them and are watchful for any signs of concern about their well-being. There is a good level of first aid knowledge amongst the staff and so pupils are well cared for and supervised whenever they are ill or injured in school. There is a satisfactory level of understanding of child protection procedures amongst staff, but some have not had any specific guidance or training and so they have to rely on their common sense. Pupils themselves receive very good guidance in how to keep themselves safe and lead a healthy life through well-planned lessons in personal, social, and health education, and in science. The school is kept very clean and smart and there are very good routines in place for moving around the school, so a calm and orderly environment is created where pupils can feel secure and comfortable. There is a high level of expertise amongst the governing body in health and safety and they have carried out an extremely thorough inspection of the school site. There are good procedures to ensure pupils are safe on visits out of school and staff are careful to check that all pupils use seat belts on transport and they carry out head counts regularly. Risk assessments are carried out on the intended activity or venue.
- 40 There is a good level of educational and personal support and guidance for pupils. Relationships are excellent in this school, particularly between pupils and their teachers and so pupils know that they can seek and receive help when they need it. Staff listen to their pupils with genuine interest and they work very hard to ensure pupils receive individual attention and help in lessons. This is a feature that parents have noticed and are very pleased with. Teachers value pupils and their efforts very highly and so pupils grow in confidence and self esteem. They want to come to school and to work hard and to do their best. There is no specific set of rules in school but there are very high expectations of behaviour. The overarching principle of consideration for others is very well promoted. The very good role models of staff are a significant feature of this school. They are extremely well spoken with clear diction, very well presented, and they set very good examples of how to behave towards each

other. As a result, and with the help of parents, the school turns out articulate, confident, mature and responsible young people.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

- 41 Parents hold South Otterington CE Primary School in extremely high regard. They are very pleased with much of what the school does and their opinions have risen over the past few years. They are particularly pleased with the quality of teaching, with the relationships they have with staff and the many opportunities they have to see their children's work and be involved in their education. For example, they are welcome to come into classes every day between 8.45 am and 9.00 am and there is an informal open afternoon every month when parents can see displays of pupils' work and talk informally to the class teachers. Parents are also pleased with the individual help that teachers give to their children and with what the school does to help them to become mature and responsible. They feel that the school turns out good 'all rounders'. A few parents are not satisfied with the amount of homework their children receive. Inspectors have found some inconsistency in the amount of homework set towards the top of the juniors, but have found it to be consistent and appropriate throughout the rest of the school.
- 42 Parents take a very keen interest in their children's education. They attend events and functions and raise large sums of money to help the school. Formal parents' evenings are held in October and July, which run from 4.30pm right through until 9.00pm, so that all parents can and do attend. Information for parents on how they can best help their children with learning at home, particularly in English, is of an unusually high standard. As a result, parents are very well able to help their children. For example, they use the same methods for helping their children with early reading skills and with learning spellings. Reading records are used as a very effective communiqué between home and school and so parents know what their children need to practise and refine, and are able to help them. End-of-year reports are consistently of a very high standard. They clearly inform parents of what their children can do in all subjects but also of what the children need to do next to improve. A number of parents help in classes on a regular basis. Teachers ensure that they have their own lesson plan and so they can carry out their role to best advantage. Parents are also very supportive of the school in helping pupils to develop as individuals, for example, in how they expect their children to behave, in achieving good attendance, and in completing homework with application and on time.
- 43 As a result of what the school does to involve and inform parents, and in turn of how the parents respond to that, they are working extremely effectively together in a partnership of education. Together they achieve some very high standards, particularly in speaking and reading, as well as in areas of pupils' personal development.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

- 44 Leadership and management are very good. The strengths identified at the last inspection have been successfully built upon. The quality of leadership makes a significant contribution to the standards pupils attain.
- 45 The headteacher's leadership is excellent in many respects. He sets a very high standard in his commitment to the pupils' learning and personal development through his own teaching. He leads the staff in managing the curriculum very effectively and monitors teaching and learning well. The headteacher has very little opportunity in the school day for management and administrative tasks and, along with all senior staff, gives much of his own time. The headteacher is a key figure in organising a group of similar small schools that has been set up to support each other and this provides good training opportunities for staff and exciting learning situations for pupils.
- 46 The staff are very clear and pragmatic in their organisation and leadership of the curriculum. They work closely together to ensure they give full coverage of the National Curriculum, and support each other at all stages of planning. The literacy and numeracy co-ordinators are very well informed through focused training and their own interests. The mathematics subject leader is a leading teacher for the subject in the authority and is very aware of the strengths and weaknesses in the pupils' learning. The literacy and numeracy subject leaders make very detailed analysis of test results throughout the school and are successful at focusing in on areas for improvement and continuing to promote key strengths. There are very detailed procedures in place to monitor the pupils' learning in other respects, such as a close scrutiny of work to a wide range of criteria. Subject leaders make good use of this information to support the target setting for individuals and groups of pupils. As a result, the school meets its own very challenging targets. The provision for the children in the reception class is very well managed. The teacher plans effectively and uses detailed procedures to measure children's performance and provide for their needs. As a result, there are good resources and current available space, which is limited, is used efficiently to teach all areas of learning. Provision for special educational needs is well managed. The co-ordinator works closely with the staff in ensuring targets are appropriate and matched to suitable action. Any funds available are used appropriately.
- 47 The management of the professional development of teachers is very good. There is a regular cycle of discussion, target setting and monitoring in place. This focuses on both the teachers' and the school's needs and is well managed by the headteacher. The monitoring of teaching is effective and supportive. Records maintained are simple, but appropriate. However, the limited time and finances to support the process mean that the future effectiveness of the current process will rely heavily on the teachers' own commitment.
- 48 The governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities very well. In particular, there are very good procedures to ensure the pupils' welfare and health and safety. The governors have a very clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and apply this knowledge well to the management of finances. The school receives about average funding. They have secured some funds towards the building of a new classroom for the reception children, which is sorely needed as the Year 6 pupils are currently working in the hall. They have worked effectively towards reducing class sizes, which was a concern both to staff and parents. They have also increased administrative time over the years so that the headteacher and staff are

able to concentrate more effectively on their key teaching and management roles. However, the headteacher still has a substantial teaching commitment.

- 49 The finances are managed well and the current high under spend is fully accounted for through staffing and expenditure issues that cover more than one financial year. The school improvement plan is carefully costed and priorities are precise and appropriate. The school could not function as effectively as it does if it were not for the excellent administrative officer. Her very good knowledge of the school and understanding of financial and management procedures eases everybody's workload and ensures the school actively seeks best value. The recent audit report had no significant issues and complimented the school on its well-run systems.
- 50 The school is well resourced and all resources are well maintained, attractive and accessible. The computers, however, continue to hinder teaching and learning because of faults to the system. The headteacher and governors are actively seeking to secure the best provision. The accommodation is in very good condition. It is bright and attractive and provides many interesting opportunities to display pupils' work. The caretaker is very efficient. However, as has been described, the accommodation is not large enough for the numbers on role because teaching takes place in the hall. It is interesting to note that because of the way teachers have planned for physical education and other lessons, there are some positive features to this situation. For example, pupils behave very maturely and responsibly in moving from room to room and the hall provides good space to do art and design and technology work. The situation will be resolved shortly after the inspection as delayed building work is now due to start.
- 51 Overall, the clear and focused leadership and management is a strength of the school and a key feature in continuing high standards.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- 52 In order to continue to improve the very high standards the headteacher, staff and governors should:
- (1) Improve the pupils' information and communication technology skills by:
- pressing ahead with priorities in the information and communication technology action plan;
 - ensuring that all teachers plan for and use information and communication technology across the curriculum and, in doing so, make more efficient use of the computer suite and computers in classrooms;
 - enabling pupils to have sufficient opportunities to practise and consolidate their information and communication technology skills;
 - promoting consistency in monitoring and assessing the progress that pupils make in all years in the range of information and communication technology skills required.
- (Paragraphs: 9, 21, 51, 71, 78, 94, 104 - 110)

As well as the key issues the school may wish to include the following, less important, issues for inclusion in the action plan:

- Improve the consistency in the standard of handwriting.
(Paragraphs: 6, 19, 70)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	27
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	11

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	13	10	4	0	0	0
Percentage	0	48	37	15	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR– Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	104
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	6

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	3

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	12
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	19

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.1

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0

National comparative data	5.6
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National comparative data	0.5
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Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2002	4	8	12

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (100)	100 (100)]	100 (94)
	National	84 (84)	86 (94)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (100)	100 (100)	100 (100)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2002	7	7	14

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	100 (95)	100 (89)	100 (95)
	National	75 (75)	73 (72)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	100 (89)	100 (89)	100 (94)
	National	78 (72)	75 (74)	82 (82)

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

** As the number of boys and girls in each year is less than 10, only the percentages are given so that pupils cannot be identified.*

Ethnic background of pupils

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

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
108	0	0
0	0	0
3	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	5.3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.1
Average class size	22

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	27.5

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001-2002
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	£
Total income	306,740
Total expenditure	292,134
Expenditure per pupil	2,518
Balance brought forward from previous year	44,951
Balance carried forward to next year	59,557

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	0.8
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	1.3

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	111
Number of questionnaires returned	54

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	56	39	4	0	2
My child is making good progress in school.	52	41	6	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	50	44	4	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	35	37	15	6	7
The teaching is good.	76	20	2	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	67	24	7	0	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	78	15	7	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	70	26	2	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	61	33	4	0	2
The school is well led and managed.	65	30	4	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	67	31	0	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	35	54	6	2	4

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

- 53 At the time of the inspection the majority of children in the reception class attended the school in the mornings only until they become familiar with school when they will attend full time. Almost all the children attend a local playgroup or private nursery before starting school. There are good links between school and pre-school facilities and this ensures children make a smooth and happy start.
- 54 The curriculum for reception children is very well planned and effective. The teacher and her support staff focus closely on developing the children's basic skills in language, numeracy and personal development. They plan exciting and often complementary activities for all areas of learning (see below). The classroom is well resourced and successfully organised to meet the children's needs. Children with special educational needs are identified quickly and their progress is closely observed to make certain they have the best support. The open-ended nature of most activities challenges the most able pupils.
- 55 The overall quality of teaching and learning is very good. The children persevere well and concentrate hard because they are interested in their work and are respected and well cared for. The teacher and support staff understand the children's needs well. The teacher introduces children to regular literacy and numeracy lessons. There are very good procedures to record pupils' personal and academic development, which contributes well to good learning.

Personal, social and emotional development

- 56 Children make very good progress in this area. Most children attain the early learning goals for their age and many exceed this. They are very aware of each other and share well. For example, in the role-play building site the children talk together to operate the cement mixer. They share equipment in the water play area, one child holding and one pouring, for example. They show good independence at this early stage of the year. Most children change for physical education with little or no help from adults. They do help each other, however, and this is actively encouraged. The children select their own work from the activities available, when appropriate, and are always busy. They waste very little time. The children behave well and are enthusiastic in their work. The staff know the children very well and support them in a very purposeful manner. The very good teaching contributes to this as there is a calm yet purposeful attitude created throughout all lessons.

Communication, language and literacy

- 57 Standards are very good. The majority of pupils exceed the goals expected for their age by the time they start Year 1. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. The children speak and listen very well. This is because the teacher provides many opportunities during the day for listening as a group or class, as well as arranging activities that encourage children to speak to each other. The children's speech at this early point in the year varies enormously but the majority speak in whole sentences and with a good vocabulary. The teacher encourages careful listening by awarding a 'Listener of the day' badge. Children take great pride in this and similar awards.

- 58 Children make very good progress in their early reading skills. They enjoy listening to stories, which the teacher reads well. They hang on every word of 'Avacado Baby' and eagerly, and accurately, anticipate what happens next. The children enjoy humour in stories and are beginning to recognise some letter shapes, particularly those in their names. They effectively learn to follow print and recognise that writing goes from left to right. There is a good range of text for pupils to read in the classroom, and this contributes to good learning. For example, there are simple instructions for each activity area with words and pictures. The teacher and support staff very closely monitor pupils' progress.
- 59 Children of all abilities achieve very well in writing. This is because there are many good opportunities for children to 'write' freely, such as in the role-play and writing areas, complemented by a clear structure for learning how to form letters and words. The teacher acts as a scribe when she and the children make sentences together and acts as a very good role-model by forming letters very carefully. Well before the end of Reception many children reach the goals expected by Year 1. In their work on different habitats they copy sentences unaided such as, 'On Friday we went to Butterfly World on the coach'. They are beginning to use capital letters and full stops well. The children progress rapidly to making good attempts at spelling in their independent writing; 'I was vere small, the gras was tal', for example. They enjoy writing poetry. By the end of the year more able children are writing up to a page independently.

Mathematical development

- 60 The children achieve well. The majority achieves the goals expected for their age by the time they start Year 1. During the inspection there was limited evidence of the teaching in this area, but the scrutiny of work and some monitoring of lessons indicates that it is good. The children make good progress in number work. At the start of the year, children can count to five and match numbers to objects. They count to and beyond 20 very accurately. By the end of the year, the children are able to add and subtract to at least 10 and many beyond that. They use number lines and other methods well to aid their counting. They make good progress in identifying two- and three-dimensional shapes because of the practical opportunities they are given. For example, they make models using cardboard cubes and cylinders and discuss the shapes in detail. The children learn a good vocabulary to support their mathematical development, often through games or other activities. They understand positional language such as 'behind', 'in front', 'beside', 'above' and compare measures by describing the 'widest' or 'narrowest'.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

- 61 Children make good progress and often exceed the goals expected for their age. Teaching and learning is good. There are strong daily routines that help children develop an understanding of the season, weather and climate. Most children are very clear about the days of the week and know when their birthdays are. Through interesting role-play activities, such as estate agents and construction sites, they begin to learn about their own world. The children have a good knowledge of their own bodies as a result of their work in science. They make good use of information and communication technology. For example, the children produce very good pictures of people in action using an art program.

Physical development

- 62 The children's physical development is good. Pupils achieve the expected levels. The quality of teaching and learning is good. The lessons are well planned so that children are active and involved throughout. They run, jump and skip with good control and move around the school hall with appropriate control. The children are developing a good awareness of the effect of healthy exercise on their body. Children handle equipment in the hall well. They use a good vocabulary including 'stretch' and 'curl' to describe their movements and shapes. They play well together. The children have access to a good range of resources although there are not many pedalled vehicles for them.

Creative development

- 63 Standards of creative development are very high. The children make very good progress. The teaching and learning is very good. There are good links between other areas of learning, such as knowledge and understanding through their studies of insects. The children make very good progress in learning to use different drawing and painting resources because they are taught interesting techniques and given good opportunities to practise them. The children produce carefully observed drawings of their own faces and mix colours well. They use simple shading techniques with chalks and other pastels. They show very good control when producing pictures on the computer after the style of Lowry. They sing a good range of songs and rhyme and have the opportunity to play percussion instruments. The main strengths in the creative development are that learning is a thread which runs through all activities, and that activities are imaginative and motivating.

ENGLISH

- 64 Standards are well above average by Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils of all abilities achieve well throughout their time in school. A very high proportion of pupils is working at levels above those normally expected for their age. The quality of teaching and learning is very good and this makes a significant contribution to pupils' success. The school has sustained high standards since the last inspection and pupils now write for more purposes.
- 65 The quality of speaking and listening is very good. The younger pupils very effectively listen to each other and their teachers and follow instructions. They speak with a good vocabulary reflecting their learning in all subjects. By Year 2, pupils can express the emotions they feel about loss, in response to a story about losing precious objects. They do this well because of the lively and motivating way the teacher tells the story and the good questions asked. By Year 6, pupils hold an informed and thoughtful discussion on Shakespeare's life and the character of the witches in Macbeth. They use their research skills well to prepare for this discussion. The teacher's fast paced questions encourage the pupils to think quickly and speak clearly. There are many opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking skills through drama and debate as well as regular presentations in assemblies. The opportunities for speaking and listening make a good contribution to the pupils' personal development by encouraging attentiveness to others and valuing their contribution. The pupils are a good audience in acts of collective worship.
- 66 Standards of reading are very good by Years 2 and 6. They make good progress. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well. This is because of the good

focus given to the strategic development of their basic skills, such as learning letter sounds and a good sight vocabulary, alongside many opportunities to read at an appropriate level both at home and at school. The contribution of parents to their children's reading is good. By Year 2, pupils read familiar words fluently and often with good expression. They follow the plot of a story well and use the text well to define the nature of the characters in a story. They benefit from the very good role model set by the teacher when reading stories together. The pupils use non-fiction books well in their studies for other subjects, such as science.

- 67 By Year 6, pupils have very successfully built on their earlier attainment. Pupils of all ability read fluently and with expression. They enjoy taking the part of different characters in plays and trying out different voices. The least able readers also read with expression, although not as fluently as the most able. They recognise the function of punctuation and its influence on their intonation. Pupils of all abilities make use of a good range of strategies when tackling unfamiliar words. They have very positive attitudes to reading, expressing strong opinions on the types of books they enjoy and the reasons for their choice. They often enjoy challenging and thought-provoking books, such as 'Charlotte's Web' and 'Lord of the Rings'. Several pupils have been inspired by their work on Shakespeare's plays to read stories based upon them. There is a very good range of books available for pupils at school although they do not often read magazines and newspapers. The pupils have good reference skills, including using the Internet at home. The older and more able pupils skim text quickly for information as well as use the contents and index pages effectively.
- 68 The standards of pupils' writing are very high. At the time of the last inspection, pupils did not write across a range of styles. This is not the case now. Within their literacy lessons, they write in many different forms. Non-fiction and narrative writing in many other subjects complement this. By the end of Year 2, the majority of pupils write stories sequentially and know that they have a beginning, middle and end. The more able, a high proportion, use an increasingly rich vocabulary and lively writing style. They often use language well; 'There were fat ones and skinny ones, bony ones and small ones, tall ones and older ones, young ones and groovy ones.' They use interesting ways to connect sentences, such as, 'Suddenly, I pulled...' and 'Next, I found'. Some pupils are doing this by the end of Year 1. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 write diaries, letters, poems, non-fiction, instructional and personal accounts. Spelling and punctuation are good. The average pupil writes in clear sentences with effective use of full stops, capital letters, exclamation marks and speech marks. Handwriting is generally well formed by the end of Year 2, although not yet joined.
- 69 By Year 6, pupils write for a good range of purposes. For example, they write reports on different events, poetry, directions and instructions. They often write stories of several pages in length making appropriate use of paragraphs and chapters. They have a good understanding of how adjectives and adverbs enliven their language. Their phrasing is often mature and interesting. For example; 'Henry woke up in the middle of the night and peered at his clock with sleepy eyes.' They often use a varied and rich vocabulary; 'The 3.30 screen was packed solid with people. The atmosphere was charged'. The pupils' spelling is accurate, even for unusual and adventurous word. Their handwriting is usually appropriate but not always of as high a standard as other aspects of the subject. In particular, by the time they leave school several pupils are still not joining letters and some work is rushed and not neat enough. The use of punctuation is very good. Pupils use bullet points, colons and semi-colons to organise their work and to make writing more effective. The less able use speech marks and commas well. Pupils clearly enjoy writing and use the skills and knowledge taught in literacy lessons well in their work.

- 70 The quality of teaching and learning is very good overall. In the very small number of satisfactory lessons the teachers do not set clear time limits for the pupils or offer them enough support. As a result they do not work as hard as they can. In all other lessons, the pace of work is fast and effective. The teachers are skilful at involving the pupils throughout the lessons. They question the pupils closely to encourage them to think about the language they use and to ensure they understand well. They tell and read stories well and give clear instructions. Work is closely matched to the pupils' needs and there is often further interesting work for more able pupils to follow. Work is carefully planned and lessons successfully build on previous learning because teachers know their pupils well and assess their progress accurately. Work is regularly marked with clear targets for further improvement arising from assessments made. The content of lessons is often inspiring and texts are well chosen. The use of information and communication technology in the subject is satisfactory as pupils use word processing to make lists, answer questions and produce stories. However, their ability to present their work in exciting ways, by merging art with text and using 'PowerPoint' presentations is underdeveloped.
- 71 The subject is well led and managed. All staff work closely together to assess pupils' standards and improve planning. The subject leader is well informed and provides good support to colleagues. There is very detailed analysis of tests results and this is used to improve future learning; for example in the improvement in pupils' use of connectives in Year 2. There are very good resources and an attractive and accessible library. The test results indicate that boys' attainment by Year 6 has been higher than girls', which is the reverse of the national trend. However, there is no evidence of this in the school at present and it is possibly linked to the fluctuations in numbers of pupils that occur year on year. The curriculum is challenging to all pupils.

MATHEMATICS

- 72 Standards attained by pupils in mathematics at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are well above the national average. There has been an upward trend in test results since the previous inspection, particularly in the number of pupils who are now attaining the higher than expected level 5 as shown in the latest results for the 2002. The end-of-year assessments that are completed by the school indicate that these standards will be maintained in the coming years. However, the percentage of pupils achieving the higher levels may fall marginally. Nevertheless, pupils are making significant progress and achieve very well in relation to their starting point in the infants. The strategy for the numeracy hour has become established and is highly effective in most classes. This has had a very good effect on the provision for mathematics in the school, and has promoted much more consistently high quality teaching.
- 73 Overall, teaching is very good. It ranges from satisfactory to very good. In the majority of classes it is very good for all pupils, irrespective of their ability, background or gender. The new whole-school planning strategy lays out the steps that teachers are to cover right through the school, from Year 1 to Year 6. All teachers structure their lessons carefully to develop mental agility, to introduce new learning and to give time for pupils to practise, before summarising learning in the final part of the lesson. In most lessons, the lesson purpose is discussed with the pupils so that they get a clearer idea of the path their learning is about to take. There is generally an appropriate balance between different aspects of the subject. The teachers' interpretation of these differs from class to class. There is clearly a strong emphasis on pure number work. Nevertheless, balance is achieved within the other three areas, namely using and applying, shape and data handling.

- 74 A very clear pattern emerges in the teaching. In those lessons where teachers give too much instruction, with pupils remaining inactive for long periods, tasks present too much challenge or too little challenge, they fail to build successfully on previous learning, and teaching is satisfactory. In those lessons where the mental starter is vibrant, pupils have the opportunity to explore their own thinking and solve problems; the quality of teaching is very good. As a result of very good teaching, pupils' personal development grows as they achieve self-reliance. In this way, Years 1 and 2 pupils mastered the recognition of different numbers that, when added or multiplied together, make ten. All pupils counted confidently up to one hundred in the correct sequence, selecting even and odd numbers when requested. In Years 3 and 4, pupils were effectively learning the next step in multiplying large numbers that, when multiplied together, make one hundred. This was further developed in Year 6, during a very brisk opening mental session that required pupils to show more than one method of working out a problem to achieve both speed and accuracy in their calculations. Most pupils enjoy mathematics and behaved very well in the majority of lessons.
- 75 All teachers use resources well, but some use a wider range than others. Most teachers have very good relationships with the pupils who work very well for them in the majority of lessons. Teachers use questions and answers well to probe pupils' ideas and suggestions. For some, it is only a small part of the lesson, for others it is the thread running through it that gives the pupils more and more independence. For example, in Year 6, during a lesson on probability, the pupils had to predict, estimate and record the numbers achieved after a given number of throws of a dice. The final outcome of pupils' estimations was a strong feature of the lesson. Some of the pupils' books viewed during the work scrutiny contained many pages of teachers' marking where the pupils' involvement would have been more valuable.
- 76 Another strength of the teaching is the matching of work tasks to the abilities and needs of all pupils, including pupils with special educational needs, who make similar progress to their peers. This is achieved because the teachers have successfully developed a more precise system for tracking pupils' progress as they move upward through the school, and most teachers use it effectively. Careful analyses of test questions inform future planning intentions, and any persistent weakness is highlighted and supported. In national test results, boys perform at a higher level than girls, reversing the national trend. Nevertheless, during the inspection no discernible differences were noted.
- 77 The link with literacy, developing pupils' language to solve word problems, is at the forefront of most lessons. However, the school is aware of the need to develop still further pupils' involvement in reviewing their own targets. Overall, information and communication technology is underused in mathematics at present, failing to be used to consolidate or challenge new skills, and rarely appears in planning.
- 78 The success of mathematics in recent years is due largely to the very good quality leadership and management of the subject. The energetic subject leader is very hard working and alert to the issues that face the school. She is aware of the need to take decisive action to maintain the high standards of achievement observed in the majority of classes. The subject co-ordinator is very aware of the strengths and weaknesses within the subject. The school's capacity for continued improvement is very good, clearly illustrated by the school's response in exceeding the targets agreed with the local education authority. Parents are justly proud of their children's achievements in numeracy, as highlighted during the parents' meeting before the inspection.

SCIENCE

- 79 By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, pupils' attainment is well above what is expected of pupils aged seven and eleven, and achievement is good. There has been clear improvement in overall standards in the infants because of the extra attention to scientific investigations and experiments, as well as the good teaching in Years 1 and 2.
- 80 By the end of Year 2, pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of scientific principles and methods of inquiry. Year 1 pupils are able to explain the life cycle of a ladybird, and illustrate their diagrams very effectively. They have a good understanding of the properties of different materials and conduct an investigation into which material will keep ice frozen for the longest period of time. A strength of the pupils is their ability to make predictions and test them to see if they are right. For example, they carried out an investigation to discover the relationship between getting older and the rate of growth. The pupils have a secure knowledge of the importance of healthy eating and exercise. Their scientific skills were very well developed through their topic on mini-beasts. They kept a record of where they looked, what they found, and then classified mini-beasts according to how they moved and the number of legs that they had.
- 81 By the end of Year 6, pupils can test a range of hypotheses, understand the principle of fair testing and recognise the need for recording accurate observations. They make predictions, provide valid reasons to explain their decisions and know how to set out the results of their experiments. Pupils in Year 6 have a good knowledge of the properties of materials. They investigate how different materials retain heat and record their findings on a database on the computer and plot their results in graph form. They show good skills in conducting and recording experiments and predicting outcomes. For example, they are able to predict the effect of exercise on the heart rate. Year 4 pupils have a good knowledge of the life cycle of a plant and of how insects help with the pollination of flowers.
- 82 Throughout the school, pupils are making good progress in the development of investigative skills. Older pupils carry out increasingly complex experiments, and activities are devised that allow them to control variables. There is a clear development in the curiosity of pupils and, as a result, pupils have a good scientific vocabulary and an enthusiasm for and interest in experimental science.
- 83 The quality of teaching is very good. The teaching is characterised by good scientific knowledge and the confident use of investigations and experiments. As a result, pupils are easily motivated, ask and answer questions confidently and respond well to practical work. Teachers prepare their lessons well and have very good organisational and management skills. This ensures that pupils are well behaved and leads to them being interested in what they are doing and having positive attitudes. In all lessons the change from whole class introduction to group activity is smoothly managed and enables a brisk pace to be sustained. Therefore, pupils persevere with tasks and are able to work collaboratively in groups with minimal supervision, particularly in Years 5 and 6.

ART AND DESIGN

- 84 Standards are very high by Year 2 and 6. Pupils of all abilities make very good progress. This is because the curriculum is very well planned and pupils are encouraged to think about their compositions and use their skills and knowledge.

Only two lessons were observed during the inspection, one good and the other very good. Other evidence from a scrutiny of work and discussions with pupils indicates that the overall quality of teaching and learning is very good. Standards have improved since the last inspection.

- 85 Pupils' knowledge and understanding is very good, particularly in the infants. The Year 2 pupils have a very good knowledge of how to use different drawing media such as oil pastels, chalk pastels, pencils and crayons. They describe how they blend colours or use different shading techniques to produce portraits. They are skilful at mixing powder paints and watercolours. They know that they put the lighter colours in first and just a small part of darker paint so 'that you get right mix'. They select the right media for the effect they want; 'I can use pastels for the eyebrows because I can make them stick out'. Pupils in Year 6 show a similar ability to select the right technique and tools in their studies of birds. They produce very dramatic pictures of owls in flight, using sweeping strokes in chalk to simulate movement. They produce equally fine pictures of small birds, using scraper boards or pencils. The main reasons for the independent way pupils work and the good understanding they have is the carefully planned experiences that build upon each other and the very good questions teachers ask to encourage pupils to think and express their ideas. By Year 6, pupils' technical ability is often very good. Their work shows a good awareness of perspective, for example, and this is used very effectively in ghostly pen and ink pictures. Observational art is good throughout the school and pupils' make good use of their sketchbooks and opportunities in lessons to practise.
- 86 Pupils have a very good appreciation of the work of different artists. The pupils are encouraged to interpret well-known and less well-known art in interesting and imaginative fashion. For example, the Years 3 and 4 pupils create extraordinary and unique abstract designs following observations of recent work of David Hockney. The pupils reveal a good awareness of design and Hockney's bold use of colour. They extend their ideas into very good three-dimensional designs in clay. In Years 4 and 5, the pupils' ideas are stimulated by their historical studies of Anglo-Saxons in producing beautiful models of jewellery with foil and clay. The pupils' understanding and the quality of work are often enhanced by good links with other subjects. For example, pupils' portrait work is linked to historical studies, such as Florence Nightingale and Mary Seacole.
- 87 The range of the art curriculum is very exciting and the standard is improved by many opportunities to view professional art or to work with artists. There is also a thriving art club. The pupils often work with unusual materials. For example, they made their own felt to produce a large group picture. Pupils use interesting material to produce group artwork, such as textured sea paintings mixing paint and paper turning. They often develop on a simple theme. For example, in Year 2 pupils worked from observational drawings of plants to patterns using paper collage involving tessellating and overlapping patterns. There is a good link between mathematics and art. In Years 4 and 5, pupils created very effective designs by overlapping two-dimensional shapes to produce three-dimensional images.
- 88 The quality of teaching and learning is very good. The teachers' subject knowledge is usually good. This allows them to question pupils closely to probe their understanding and lead to new ideas. They create many opportunities for pupils to work in different groupings, such as individually and in group work. This contributes to their social and personal development. The use of excellent resources from pictures and photographs to collections of rocks, stones and stuffed animals all contribute to the high standards. Teachers make effective use of literature and poetry to stimulate

ideas. Lessons are conducted at a brisk pace, with a good balance between opportunities to practise techniques and create their own composition. There is some use of information and communication technology through art packages on the computer, in designing iron-on transfers for example, and digital photography, but this is not yet a well-developed feature of teaching. As a result of the effective teaching, pupils work very hard and often concentrate closely. Close links to work in design and technology mean that pupils use making skills well in their artwork, such as when joining materials in the most appropriate way. Work is very closely matched to pupils' ability and experience.

- 89 The curriculum is very well led and managed. Long-term planning ensures pupils' systematically build upon their skills. The pupils' work is attractively displayed and teachers make good use of labels to stimulate further interest. The subject leader closely monitors progress through the school and keeps portfolios of work to show the range and depth of pupils' standards. The artwork through the school contributes significantly to the pupils' spiritual appreciation and leads to very good attitudes to the subject.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

- 90 Standards are above typical expectations by Year 2 and Year 6. The previous inspection found standards broadly similar. Pupils of all abilities make good progress throughout the school, and these standards represent good achievement. In recent years the school's thrust has been rightly to improve literacy and numeracy, but enthusiastic leadership from the headteacher has secured a prominent place for design and technology within the curriculum.
- 91 No lessons were observed in the infants. The quality of pupils' finished products from last term and this term indicates that good teaching has taken place. Pupils have confidently built a range of 'vehicles' from junk modelling that involved gluing together various food packaging boxes. Once constructed, models were made mobile by using wheel bearings manufactured from clothes pegs. The quality of design and final painting were of a high quality. All pupils gained from such tasks that clearly involved measuring and cutting in straight lines in readiness to accommodate doors and windows that opened. In discussion with pupils, they indicated their enjoyment for the cutting and sticking activities that took place, and the fact that their models actually moved when placed on a flat surface.
- 92 Scrutiny of pupils' work in Years 3 and 4 indicates the manufacture of well constructed free-standing picture frames to display photographs of themselves taken with a digital camera. Measurement and cutting skills indicate high levels of care and pride in the finished product, successfully linking numeracy and information and communication technology. The 'fair ground attraction' models manufactured from a range of gears contained in a construction kit and powered by a simple electrical circuit again successfully enriched the subject's prominence within the school.
- 93 At the end of Year 6, last year's pupils' work demonstrates that they can use a wider and more difficult range of materials and tools. Their measurements are more exact and their fastenings more complex than the infants, as observed in the wooden figures that enhance the school entrance and library area. The older pupils are aware that careful measurements result in accurate models. Teachers use this awareness very well to develop pupils' numeracy and their interest in practical problem solving, for example the mobile insects suspended from the ceiling. Pupils enjoy using their drawing skills in the design stage, but are less interested in the writing needed for the

evaluation stage. Although teachers do not plan in the use of computers to help with designing, they do use them for researching the background information on which some of the topics are based.

- 94 Scrutiny of work undertaken previously by Year 6 pupils indicates good opportunities for them to think for themselves and to use their own initiative, for example in their own designs for a futuristic playground area. The only major problem encountered is the cost to implement such grand ideas in the real world. Work is displayed very well to celebrate the achievements of all pupils, regardless of ability and needs. Careful consideration is given to pupils with special educational needs in selecting appropriate materials and resources to assist them. In the good lesson observed in Year 6, the teacher introduced the topic with the use of a model owl to illustrate clearly the importance of feathers when flying and the need for camouflage in order to catch its prey. This assisted pupils to visualise the shape and texture of feathers and the importance of wing feathers having a greater length than feathers attached close to the body. The teacher's good method helped widen pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural experiences. In consequence, pupils were bursting in anticipation to draw and try out their own ideas.
- 95 There is good management and leadership of the subject by a combined team effort and a well-informed headteacher. Resources are of good and suitable quality. However, insufficient opportunities are provided in design and technology for pupils to use computers to assist their work. The use of assessment to support pupils' skills development is very much in its infancy and continues to be an area for future improvement.

GEOGRAPHY

- 96 By Year 2 and Year 6, pupils are working at a level that is above what is expected for their age, and their achievement is good. They have a good knowledge of places around the world and they are particularly aware of how the local area contrasts with other areas nearby and those countries that they study. Standards at the time of the last inspection were reported as well above the expected level.
- 97 A strength of the curriculum is the pupils' knowledge of their local environment and the effects of environmental change. Year 3 pupils are able to identify how the local landscape has changed, the limitations of local amenities and what needs to be done to improve the quality of life in their own area. Year 4 pupils who, through an investigation of a village near York, compare and contrast the impact of traffic on different communities to develop this. A further strength is the pupils' ability to compare the similarities and differences of their own locality with other parts of the world. Year 6 pupils study life in a village in India and compare the experiences with that of their own, noting the differences in size, population, religion and climatic condition. This results in a much greater level of pupils' awareness of levels of employment, the degree of poverty and the life expectancies of people in the developed and the underdeveloped world. In both the infants and juniors, pupils use geographical terminology accurately. For example, Year 6 pupils have undertaken a study of the River Swale and can confidently explain the terms erosion, meander and deposition as well as explaining the industrial and leisure uses of rivers. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have good map skills and can identify the countries of the British Isles. They are able to track the route from the school to the post office and report on the services that local shops provide. Pupils express their opinions about what they like and dislike in the local area and why it is important to take care of the environment.

- 98 The quality of teaching is good. Teachers' planning is very thorough and good attention is paid to using geographical language, with the result that pupils understand and use technical terminology effectively. There are good opportunities to support the development of the pupils' literacy skills. There are good relationships between teachers and pupils. This enables the learning in school and in the community to be carried out effectively and encourages independent investigations. Teaching in the upper juniors has high expectations of pupils, sets challenging tasks and uses good resources to support the learning. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good across the school and they are enthusiastic to participate in discussions by sharing ideas and opinions. Pupils are given opportunities to work co-operatively and collaboratively, and record their findings of investigations with a good degree of accuracy. They particularly enjoy opportunities to improve their knowledge and skills through field trips and visits to the local area.
- 99 The headteacher provides good leadership and management and this has led to pupils achieving high standards, developing a good understanding of other cultures, in this country and abroad, and appreciating the importance of how the environment can be protected and sustained.

HISTORY

- 100 By Year 2 and Year 6, pupils are working at a level that is expected for their age, and their achievement is satisfactory. By Year 2, pupils understand the differences between past and present and old and new. They have a good knowledge of famous events and people from the past. For example, Year 2 pupils know the causes of the Gunpowder Plot and how famous people such as Mary Seacole and Florence Nightingale made a difference to the lives of people. By Year 6, pupils are knowledgeable about the periods in the past that they have studied and, for example, are able to explain how the education system in Ancient Greece treated boys and girls differently. Pupils are aware of how sources of evidence can inform them of the past. For example, Year 3 pupils ascertain the differences in the quality of life of rich and poor people at the time of the Tudors. Pupils are able to organise, evaluate and present information derived from historical sources, for example when Year 3 pupils research Ancient Egypt and explain how the process of mummification works. However, pupils' writing skills are not sufficiently developed and opportunities for extended writing are limited.
- 101 No lessons were observed in the inspection and judgements are based on an analysis of pupils' work, teachers' planning and discussions with teachers and pupils. Teaching is good because they plan systematically and make effective use of artefacts and resources. Teachers encourage in pupils the skill of providing evidence to justify opinions and written statements. As a result, pupils work independently and evaluate information derived from a range of resources with skill and maturity. This is reflected in their ability to research topics using texts, photographs, videos and the Internet. This leads to pupils being interested in major events of the past and making thoughtful comparisons with events in their own lives.
- 102 The headteacher provides good leadership that ensures activities are planned in an appropriate sequence to build upon pupils' previous experiences and skills. Good use is made of the local area and visitors to school, who recreate the past through drama. This develops pupils' understanding, extends their knowledge and sustains their enthusiasm for history.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

- 103 Standards achieved by pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 are broadly satisfactory, and are similar to those found at the time of the previous inspection. The school's resources for teaching information and communication technology have improved. Pupils had limited opportunities to access information and communication technology during the updating of equipment in the computer suite, which was beset by problems and took longer than anticipated. This has contributed significantly to the subject's low profile in supporting skills in other subjects. At the time of the inspection, employed technicians were attending to major problems. When fully operational, the school is conscious of the need to make all staff aware of the computer suite's potential as an additional teaching tool to be used on a regular basis.
- 104 Teaching is satisfactory. In Years 1 and 2, pupils confidently used the mouse to move quickly around word processing text, adding letters at the beginning of sentences and inserting letters where necessary. When editing a story, higher attaining pupils understood the need to highlight sections clearly before moving text to its rightful position in the document. All pupils concentrated hard and supported each other very well when working in pairs. The majority of pupils have access to computer facilities at home. Nevertheless, less confident pupils learned quickly because they had been partnered thoughtfully with other more confident pupils. Therefore, information and communication technology makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development although this is not specifically planned into lessons.
- 105 There were no direct teaching lessons observed in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6. However, from discussions, older pupils talked knowledgeably about the work they had undertaken last year. They could suggest a series of commands to make a programmable floor robot travel in various directions, and most knew that a sequence of commands could be repeated four times to make the robot travel in a square. They recalled using the computer to make simple block graphs and talked about the collection of data in a variety of forms, for example the comparison of temperatures and climate of different countries around the world, as displayed in the school hall. Most pupils know how to search for information using CD-ROMs and they have a good understanding of how to present text, modifying its appearance for different effects and purposes. Year 6 classroom displays clearly indicate that pupils can copy text and use a digital camera to illustrate publications.
- 106 The subject leader and headteacher have ensured that staff have more and better resources with which to work. Since the previous inspection the staff have completed most of their training, which has increased confidence and expertise. All teachers are determined to increase the pace of learning after a period when using the computer suite was particularly difficult due to the many malfunctions of software. They persevere even when the computer suite does not work as smoothly as it should.
- 107 Teachers apply computers well to learning in some subjects. For instance, the art software enabled Years 1 and 2 pupils to produce an impressive display in the style of Lowry by creating a wide range of skin tones to blend in with the rather stark background. The range of application is not wide enough. Overall, insufficient use is made of computers to help pupils with critical research. Teachers do not yet plan to use the computer sufficiently to promote literacy and numeracy.
- 108 The arrangements for assessing what pupils have learned, and establishing what work they need to do next, are underdeveloped. All teachers have a shared understanding about what needs to be assessed, but this has not yet been translated into adequate systems. Pupils' learning is not checked often enough. As a result,

teachers do not identify pupils' learning needs precisely enough. With many pupils having access to computers at home, the school needs systems to distinguish between those pupils who need more practise and those who are ready to move on and extend their skills.

- 109 Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The co-ordinator is well qualified and has a thorough overview of the subject and is clearly aware of its present strengths and areas for development. Once the computer suite is free from breakdowns, the capacity for continued improvement is good.

MUSIC

- 110 There was insufficient evidence to make a judgement about standards and the quality of teaching and learning. Evidence was gained from one lesson in the Years 4 and 5 class, discussion with pupils, scrutiny of teachers' planning, and singing in assembly.
- 111 Pupils sing tunefully in assemblies as in most schools. This is an improvement from the last inspection when the quality of singing in assemblies was an issue for the school. The pupils show a good awareness of the loudness and softness of the music, and a good rhythmical sense.
- 112 The pupils in Years 4 and 5 are making good progress in producing their own compositions. They successfully create compositions, which have four beats to the bar. They have a good understanding of maintaining a constant rhythm to hold their performances together. The pupils select a suitable percussion instrument to create the sound they want. The teacher has a good understanding of the subject and acts as a good role model. This gives the pupils confidence and encourages them to try hard.
- 113 The curriculum is broad and interesting. Pupils listen to a range of musical styles in lessons and in assemblies. They have opportunities to learn musical instruments, including recorders, with specialist tuition, and perform in assemblies and for parents. Music does not have as high a profile as the school would like due to a lack of specialist skills.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

- 114 The previous inspection found standards in physical education to be above average for pupils in Year 2 and Year 6. These standards have been successfully maintained. Pupils experience a very well balanced curriculum through a good range of physical activities that include swimming and adventurous activities. All pupils have a thorough understanding of the relationship between exercise and health and fitness.
- 115 In the infants, pupils travel and balance very confidently when moving across the floor and on equipment. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, perform simple skills with good control and agility, and show good and sometimes very good control of their movements when running, walking, skipping, hopping and changing directions. In gymnastics, pupils combine a sequence of movements, paying attention with confidence to starting and finishing positions. In the juniors, pupils have good levels of co-ordination and are agile and balanced in their movements. For example, Year 6 pupils balanced using different parts of their bodies, successfully linking a sequence of flowing movements. A strength of the subject is that teachers make perceptive evaluations of pupils' performances. Pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5 have

regular swimming lessons, and the standard achieved is excellent. The majority of pupils swim the recommended twenty-five metres by the end of Year 6.

- 116 The quality and range of sporting activities provided during extra-curriculum sessions and the use of balls and skipping ropes during playtimes, enhances the subject's profile, and the good skills achieved. The quality of teaching is very good. The very best teaching is characterised by very secure subject knowledge and an emphasis on pupil demonstrations, high expectations of pupils' behaviour and the effective use of available resources. This leads to pupils' responding enthusiastically with very good standards of concentration and very positive attitudes to their work. For example, in Years 1 and 2, pupils were very well focused when travelling around the hall, using space confidently, demonstrating curling and stretching movements with great agility and control. Pupils developed long, thin shapes to make a 'lamp post' before moving off to make well-balanced 'star' shapes. Significant contributions to the personal and social education of pupils also added to the effectiveness of this particular lesson. The development of social relationships is also a strength of the school. Pupils work together well in pairs and small teams, appreciating each other's successes and difficulties. In a very good lesson in Year 6, strong links with numeracy were evident when pupils displayed well-controlled symmetrical shapes as they stretched and twisted prior to landing. Most teachers place good emphasis on safety, and most classes are managed and organised well so that pupils work safely and move with regard to others. Nevertheless, the movement of equipment by pupils at the end of lessons requires greater attention to establish more orderly routines incorporating the correct carrying and lifting of equipment.
- 117 Management of physical education by the headteacher and his enthusiasm for the subject are very good. Planning is assisted by recently developed national guidance. Pupils are assessed by direct observation. At present, ongoing assessments of pupils' skills lack a consistent approach and are ineffective in accurately monitoring what skills pupils have acquired during a lesson in order to inform future planning intentions. The spacious school grounds, consisting of a grassed playing area and marked hard surface and a very good level of resources, enhance the subject's high profile within the school.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

- 118 By Year 2 and Year 6 pupils' standards of attainment in religious education are above the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Good standards have been maintained since the last inspection.
- 119 Pupils achieve well by the age of seven. They are aware that different people have different places of worship and that there are similarities and differences in Christian and Hindu faiths. Year 1 and 2 pupils relate the principles of these religions to their own lives by respecting and valuing people who help them and identifying how they can help others. Pupils' knowledge about Christianity and Bible stories is good and they can describe many of the features of the Easter and Christmas stories.
- 120 Pupils achieve well by the age of eleven. They are introduced to the essential principles of a variety of world religions, for example Hinduism, Judaism, and Sikhism. Pupils in Year 6 have a good knowledge of Hinduism and reflect this when they retell the story of Rama and Sita. They are aware of a variety of world religions and can explain how and where their followers pray, who is their god and who founded their religion. For example, Year 3 pupils have a good knowledge of the meanings of the festivals in the Jewish calendar. A strength of religious education is the links made

between religion and the pupils' own daily lives. For example, the work done on friendship cements their understanding of what friends should and should not do. It makes an effective contribution to pupils' personal development by making them aware and respectful of the needs and beliefs of others.

- 121 The quality of teaching is good. Lessons are well planned, learning outcomes are clear and proper attention is paid to encouraging pupils to explore their feelings and thoughts. Teachers have a good relationship with pupils, are aware of their individual needs and differences and approach issues sensitively. The skilful questioning of teachers encourages pupils to express and explain their opinions, which results in pupils becoming more confident and mature.
- 122 Good use is made of visits to local churches. The teachers make effective use of displays and resources to stimulate pupils' interest in and appreciation of a number of world religions.