

INSPECTION REPORT

ST PETERS CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Doncaster

LEA area: Doncaster

Unique reference number: 106760

Headteacher: Mary Barry

Reporting inspector: Steve Bywater
18463

Dates of inspection: 31st March to 3rd April 2003

Inspection number: 251741

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

School category: Voluntary aided

Age range of pupils: 4 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Sandy Lane
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Appropriate authority: Governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr A Prior

Date of previous inspection: 9th June 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
18463	Steve Bywater	Registered inspector	Science Information and communication technology	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? How well are pupils taught?
9224	Mike Vineal	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with its parents? How high are standards? (Attitudes and behaviour)
19874	Joe Fitzpatrick	Team inspector	English History Equal opportunities	How well is the school led and managed?
16447	Rosie Grant	Team inspector	Art Design and technology Foundation Stage	How good are curricular and other opportunities?
17681	Roger Sharples	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography Music Physical education Special educational needs	

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	7
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	13
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	16
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	18
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	20
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	22
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	23
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	25
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	26
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	31

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Peters is a Catholic Primary school with 258 pupils aged between four and eleven on roll; 78 per cent of these pupils are baptised Catholic. Most pupils are white British although 18 pupils (seven per cent) are from ethnic groups. These include Asian British Indian (six), Asian British Pakistani (four) and eight pupils from a range of other groups. Of these pupils, 14 are described as having English as an additional language but only one is at an early stage of acquisition. This average sized school has seen a steady fall in numbers since the last inspection (361 on roll in 1997). The school serves two parishes, St Peters and St Pauls and three buses bring pupils to school. Forty-four pupils (17 per cent) are entitled to free school meals. Forty-five pupils (17 per cent) are on the register for special educational needs; 18 of these are on School Action plus and five pupils have statements. Most of the needs are identified as general learning difficulties and two pupils are identified as having emotional and behaviour difficulties. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is below the national average. Attainment on entry to the reception class is average but includes a range of well below to well above average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school with some very good features. Standards in a number of subjects are above national expectations by the age of eleven. Good teaching ensures that pupils learn effectively the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. A rich and interesting curriculum motivates pupils well and promotes their personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well. Scientific enquiry skills are not promoted so well. The pupils like school and they behave well. They have good attitudes and relationships are very good. Parents are justifiably pleased with the education their children receive at St Peters. There is a calm, caring and supportive ethos in the school and pupils feel valued. The headteacher provides high calibre leadership but the roles of co-ordinators need to be improved. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- By the age of eleven, standards are above average in English, art, design and technology, history, music and physical education.
- Teaching and learning are good overall and pupils make good progress.
- Teachers provide a wide and interesting range of work for pupils, including those with special educational needs. The school has a caring ethos and is held in high regard by parents.
- The school provides very well for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. As a result, pupils behave well and have positive attitudes to school.
- The headteacher has a very clear vision which is shared by staff and governors. Overall leadership and management are good.

What could be improved

- Pupils' skills of scientific enquiry – especially in the upper juniors.
- Developing the monitoring and evaluation roles of co-ordinators.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in June 1997 and five key points were raised. The school has made very significant progress in raising standards in information and communication technology (ICT). New and improved equipment, increased staff confidence and subject knowledge and the provision of a relevant range of activities have helped to improve pupils' standards. At present, those pupils in Year 6 have not had sufficient time to reach national expectations, but in all other classes standards are at the levels expected. Assessment has improved in all areas of the curriculum. The school has developed well its day-to-day financial management systems and these are now very good. Pupils no longer miss the same lessons every week to receive additional musical or other tuition. The only area of these issues which still needs further attention is the improvement in co-ordinators' management and monitoring procedures.

STANDARDS

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

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

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

In the 2002 national tests for eleven year olds, pupils' attainment was above the national average and the average for similar schools in English. Standards were in line with the national average and the average for similar schools in mathematics and science. In the national tests for seven year olds in 2002, when compared with the national average, pupils' standards were below average in reading and mathematics and very low (in the lowest five per cent of schools) in writing. When compared with similar schools, standards in reading, writing and mathematics were well below average. These low standards were mainly the result of unsatisfactory teaching during a very disjointed year for pupils in Year 2. The full range of inspection evidence shows their standards have risen significantly in Year 3. By the end of Year 2, standards are currently above national expectations in music and physical education and in line with national expectations in reading, writing, mathematics and science, and in all other subjects. All pupils in the infants are making satisfactory progress. Pupils make better progress in the juniors because teaching overall is livelier. By the end of Year 6,

standards are above national expectations in English, art, design and technology, history, music and physical education. Standards are in line with national expectations in all other subjects with the exception of ICT where they are just below. The inspectors did not judge standards in religious education because this subject was inspected under different guidelines. By the end of the reception class, children make satisfactory progress and most attain the expected standards for their age. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards targets in their individual education plans. Teachers set targets for pupils that are sufficiently challenging and take good account of pupils' prior attainment. This is indicative of the high expectations of the school.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have good attitudes to their work. They are interested in school and enthusiastically involve themselves in the wide range of activities the school provides.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils' behaviour in and around the school is good. They are courteous to each other and to adults. There is an absence of oppressive behaviour, including bullying, sexism and racism.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils' personal development is good. They have very good relationships with one another and with adults in the school. Pupils respect and value other pupils' beliefs, cultures and backgrounds.
Attendance	Satisfactory. The attendance rate is average in comparison with other schools nationally. Pupils are punctual and want to come to school.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching, such as that seen in Years 1, 3 and 4, is one of the reasons for the success of the school. Teaching in the reception class ensures children get off to a sound start at school through a suitable range of well-planned activities and in the infant classes the teaching is satisfactory. Good teaching in the junior classes enables pupils with a wide range of needs to learn effectively. Throughout the school teachers links subjects, including literacy and ICT, together in a very effective way. Literacy and numeracy are taught well. The large number of support staff makes a positive contribution to pupils' learning. The quality of teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. The school now needs to identify more formally the more able and gifted children, and provide a programme of work to meet their needs. Another area to improve is the quality of marking which is often little more than a tick or cross and does not help pupils to improve their work. Teamwork and relationships are

important features of the teaching at this school and add considerably to the pupils' attitudes. The quality of pupils' learning is good overall and very good in some classes. They are keen to learn and work very well co-operatively and collaboratively.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is planned satisfactorily to cover all the national Early Learning Goals. The school provides a broad range of work that is stimulating and relevant to pupils in Years 1 to 6. The good provision for extra-curricular activities, visits and visitors enriches the quality of pupils' learning further.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The school's programme of support for pupils with special educational needs is good. It is effectively organised to identify pupils who need additional help, ensuring they make similar progress to their classmates.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	There are very few pupils who require specialist support. However, teachers ensure that pupils have equality of opportunity to take full advantage of the learning experiences that they give them. This means that these pupils achieve at least as well as their classmates.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Provision for personal development is satisfactory. However, provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good and is one of the strengths of the school on which its success is built. The school ensures pupils have a clear understanding of what is right and wrong, and show a high degree of respect for all people.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares well for its pupils. Members of staff treat the pupils with understanding and respect. Teachers and support staff know the pupils very well and have useful information to tell them what pupils have done well and where they need help. Therefore, the school directs support effectively to the pupils who need it most.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good overall. One of the main reasons for the success of the school is the very good leadership of the headteacher. She has a very clear vision of what sort of school it should be. She puts pupils and their achievements first. Subject co-ordinators need to develop their roles more to ensure they understand the strengths and weaknesses in their subjects. There is a very good sense of team spirit among the staff and a definite shared commitment to succeed.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very good. The governing body fulfils its responsibilities extremely well and takes a very active role in helping to shape the direction of the school through strategic planning. Governors are fully committed to and supportive of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Monitoring and evaluation of overall school performance are good. There is a careful analysis of standards, frequent checking of the progress towards targets in the school development plan and regular observations of teaching. Most weaknesses are identified early and the school responds immediately and efficiently in dealing with them. However, pupils' work is not scrutinised carefully enough.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. There is a clear link between development planning and finance. Priorities are entirely relevant to school. It clearly understands the principles of best value and these are at the hub of the financial planning process.

The school's aims do not do justice to the actual work of the school because they do not reflect or explicitly promote the school's commitment to the raising of standards of attainment. The school has a good level of staffing and provides good opportunities for staff development. The accommodation is good and is used efficiently. Resources are good.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children like school and make good progress • The teaching is good and the school expects children to work hard and achieve their best • They feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem • The school is well led and managed • The school is helping their children become mature and responsible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of homework • Information about their children's progress • The school working more closely with parents • The range of activities outside lessons

Nineteen parents attended a meeting held with the registered inspector prior to the inspection, and 93 parents and carers (36 per cent) returned questionnaires. Parents have positive views and there is an effective partnership between home and school. The inspection team agree that parents are right to hold such positive views. The information provided by the school is satisfactory but the quality of reports and information about pupils' learning has scope for improvement. Homework is judged to be satisfactory but the team do agree a more consistent policy would benefit school and home. The team feel that the school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1 Standards of work seen in the inspection are generally in line with national expectations by the age of seven and eleven. Pupils achieve satisfactorily in the infants and they achieve well in the juniors. Standards have improved since the last inspection.

2 Strengths in standards achieved:

- Standards achieved in the national tests for eleven year olds in 2002 were above the national average in English
- By the age of eleven, standards are above average in English, art, design and technology, music and physical education
- Pupils make good progress overall
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards their individual learning targets

Area for development is:

- To continue to improve standards in ICT

3 Children's attainment on entry to the reception class in the autumn term is broadly average, though the range of attainment is wide, and the intake includes a minority of very capable children and some who find learning hard. They all make satisfactory progress in the reception class as a result of sound teaching. They are likely to attain the national targets for their age by the end of the reception year. The school has recognised the additional learning needs of a pupil who has a different mother tongue and is drawing on extra support to address them.

4 In the 2002 national tests for seven year olds, pupils' results were below the national average in reading and mathematics and well below the national average in writing. When compared with schools with a similar proportion of pupils on free school meals, standards were well below average in reading and mathematics and very low (lowest five per cent of schools) in writing. Teacher assessments in science indicated that standards were well below average. Evidence shows that improvements are generally in line with the national trend but these results in 2002 were particularly disappointing and were mainly attributable to the difficulties in the Year 2 class which suffered much disruption over the year due to staffing problems and pupils who underachieved. Already, this group of pupils has made very significant progress in Year 3. Inspection evidence shows that the standards in Year 2 this year will be higher than last year and are likely to be in line with national expectations in English, mathematics and science. Better standards are due to more consistency in the quality of teaching. There is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls. Pupils make satisfactory progress in the infant classes.

5 In the 2002 national tests for eleven year olds, pupils' results were above the national average (and above the average for similar schools) in English and in line with these averages for mathematics and science. Evidence also showed that good value had been added in English for pupils moving from Year 2 in 1998 to Year 6. There is no clear trend of girls or boys outperforming the other. There has been an improvement in standards in English since the last inspection. The full range of inspection evidence indicates that standards this year will closely match those of last year and the standards in literacy and

numeracy match those normally expected for pupils at the age of seven but are above average at eleven. Pupils continue to make good progress in the junior classes.

6 By the end of Year 2 pupils' standards in speaking and listening are above average and standards in reading and writing are in line with the national average. By the end of Year 6 pupils attain standards in English that are above the national average. Throughout the school pupils listen with good levels of attention and understanding. They follow instructions well and express their ideas clearly. In both infants and juniors most pupils speak confidently and willingly ask questions when they are unsure about what to do. Higher attaining pupils in Year 2 read fairly demanding texts fluently, accurately and with good expression. Average pupils sound out unfamiliar words and correct mistakes. Lower attaining pupils tend to read rather hesitantly in a stilted fashion. Higher attaining pupils in Year 6 read demanding texts with fluency, at good speed and with a high level of understanding. Average pupils are less fluent but have good understanding. Lower attaining pupils read relatively simple texts competently but tend to hesitate more frequently when they encounter unfamiliar words. Throughout the school, pupils have secure research skills and those in Year 2 as well as those in Year 6 know how to consult a book's index and how to find books in the school library; older pupils make use of the Internet. Pupils produce a good range, volume and variety of writing. A small number of less able pupils in Year 2 have difficulty in producing writing that is more than a few sentences in length but they make steady progress. Average and higher attaining pupils in this year produce more fluent writing. Most pupils in Year 6 write well with a sound command of appropriate vocabulary. More able pupils show sensitivity in their choice of words and apt phrasing. This is an improvement since the last inspection when standards were average. Given that they enter school with average standards, pupils achieve soundly in Years 1 and 2 and well in Years 3 to 6.

7 By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, standards in mathematics are in line with national expectations. All pupils make satisfactory progress overall. The progress of pupils in Year 2 is sometimes slow because the activities are not appropriately planned to meet their needs. For example more able pupils are not challenged by the work on time because they sit for a long period performing tasks that they already understand. However, when teaching is good and pupils are challenged by the activities as in the juniors then the progress they make in their learning is better. In Year 2 the more able pupils can identify the different features of shapes and are able to find the line of reflective symmetry. Most pupils have secure number skills and are confident in telling the time. Pupils in the junior classes show an improvement in the pace and progress of their work. By Year 6, pupils have benefited from a good range of challenging activities in number, shape, space, measure and data handling. They apply their knowledge and skills in practical situations. The more able pupils are given more opportunities to complete their work independently while the less able receive more support and easier worksheets.

8 Standards in science are in line with the levels expected nationally by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils achieve satisfactorily overall in the infants and juniors but they make unsatisfactory progress throughout the school in their experimental and investigative skills. By the end of Year 2 almost all pupils are on course to achieve the nationally expected level and around a fifth are higher attainers. Most pupils have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of materials and their properties and physical processes. Some of pupils' best work is on life and living processes but the weakness is the lack of opportunities for pupils to plan experiments or to predict what will happen and why. An over-emphasis on the use of worksheets is restricting pupils' recording skills. By the end of Year 6, standards are in line with national expectations but pupils do not make sufficient progress in developing their investigation and experimental skills. Rarely do pupils plan and carry out their own experiments. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 in particular have missed out on crucial stages of predicting and hypothesising. A further weakness in much of the work prior to the inspection

was the lack of opportunities for pupils to select their own equipment for the experiment and to record work in their own way. Pupils in the juniors benefit from a broad curriculum and they make satisfactory progress in their knowledge and understanding of life and living processes, materials and their properties and physical processes.

9 Other subjects:

Subject	By the end of Year 2	By the end of Year 6
Art	In line with levels expected	Above levels expected
Design and technology	In line with levels expected	Above levels expected
Geography	In line with levels expected	In line with levels expected
History	In line with levels expected	Above levels expected
Information and communication technology	In line with levels expected	Below levels expected due to lack of experience using the new computer equipment.
Music	Above levels expected	Above levels expected
Physical education	Above levels expected	Above levels expected

10 Pupils with special educational needs make good progress throughout the school, and those for whom English is an additional language achieve as well as the other pupils in their year group. They concentrate well, for example in sessions working on spelling and reading programmes.

11 Teachers set targets for pupils that are sufficiently challenging and take good account of pupils' prior attainment. This is indicative of the high expectations of the school.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

12 Very good relationships are evident in this school and underpin the good attitudes, values and behaviour seen. All aspects of this area were good at the last inspection, but relationships and behaviour have improved still further since then. This is a very inclusive school and, throughout the inspection, the team saw good practice in lessons of all pupils being given equal opportunities.

13 Children in the reception class have positive attitudes to their work. They take part enthusiastically in a range of practical work, often showing good levels of curiosity, concentration and perseverance. Most are confident and have clear ideas about what they want to do. This reflects their good relationships with adults and the opportunities that they are given to make choices. They listen well for short periods when they are part of a large group, notably when they are interested in the topic. They are keen and lively and a few do not always wait for their turn to speak, or listen well enough to other children. As yet, teaching has not promoted these skills well enough.

14 The very good relationships seen go right across the school and were no better demonstrated than in the 'buddy' system. To see large Year 6 boys proudly walking into a whole school assembly holding hands with tiny girl 'buddies' in reception, was to typify the positive nature of relationships between the children. Equally, a group of Year 6 pupils, asked what they would do if they were upset or sick, replied that they would walk round the playground, talking to a friend. Such relationships stem from the very good models set by teachers, not only in their commendable relationships with the children but in their relationships with each other and with other adult staff. This was seen having a very positive influence when three classes combined, in the hall, for a music lesson on percussion performance, where the banter and interplay of the three teachers and the two teaching assistants contributed greatly to both the pace and the enjoyment of the lesson. This is a

happy school and many lessons seen incorporated 'fun', which attests well to the relationships built up.

15 With the children interacting so well and caring for each other, it is no surprise to see good behaviour. The staff's approach is so positive and consistent. The children know where they stand and like this fact. Good rewards and sanctions support the behaviour policy and are understood and approved by the pupils. The relationships fuel respect for each other and for property, and children respect the efforts of others. In the same music lesson referred to above, as one class performed a previously practised number, the other class sat very attentively and spontaneously applauded at the end. Similarly, the children understand the impact of their actions on others, so bullying is rare and when it occurs it is unacceptable to other pupils as well as quickly dealt with by staff.

16 Children enjoy school, are very proud of it and come readily to it. They have good attitudes to learning and usually settle quickly to personal study. Pupils with special needs show good levels of concentration in lessons. Behaviour in class is usually good, especially when engaged by the work. The only exceptions are in some infant lessons, where a few challenging pupils do, on occasions, disrupt learning and sometimes influence other classmates. The inspection revealed no problems with excessively boisterous behaviour as was reported in the last inspection. Exclusions have taken place in the recent past, but not this year. Personal development thrives on the relationships described and responsibilities are offered to the older children (eg 'buddies', watching the office during lunch, monitoring doors). No school council yet exists, but plans are well advanced to create one next academic year.

17 Attendance is satisfactory, being very close to the national average. It could be higher but for the significant number of pupils who take holidays during term time.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

18 The overall quality of teaching is good and as a consequence the quality of learning is also good. The proportion of very good and excellent teaching in Years 1, 3 and 4 represents a good improvement since the last inspection. More than 66 per cent of all lessons seen were good or better and 17 per cent were very good or better. One lesson was outstanding. The very good diet of teaching is having a significant impact on the learning and progress of pupils in the junior classes in particular and is a major improvement since the last inspection.

19 Teaching is satisfactory in the reception class. The teacher and learning support assistant work well together. The learning support assistant often provides good support for groups of children, extending their communication skills and encouraging them to work hard. Direct teaching is satisfactory, overall. Recently introduced methods of teaching reading are having a beneficial effect on the speed with which children learn the sounds and names of letters. These skills are also improving their writing. Mathematical skills are taught satisfactorily, though the pace and challenge of direct teaching do not always stretch the brighter children enough. Teaching of personal and social skills is effective in most respects, except that a few children still find it difficult to take turns and listen well to one another. The organisation of teaching is beginning to take account of new opportunities to use the outside space, but needs further development in order to maximise children's learning.

20 One of the main reasons for the high proportion of good teaching is the expectation of what pupils can achieve and how they should behave. The high standards of discipline are blended very well with humour and encouragement in the best lessons, and this ensures a purposeful working environment where it is easy for pupils to learn. Teachers do not have to

waste time controlling their classes. Pupils respond very well to this ethos and as a result most classrooms are happy working environments where pupils consistently try their best.

21 Another positive feature is the use of teachers' particular expertise and influence in a number of subjects. For example, the art, music and physical education co-ordinators have a positive impact on teaching in other classes and this is having a major impact on the standards achieved. In most lessons the teachers' good explanations and good questioning promote thinking. Pupils are not afraid to 'have a go' because the security of relationships means that there is nothing wrong with not being right. Pupils' self-esteem and confidence are high. They know that their contributions are valued, and enjoy receiving praise and encouragement for their efforts. It is rare for pupils to misbehave in lessons and only occasionally in one or two classes was there any minor cause for concern.

22 The teaching of literacy and numeracy skills is good. The main strengths in literacy lessons include Year 6 pupils responding eagerly to the teacher's lively approach to writing a formal letter and the teachers' good use of resources including 'big books'. In numeracy lessons, the teachers ensure that pupils are clearly focused as they concentrate on finding methods and strategies to solve problems. Pupils show high levels of interest in mental mathematics sessions and are keen to achieve at speed, especially in 'competitive' games. Teachers make unusually good links between English and work in other subjects. For example, there is a good deal of good quality writing in history and religious education and in these and other subjects teachers pay good attention to the quality of pupils' language as well as to their understanding. Good use is made of the key words pupils need to grasp in order to understand a concept or to express their understanding in writing and many key words are on permanent display in classrooms. Teachers in all subjects make good use of question and answer sessions in order to develop pupils' understanding and this is helping pupils to develop above average levels of confidence and competence in speaking and listening. Teachers use computers regularly for research and to enhance the work in other subjects. As a result pupils now use computers more naturally as part of their studies.

23 All teachers share the learning objective for the lesson with their pupils and most spend valuable time during the lesson and at the end to remind pupils of their intended learning and asking how well they feel they have met the objective. As a result of this clear focus, most pupils have good levels of understanding about what they are to learn and what they have learned. There are a good number of adults helping in the school. Teachers' planning ensures that this support is used well and all helpers know exactly what is required of them. Not only do these instructions help adults to support their groups, but it also allows teachers to focus their attention on smaller groups. Classroom support assistants provide good support in lessons for pupils. For example, a pupil with a statement of special educational need receives very good support in science and physical education lessons in Year 4 and in Years 5 and 6 a pupil with communication difficulties is given a lead role in a short play.

24 Teachers work hard with their displays to create an environment which excites, informs, educates and motivates. There are items for pupils to look at, to answer questions about and to touch, examine and observe. The displays about life in other countries such as Thailand in Year 2 and Kenya in Years 3 and 4 are particularly good examples of teachers providing stimulating classrooms which promote a very good social and cultural understanding of other countries.

25 All teachers know the pupils with special educational needs well and are aware of their needs. They make good provision within their planning, setting appropriate tasks for the various ability groups, thus ensuring that all pupils are fully included in their lessons. The pupils' individual education plans reflect their needs and are used effectively in lessons to provide appropriate learning activities.

26 In considering how teachers can improve their teaching, an area to develop is the use of marking. In many subjects and in many year groups, teachers consistently praise pupils' work. However, there are too few occasions when teachers consistently remind pupils of how they can improve their work. This is especially so when pupils sometimes do not take sufficient care with their presentation and spelling.

27 One aspect of the work in the upper juniors in particular is disappointing. Investigative and experimental work in science is unsatisfactory. Pupils have not been given sufficient opportunity to plan and carry out experiments. In discussions, pupils expressed their concern and boredom over doing too much copying directly from books and the lack of experimental work. Scrutiny of pupils' work and the observation of lessons confirm this as an area of significant weakness. Pupils are over-directed which reduces their independent work. A similar concern was expressed during the last inspection and improvements here have been unsatisfactory.

28 Homework is satisfactory. It supports pupils' learning but is inconsistently given. Although 71 per cent of the parents who responded to the parents' questionnaire are satisfied with the homework given to pupils, a significant minority are not.

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

29 The school provides a rich and varied curriculum that meets national requirements well. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The basic curriculum is extended well through good provision in art, music and physical education. Chances for pupils to express themselves creatively and to take part in sport are better than those found in most schools. Religious education is represented strongly. Very good links are made between subjects. In Years 3 and 4, for example, pupils studied Kenya in geography and African art in art and design. Visits to places of educational interest make a good contribution to the curriculum. Extra-curricular provision is good. The school is fully inclusive and provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. A scheme of work for personal, social and health education is still to be developed.

30 The curriculum provided for children in the reception class is satisfactory and enables them to make sound progress. It covers all nationally recommended areas, and gives due attention to the teaching of the key skills of literacy and numeracy. The implementation this year of a new method of teaching letter names and sounds is having a beneficial effect on children's early literacy skills. Good opportunities are also given for children to engage in practical activities and role-play. There is a reasonable balance between direct teaching and exploratory or practical work. Staff are also beginning to take advantage of the new area outside the classroom for outdoor activities, but this provision is in a fairly early stage of development.

31 Strategies for teaching literacy are good. The three-part lesson, where skills are taught, practised and reviewed, is used well. Pupils have good opportunities for extended writing in subjects such as history. This good provision leads to higher than usual standards by the end of Year 6. Strategies for teaching numeracy are satisfactory and result in sound learning. Provision for ICT has improved greatly since the last inspection. The new ICT suite is used well and pupils are acquiring relevant skills at a faster rate. As a result, most pupils are working at appropriate levels for their age. Year 6 pupils, however, have not had enough experience to close the skills gap and their attainment remains below average. Provision for science is unsatisfactory. Not enough opportunities are given for pupils to acquire scientific

skills by finding things out for themselves. The over-directed approach to teaching science stops some pupils from achieving as well as they might. In contrast, skills and techniques are taught systematically in art, and in design and technology. As a result, pupils acquire a broad repertoire of skills and achieve well. Good use is made of nationally recommended schemes of work in a range of subjects.

32 Provision for personal, social and health education is currently only satisfactory, but is being seriously addressed with the intention of formalising both policy and curriculum by next year. Meanwhile, these aspects of the children's education are introduced across the curriculum informally, by class teachers in both circle time and registration sessions.

33 Apart from that covered in the science curriculum, drugs education is not currently delivered, while sex education comes from science and from the diocesan 'Education in Personal Relationships' programme. A new policy has been written and a scheme of work is being produced, led by two teachers who have been on a course run by the diocese. Another teacher is working on the health education aspects of this area of learning. She is liaising with the local education authority which has schemes in which they involve the school nurse. Healthy eating is another likely facet of the emerging plan.

34 The school identifies special educational needs at an early stage and appropriate individual education plans are put in place. The targets in these plans reflect the areas of need identified in the statement or pupils' identified need. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their learning and are aware of their own learning targets. The special educational needs co-ordinator, class teachers and support assistants regularly review the individual education plans to ensure that pupils are making good progress towards their targets. When the activities are planned at the correct level and the pupils receive the appropriate level of support in lessons then pupils make good progress in their learning.

35 Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. All these aspects of personal development are rooted in the school's distinct Catholic ethos. Chances for pupils to develop these dimensions of their personalities are fully embedded in the school's work. Provision is better than at the time of the last inspection.

36 Provision for spiritual development is very good. Collective worship provides time for prayer and quiet reflection, as the pupils consider their spiritual journey through life. Music plays a strong part in establishing a reverent atmosphere, both at the beginning and end of the worship and as pupils join in hymns. Other chances for reflection are built into lessons, for example in English, art and religious education.

37 Provision for moral and social development is very good. Strong moral and social messages pervade assemblies. Pupils are expected to espouse Catholic values and their personal responsibility is stressed. They are expected to take the extra steps to be a good friend, to forgive and to be sensitive to other people. The impact of this teaching is seen in almost all classrooms where pupils show respect for other people's point of view and property. When they are asked to evaluate one another's work, for example, they find kind things to say about the work of lower attaining pupils. The 'buddy' system, where Year 6 pupils pair up with children in reception, works very well. The older boys and girls take their responsibilities seriously, as they lead their partners into a special assembly each week. Pupils are given many opportunities in lessons to develop good social skills, for example, when they work with a partner in design and technology. The youngest children in reception know that it is wrong to steal.

38 Provision for cultural development is very good. Pupils study other major world faiths in religious education. Art and music make a very strong contribution to pupils' knowledge of

styles of work, artists and musicians. History and geography, often extended through interesting visits, help pupils to learn about their own and wider localities from the past and present. The multi-cultural dimension is included well in all subjects. Music and art, for example, embrace different cultural traditions, and the texts used in literacy help pupils to understand more about other people's lifestyles. A visit is planned to Bradford's Multi-faith Centre next term, so that staff can extend this work even further.

39 The contribution of the community to pupils' learning is something that has been orchestrated and increased very effectively recently. Extensive beneficial links have been established and good use made of both visitors coming into the school to enhance the curriculum and classes going out to local museums, places of interest, etc, that relate to topics being studied. Several classes spoke animatedly about a visit to a World War II Museum.

40 Links with the two parishes feeding the school are very strong and the church clearly has regular contact with the school. This extends to aspects like charity actions for the Bishop's Fund (South Yorkshire Charities) where many initiatives are run, such as 'Dotty Days'.

41 Some links are involving engaging parents as well as children. The Workers Education Association ran some adult education ICT courses such as 'Keeping up with the Children' in the school, and York College of Law is about to provide students to run courses on citizenship for the pupils and run 'Law Clinics' for the parents.

42 Links and induction to the secondary school to which the majority of pupils transfer, are good. The head of music from this school recently spent a whole day in the school, running a workshop with Year 6 that ended with a concert. The school has built a link to a teacher training college in Leeds and the first student will be in school from June. A local 'Beacon' primary school runs workshops in the school; a workshop with other local primaries was part of 'Technical Challenge' week; and Hallam University supplied a civil engineering student for School Science Week who was still being talked about in a science lesson observed.

43 Doncaster TEC is considering running adult courses and the headteacher is also in discussion with the local commercial world, attempting to harness businesses' involvement in the school. Links also exist through sport where local professional football and rugby league clubs help coaching, as well as a local golf club. This is a very active theatre of progress.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

44 This is a caring school and, as at the last inspection, there are good systems that give the safety and welfare of all pupils a high priority. Since the last inspection there has also been a good improvement in the procedures of checking pupils' learning and progress.

45 Child protection procedures, led by the headteacher, are taken very seriously and all staff are aware of their responsibilities. Health and safety is also well monitored in a way that involves all levels – the governing body, where at least two governors have industrial experience of this area, the teaching staff and the very active caretaker. Regular 'walks of the premises' are conducted and this team clearly keep on top of all relevant such issues. Areas such as First Aid are well organised and appropriate records kept but the quality of care is what one notices in this school. The everyday handling of boys who have bumped their heads playing outside or children feeling unwell in class demonstrates well the ethos of support and

concern that pervades. From the adult discovering the problem to the office contacting the parents, such matters are handled especially well.

46 The monitoring of such activities as fire drill, incidents and accidents is efficiently done as is the monitoring of attendance. This is now computer based and the office staff, working closely with class teachers, keep a good eye on any unacceptable trends, notifying the EWO (education welfare officer), if needed. The improvement in attendance over recent years attests to this.

47 Procedures for checking children's progress in the reception class are satisfactory. Procedures for checking their progress in reading are good, and these help staff to grade the work given to children appropriately. Record keeping that takes account of the national targets for children of this age is less well developed.

48 There has been no behaviour management training for the special educational needs staff but the co-ordinator has approached the local authority support team to provide this training.

49 There are good procedures in English and mathematics to check how well pupils are learning and whether they are making enough progress and to set individual targets. Arrangements for checking the progress in other subjects are being developed but are not used to the same effect to inform the planning of future learning activities. In English and mathematics regular checks in the form of tests are used to establish the standards that the pupils are attaining. From this information the teachers predict the standard that the pupil is likely to achieve by the next term and plan the activities that are required to meet these targets. At the end of each school year the teacher in the pupils' present class discusses the attainment of each pupil with their next teacher.

50 In the other subjects the pupils' attainment is checked using guidelines linked to a nationally recognised scheme of work and is recorded on the computer, but this information is not used as effectively to influence future targets for the pupils' learning. A relatively new development has been the introduction of individual pupil booklets stating their targets in English and mathematics.

51 Overall there are good arrangements for tracking the pupils' attainment and progress in subjects. However, this is not the case in procedures for checking the pupils' personal development and there is limited information recorded in school reports.

52 There is good co-ordination of the procedures for checking pupils' learning and progress. The co-ordinator is aware of the need to further develop the procedures in subjects other than English and mathematics.

53 The procedures for assessing pupils with special educational needs are good. The school uses a range of different tests and assessments to determine how they can best help pupils. There are good examples of advice and support from outside agencies; for example, a teacher from the local authority support team provides additional sessions to boost the literacy skills of the pupils with special educational needs.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

54 As at the last inspection, the overall partnership with parents is good. Parents' views of the school are good and in the parents' questionnaire, more than 90 per cent of parents agreed that their child liked school and made good progress there and the school helped them become mature and responsible. They similarly agreed that the school was well managed and had good teaching. They added that the behaviour of children was good, teachers had high expectations and were easy to approach with questions, etc. Some were critical of homework, but divided on whether more or less was wanted, and of extra-curricular activities. On this latter issue, the evidence of the inspection rather refuted it, as a fair range of activities enhance the curriculum, covering sport and music, with art and ICT about to be added. The remaining criticism was concentrated upon the information they got, especially on the children's work, and how closely the school worked with parents.

55 The parents' meeting was equally positive in balance and illustrated the points above. There was some concern expressed about traffic outside school and the supervision of loading and unloading of the children from buses. The inspection team found that both issues had been satisfactorily dealt with by the time of the inspection.

56 The communications to parents are only satisfactory. The weekly newsletter has been introduced and improved and a nice touch is to issue it always on Thursday so parents know when to retrieve it from the depths of their child's bag. Other letters keep up good contact on events, visits and countless other issues. However, where communications need improving is in giving insights into the children's work and helping parents to know how to help the children. Plans are already in hand to extend the use of evening briefings on topics, Reception has already had one on the phonic system used there, and it is planned to try such an instructive meeting in conjunction with the governors' meeting for parents.

57 Reports to parents are another area where communications home could be improved. Plans exist to improve these, which currently are over-descriptive and insufficiently individual and evaluative. They do include a quite well used personal development, 'general' section but frequently fail to produce a picture that parents readily recognise.

58 Parents' evenings are already well attended but are in line to be improved and re-timed. and such moves are typical of the many initiatives being taken to engage parents even better.

59 Several parents already help in school, especially in reception and with the younger age group. Some of these recently took up added opportunities to work as teaching assistants. Others help on visits and special events. There are very active parent governors who work hard to represent the parents in the strategic direction of the school. The headteacher also does consult parents on key issues – most recently by means of a questionnaire. Links with parents are good but the school continues to work to improve the effectiveness of these links.

60 Already, the impact of parents upon aspects of the work of the school is good. As well as through the many helpers, this is particularly focused through the 'Friends' – an informal small group of enthusiastic activists with a large band of parents who help when asked. Many good social and fund-raising events have been organised, including a Summer Fair, a Christmas Fair and children's discos. They currently plan an Easter Craft and Cake Fair. These events are well attended and raise substantial funds for much wanted items in the school. In recent years, the Friends raised over £5000 for the ICT suite and over £4000 for the library. They have also funded much of the recent re-glazing.

61 The school has also worked hard to get many parents making a good contribution to children's learning at school and at home. This has been especially effective with parents of children with special educational needs. These parents are now closely involved in their

children's individual education plans and the monitoring of their progress. Other initiatives try to involve parents in reading at home, for example in the reception class, and homework.

62 The partnership with parents is an ever-strengthening one.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

63 The general quality of leadership and management is good. The headteacher provides very good leadership. She has helped the school to emerge from a difficult period and provides a clear sense of direction. She and the deputy head, who like her arrived only in September of last year, have carried out useful audits of important features of the school's work, such as the teaching of literacy, in order to form a sound assessment of what the school is doing well and what needs to be improved. Together they have brought staff together by means of school-wide policies on matters such as teaching, assessment and marking. While some work remains to be done in each of these areas, the school has made impressive progress in a relatively short period of time. The school improvement plan, drawn up in consultation with all members of staff, is a useful working document that sets out appropriate priorities and targets. Links with the school budget, however, could be made more precise.

64 Senior managers have helped to enhance the role of subject co-ordinators. Co-ordinators have been given time, for example, to re-write or update policies for their subjects and are expected to make contributions to the school improvement plan on the role of their subject in the curriculum. They monitor teachers' planning in their subjects and some have been able to form an overview of the standards being attained throughout the school by a scrutiny of work and of displays around the school. Not all have carried out a rigorous work scrutiny as yet, however, and co-ordinators have not yet been able to observe teaching and learning in their subjects. While the role of subject co-ordinator is more fully developed than was the case at the time of the last inspection there remains room for further development. The leadership and management of special educational needs are good.

65 The governors provide very good support for the school on the basis of very good understanding and knowledge of its strengths and weaknesses. They helped to maintain stability and continuity during the recent difficult period and can take much of the credit for guiding the school into the present period of stability and progress. They are active in planning for the strategic development of the school and strongly support the new senior managers' aspirations to raise standards of attainment. In this regard, it should be noted that the school's aims, while unexceptional in many ways, do not do justice to the actual work of the school because they do not reflect or explicitly promote the school's commitment to the raising of standards of attainment.

66 Designated governors have initiated procedures for managing the performance of the headteacher and have set appropriate targets. Likewise, the headteacher has re-started the system for the appraisal and management of the performance of each member of staff, and the headteacher and a local adviser have observed each teacher teaching and provided valuable feedback. A member of staff has been given overall responsibility for the professional development of non-teaching staff and has carried out an audit of their needs. Further training and development of teaching and non-teaching staff should help the school to continue along the path of progress and renewal it has embarked on since the arrival of the headteacher.

67 A strength of the school is its strategic use of resources and its efficient handling of financial management, both of which are very good. In particular, the very good day-to-day

financial administration carried out by the administration assistant (effectively a bursar) is a big advance upon the last inspection.

68 Very good control is kept of all expenditure and budgeting constraints are tackled equally well. Moreover, good management accounts data is fed to both headteacher and the chair of governors and financial sub-committee (one person – and an accountant). The governors have an impressive grasp of the issues facing the school and a firm input into the financial strategy needed to address them, which springs coherently from the School Development Plan. This linking of headteacher, governors and administration assistant forms an unusually sharp, coherent and active team. The result is efficient use of funds and careful thought is found behind all spending that links it to educational priorities. The carry forward figure in the financial tables is larger than might be expected but these figures include staffing costs which had not been removed before this balance was given. Taking into account the effectiveness of the education provided, the school now provides good value for money, an improvement since the last inspection.

69 This efficiency extends to a good embracing of the principles of best value. This extends well beyond mere acquisitions of resources to a whole attitude of strategic financial planning. Several new revenue sources have been found and the search actively continues.

70 The school has a good staff made up of suitable numbers of well-qualified teaching staff, who work together well and offer a very good range of expertises. The numbers of support staff have recently been increased which is beneficial but their training and integration into this good teaching team need attention.

71 Learning resources are good overall and very good in physical education and music. They are only satisfactory in English where the library is light on fiction and is insufficiently used despite its excellent refurbishment.

72 Accommodation is good overall with mostly light, airy and spacious classrooms and several good areas for withdrawal and storage. The weaknesses are ease of access and the noise that filters between some classrooms. A good spacious hall is a major asset, but it suffers by being the crossroads of the school so that any lesson in it is interrupted by 'regular' traffic. The very adequate ICT suite is a good teaching room except for the same problem of being a route to classrooms and the library. Offices are well provided and beneficially positioned (the administration office is well placed to aid security). Security outside has been greatly enhanced by the effective fencing erected. External play areas are fairly spacious and include a hard level surface and a grassed area. Whilst there is an imaginative 'route' game painted on the hard area, there are no seats or houses or other play items present. The separated reception area will soon benefit from its many play items. The whole school is very well maintained, tidy and well cared for by a first-class caretaker. The school generates a bright aura.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

73 In order to raise standards and improve the quality of education, the headteacher, staff and governors should

- develop pupils' skills of scientific enquiry by:
 - a) providing more opportunities for pupils to independently plan their own experiments, choose equipment and record their findings;
 - b) providing sufficient opportunities for pupils to predict, hypothesise and consider ways to improve their investigative work.
(paragraphs 8, 27, 31, 96-99)

- develop the monitoring and evaluation role of subject co-ordinators by:
 - a) empowering co-ordinators to produce an action plan for their subjects with guidance, time, resources and opportunity to develop their subject;
 - b) establishing a programme of lesson observations, scrutiny of pupils' work and analysis of teachers' planning to monitor teaching and learning in their subjects in order to find what is working well and what is not;
 - c) reporting back to senior management and governors and taking the necessary action to raise standards and quality;
 - d) using the outcomes of monitoring to inform staff development, curriculum and whole-school improvement initiatives;
 - e) ensuring that subject co-ordinators are fully involved in the financial management of their subject.
(paragraphs 64, 88, 94, 101, 111)

The school should also consider the following minor points:

- improve the quality of marking throughout the school by being more rigorous in identifying pupils' errors in punctuation, spelling and grammar and making sure that marking indicates precisely how pupils can improve their work;
(paragraphs 26, 87, 94, 99)

- reconsider the school's aims so that they reflect more explicitly the school's commitment to the raising of standards of attainment;
(paragraph 65)

- improve the communications between school and home by:
 - giving insights into the children's work and helping parents to know how to help their children;
 - improving reports to parents by ensuring that they are less descriptive and more individual and evaluative.
(paragraphs 56 and 57)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	54
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	26

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
Number	1	8	27	17	1	0	0
Percentage	2	15	50	31	2	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	None	258
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	None	44

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	None	5
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	None	45

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	14

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	23

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2

National comparative data	5.4
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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)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	19	12	31

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	16	13	16
	Girls	9	8	10
	Total	25	21	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	81 (86)	68 (92)	84 (97)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	15	16	18
	Girls	9	10	9
	Total	24	26	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	77 (86)	84 (97)	87 (97)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	22	18	40

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	18	17	21
	Girls	13	14	15
	Total	31	31	36
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	78 (74)	78 (70)	90 (89)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	17	17	20
	Girls	12	13	14
	Total	29	30	34
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	73 (68)	75 (72)	85 (89)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

Ethnic background of pupils**Exclusions in the last school year**

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	240	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	6	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	4	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	8	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	0	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	11
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23
Average class size	26

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	13
Total aggregate hours worked per week	208

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	None
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	None
Total number of education support staff	None
Total aggregate hours worked per week	None
Number of pupils per FTE adult	None

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	4
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001-2002
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	£
Total income	591420
Total expenditure	606706
Expenditure per pupil	2092
Balance brought forward from previous year	63842
Balance carried forward to next year	48556

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate 36%

Number of questionnaires sent out	258
Number of questionnaires returned	93

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	55	44	1	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	44	46	5	1	4
Behaviour in the school is good.	39	54	3	1	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	29	42	19	3	6
The teaching is good.	48	44	1	1	6
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	28	39	25	4	4
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	52	43	1	0	4
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	51	45	1	1	2
The school works closely with parents.	28	41	20	3	8
The school is well led and managed.	44	44	2	0	10
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	47	52	1	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	22	33	25	10	10

Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding

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

74 The 28 children in the reception class all started school at the start of the autumn term. All had pre-school experience in nearby nurseries. On entry to the school, their attainment was broadly average, though this masked a wide range, with some very capable children and some that needed extra support.

75 Provision and teaching in the reception class are satisfactory, and help children to make sound progress. This finding is similar to that reported at the last inspection. The teacher and nursery nurse work together well and meet the children's needs soundly. All of the required areas of learning are provided. The area outside the classroom is fenced off and is being redeveloped to create an excellent space for outdoor work. This improvement extends the scope of outdoor education and has the potential to lift standards of work generally.

Personal, social and emotional development

76 Most children are likely to meet the national targets for their age by the end of the reception year. They achieve satisfactorily, due to sound teaching. In some aspects, their attainment is higher than expected; for example, they are curious about the world around them, have good relationships with adults and most are able to work independently. They can sustain interest for quite a long time in activities that they choose for themselves. Two girls, for example, drew out their own road plan in the yard and ran buses round it, stopping to pick up passengers. They understand the difference between wrong and right, as when the teacher read a story about a missing coin that might have been stolen. They behave well when they are doing practical work, but a few children still find it difficult to work in a larger group. They do not always wait for their turn to speak, or listen quietly enough to one another. The teacher copes with the children's exuberance quite well, and uses a range of strategies, including using a quiet voice and hand signals, to gain their attention. There is scope to extend and use the more successful strategies more consistently.

Communication, language and literacy

77 Most children are on course to meet the national targets in all aspects of work by the end of the reception year. They make satisfactory progress, due to sound teaching. A minority of children have well-developed conversation skills. They can draw upon their own experiences, when listening to a story, for example, and explain their ideas well. They speak confidently to adults, and ask as well as respond to questions. Other children speak with less ease and a few, including a child with English as an additional language, do not communicate readily, and need coaxing to speak. Although children listen well when they are interested, they do not always sustain attentive listening. They have not fully understood rules for listening when they are members of a larger group. The school is drawing on external support to address the language needs of the child with English as an additional language.

78 Recent changes in methods of teaching reading are having a positive effect, especially on the speed with which children learn and apply the names and sounds of letters. Parents have been well informed about the method used and play an active part in developing children's early reading skills. Many children know a few words, and recognise alphabet sounds and some groups of letters. They can talk about stories and characters in their books. They use their knowledge of sounds to write. Able children write a sentence or two independently. Their writing is recognisable and letters are formed quite carefully. Other children write a few words or, in the case of lowest attainers, make marks to communicate meaning. Staff work well with groups of children to help them acquire writing skills.

Mathematical development

79 Most children make satisfactory progress, as a result of sound teaching, and are on course to meet the national targets by the end of the reception year. Most children recognise numbers up to ten, and a sizeable minority can go beyond this. Some are able to do simple calculations. When the teacher held up the number five, for example, one boy showed a card with six spots on it, carefully covering one of them with his finger to make five. They join in number rhymes well, learning through practical experience how many ice-creams are left each time one is taken away. They recognise some flat shapes and can draw simple sequences of shapes. They are beginning to use everyday words, such as forward, backwards and sideways, to describe position. Teaching is based appropriately on explanation, demonstration, questioning and practical activities. The direct teaching is satisfactory, but expectations of what children can do are modest. More pace and challenge would lift children's achievement even further.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

80 Most children achieve satisfactorily as a result of sound teaching, and are likely to meet the national targets by the end of the year. Early investigative skills are taught soundly. Children suggest which objects might float and which sink, then find out through experimentation whether their ideas are right. Some use the computer confidently, following instructions and clicking on the mouse to move objects. They discuss different kinds of boats, drawing on their own experience of going on ferries, for example, to inform their views. They build a range of vehicles, using different construction kits. Children are given a good range of practical experiences to extend their knowledge and understanding. Staff make a good contribution to children's learning when they support different groups, for example when working on sinking and floating. Direct teaching is satisfactory, though a discussion on boats was too wide-ranging for the children's age and experience.

Physical development

81 Provision and teaching are satisfactory. As a result, children achieve satisfactorily and are on course to meet the national targets by the year-end. Children acquire satisfactory manipulative skills, through regular opportunities to use pencils, tools and scissors. Some girls are particularly dextrous as they cut shapes out of play-dough. Children develop their abilities to move in different ways and to balance through their involvement in sound lessons in physical education and outdoor play. The quality and range of outdoor work are still developing; the space is being extended and additional resources bought. Currently, classroom organisation is not sufficiently geared up to maximise its effectiveness.

Creative development

82 Provision and teaching are satisfactory, overall, though some good opportunities are provided for role-play, which children use well. Children's achievement is satisfactory overall, and most are on course to meet the year-end national targets. They engage readily in a range of work, including painting, making collage pictures, playing in the 'fruit and vegetable shop' and making imaginative models. They take on different roles well, for example the role of shopkeeper and shopper. As they do this, they extend their language and mathematical skills, as well as their imagination. They join in songs and rhymes enthusiastically.

ENGLISH

83 By the end of Year 2 pupils attain standards in speaking and listening that are above average and standards in reading and writing that are in line with the national average. Pupils' literacy skills are average. This is an improvement since the last inspection when pupils' standards in speaking and listening were average. By the end of Year 6 pupils attain standards in English and literacy that are above the national average. This is an improvement since the last inspection when standards were average. Given that they enter school with average standards, the pupils achieve soundly in Years 1 and 2 and well in Years 3 to 6. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress throughout the school and those for whom English is an additional language achieve as well as the other pupils in their year group.

84 Throughout the school pupils listen with good levels of attention and understanding. They follow instructions well, take part eagerly in classroom discussions and most are capable of expressing their ideas clearly. In both infants and juniors most pupils speak confidently, with a good command of vocabulary, and a pleasing feature is their willingness to ask questions when they are unsure about what to do or do not understand a point well. This is a reflection of the trusting relationship between pupils and their teachers. In Years 1 and 2 higher attaining pupils read fairly demanding texts with good expression and a good measure of fluency and accuracy. Average pupils read competently and are usually able to make use of sound phonic knowledge to decode unfamiliar words and to correct mistakes. Lower attaining pupils read with sound understanding but tend to read in a rather stilted fashion, word by word, and some hesitate frequently at relatively simple words like 'friends' or 'found'. Higher attaining pupils in Year 6 read demanding texts with fluency and at good speed. They cope well with unfamiliar words and their level of understanding is high. Average pupils are less fluent but have good understanding; one such pupil read words like 'challenged' and 'delicately' well but hesitated at 'in hot pursuit'. Lower attaining pupils read relatively simple texts competently but tend to hesitate more frequently and to need prompting when they encounter unfamiliar words: one pupil needed help to pronounce 'leather', 'straight' and 'tracksuit'. Pupils in Year 2 as well as those in Year 6 know how to consult a book's index and how to find books in the school library; older pupils can also make use of the Internet.

85 Pupils produce a good range, volume and variety of writing in English and in other subjects such as history and religious education. A small number of less able pupils in Year 2 have difficulty in producing writing that is more than a few sentences in length but they persevere and are making steady if slow progress. Average and higher attaining pupils in this year produce more fluent writing, sometimes re-telling in their own words traditional stories like 'Little Red Riding Hood' or 'Jack and the Beanstalk'. Most pupils in Year 6 can order their thoughts clearly on paper with a sound command of appropriate vocabulary. More able pupils write at greater length and are beginning to show sensitivity to word choice and apt phrasing. In addition to letters, stories and descriptions, some were able to set out an argument on a controversial topic with a good level of skill. Most could spell with reasonable accuracy and mistakes in spelling tended to be fairly simple or slight – for example, writing 'somethink' for 'something', 'evry' for 'every' or 'flite' for 'flight'. Pupils for the most part have good attitudes to English and are keen to do well.

86 The quality of teaching is sound in the infants and good in the juniors. Teachers make good use of the National Literacy Strategy to help pupils gain a sound grasp of phonics which helps them with their reading and their spelling. In one good lesson Year 2 pupils showed good knowledge of the features of the 'big book' they were reading. They knew how to make use of the 'table of contents', could find and use the index, and understood and used words like 'alphabetical order', 'glossary' and 'illustration'. In a sound lesson involving this year group the teacher made use of a number of devices to help pupils to understand how to use speech marks, including clear illustration on the board. In a good Year 6 lesson, the pupils discussed the features of a formal letter, comparing them with those of a less formal letter. They were able to use terms like 'paragraphs' and 'letter of complaint' with ease and were not afraid to ask for clarification of some words they did not understand in context, such as 'consequences', 'unreliable' and 'in spite of'. The level of comprehension of most of the pupils was good. Teaching approaches and materials are well adapted to match the needs and abilities of different groups of pupils in the class and weaker pupils, including those with special educational needs, are usually well supported by classroom assistants. There is a good turnover of readers and library books to ensure that pupils make progress with their reading, and weaker readers are identified and are heard to read more frequently.

87 Teachers make good use of assessment to track the progress of individuals and groups of pupils. A particular strength was the use of assessment data to divide classes into three ability groups. Teachers collaborated to identify the strengths and weaknesses of each group, their levels of attainment in terms of the National Curriculum, their future targets and their predicted grades in end of year examinations and national tests. The assessment data section dealing with 'future targets' was especially useful as it identified for teachers and pupils exactly how pupils might address their weaknesses and build on their strengths and in this way make progress. Teachers mark pupils' writing conscientiously and some provide precise guidance on how improvements could be made. Practice, however, varies and some of the marking is lacking in precision and the support it provides for development. Although teachers make good use of National Curriculum level descriptors in order to grade pupils' attainment, there is no accurate record of pupils' reading ages because there has not been a tradition of using suitable standardised tests to obtain this information. There is only one pupil who is at an early stage of learning English. His needs have been carefully diagnosed with the help of a specialist adviser from the local education authority and are being carefully addressed.

88 The subject is well supported by a good range of books, including recently purchased sets of readers to support the guided reading in literacy lessons. There is a satisfactory collection of individual readers but there is also room for more of these. Some sets of dictionaries are old and showing signs of wear. Almost all classrooms and many corridor areas are enlivened with well-mounted displays of pupils' writing, including some that has been attractively word processed. The subject co-ordinator, who is relatively new to the school, has good subject knowledge and is helping the school to develop a unified and cohesive approach to the teaching of language and literacy. She has carried out a valuable audit of the subject and provision has been made for staff to attend relevant in-service training. She monitors and supports teachers' planning of lessons but has not yet been able to observe teaching in the subject. The headteacher has observed all teachers teaching literacy and has provided valuable feedback but the role of the subject co-ordinator in this area needs to be developed further. The teaching force in the school has recently been strengthened by the addition of a large number of support assistants. They are already making a positive contribution to pupils' learning in English but their contribution would be enhanced by further training. The school places a very strong emphasis on the development of pupils' language skills and for the past year the development of writing has rightly been an

important priority in the school improvement plan. This is an initiative that should be continued and in order to make further progress the school should attend to the following:

- the enhancement of marking, making sure that it indicates precisely how pupils can improve their writing;
- the identification of pupils' reading ages by the use of appropriate standardised tests;
- the development of the role of subject co-ordinator;
- providing training for some support staff on the skilled hearing of pupils reading, including the ability to diagnose specific difficulties and to make supportive interventions.

MATHEMATICS

89 Standards by the end of Year 6 are in line with similar schools and all schools nationally. By the end of Year 2 the 2002 test results were below the national standards but the work seen during the inspection indicates that standards are in line with the national average. Staffing issues in the infant department which have now been resolved are a possible reason for the lower standards achieved in the 2002 tests. All pupils make satisfactory progress overall but when teaching is good and pupils are challenged by the activities as in the juniors then the progress they make in their learning is better. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language achieve as well as the other pupils in their year group because their work is carefully planned and well supported by teachers and support assistants.

90 In Year 2 the more able pupils can identify the different features of shapes, for example a pentagon and a hexagon, but lower attaining pupils find difficulty in naming a shape with five corners. When considering simple shapes they are able to find the line of reflective symmetry. They are confident with their 5 times table and can predict the next number when the teacher leaves out a number as they count as a class. Pupils can insert the correct symbol to solve a problem, for example the + into $58 \ ? \ 26 = 84$. All the pupils can recognise o'clock, $\frac{1}{4}$ past and $\frac{1}{2}$ past using a clock face, with the more able transferring analogue to digital time. The progress of pupils in Year 2 is sometimes slow because the activities are not appropriately planned to meet their needs. For example, more able pupils are not challenged by the work on time because they sit for a long period performing tasks that they already understand.

91 Pupils in the junior classes show an improvement in the pace and progress of their work. In Year 3 they are able to identify right angles in different shapes and can show examples around the classroom. The more able pupils in the class can double 48 but the less able struggle to answer as the numbers increases in value. In Year 4 more able pupils can write the fractions to represent $\frac{1}{4}$, for example $\frac{16}{64}$. A pupil with special educational needs receives good support to understand how to write $\frac{1}{2}$. Pupils show good knowledge of how to use a bar graph to record and interpret data. In Year 5, pupils can solve problems involving the comparison of weights and show good progress in their addition and division skills.

92 The work in the pupils' books and in the lessons in Year 6 shows that they are set a good range of challenging activities to enable them to use their knowledge in practical situations. For example, they are able to use their knowledge of fractions to calculate the proportions of water and cordial that comprise a glass of orange. The pupils are able to estimate accurately and are able to convert fractions into the decimal equivalents. The work is appropriately matched to the needs of all the pupils. The more able pupils are given more

opportunities to complete their work independently while the less able receive more support and easier worksheets.

93 Teaching is satisfactory in the infants and good in the juniors. The main reason for this is that the learning activities in the juniors are planned more effectively to meet the needs of all the pupils, which subsequently provides them with the correct level of challenge to ensure they make progress. The particular strengths seen in the best lessons include the good use of questioning and the encouragement of pupils to work together in small groups or with a partner. This was seen to good effect in a Year 6 lesson when pupils displayed good conversational skills to explain their answers on problems concerning proportion. The pupils respond positively to these opportunities and give well-reasoned and thoughtful answers. Most of the teachers have sound subject knowledge and in the best lessons there are high expectations of the quality of work that the pupils produce. Time is given in each lesson to the improvement of the pupils' mental mathematics skills and most teachers use this session to check on what pupils know and can do. ICT plays a small part in improving pupils' mathematics and the co-ordinator feels that this provision needs further development.

94 The school has recently focused on the procedures for checking how well pupils are learning and whether they are making enough progress. The subject co-ordinator intends to use this information to concentrate the teaching on specific areas of identified weakness to further improve the pupils' attainment. The marking of work in the pupils' books is under-developed and its effectiveness requires further attention. The co-ordinator intends, if time is available, to interview pupils and to monitor examples of their work. The subject is led satisfactorily.

95 There has been satisfactory progress in the subject, particularly in the procedures for checking pupils' progress, since the last inspection.

SCIENCE

96 Standards in science are in line with the levels expected nationally by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Standards are similar to those being achieved at the time of the last inspection. Pupils achieve satisfactorily overall in the infants and juniors but they make unsatisfactory progress throughout the school in their experimental and investigative skills. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress throughout the school and those for whom English is an additional language achieve as well as the other pupils in their year group. No significant difference was seen in the performance of boys and girls.

97 By the end of Year 2, standards are in line with national expectations. Almost all pupils are on course to achieve the nationally expected level and around a fifth are higher attainers who should achieve a higher level. Most pupils have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of materials and their properties. They recognise and classify man-made and natural materials. Most pupils know that heating causes some changes to materials (butter and chocolate for example) and these can be reversed on cooling. They also know that cooking toast and boiling an egg, changes occur that cannot be reversed. In their work on physical processes, pupils know that a complete circuit is needed for a bulb to work and they draw a circuit diagram. Some of pupils' best work is on life and living processes. There is a good link to healthy lifestyles including the benefits of a balanced diet and taking exercise. Pupils know that plants need water, light and soil to grow and they confidently name the parts of a plant, including stem, root and flower. Although there are occasional examples of pupils carrying out simple investigations, these are not common. There are too few opportunities for pupils to plan experiments or to predict what will happen and why. There is little evidence of pupils showing a firm understanding of how a test can be made fair. Although it is reasonable

for lower attaining pupils to receive considerable support using prepared recording sheets, higher and average attainers need to consider their own recording methods. An over-emphasis on the use of worksheets is restricting pupils' recording skills.

98 By the end of Year 6, standards are in line with national expectations but pupils do not make sufficient progress in developing their investigation and experimental skills. Investigations are sometimes carried out as demonstrations by the class teacher, but rarely do pupils plan and carry out their own experiments. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 in particular have missed out on crucial stages of predicting and hypothesising. A further weakness in much of the work prior to the inspection was the lack of opportunities for pupils to select their own equipment for the experiment and to record work in their own way. When they are given the opportunity, pupils in Year 3 and 4 make very sensible predictions about how high various balls will bounce. Higher attaining pupils in particular use scientific knowledge to make generalisations, for example, if a ball is bounced on a hard surface it will bounce higher than if bounced on the carpet. By the end of the lesson, these pupils confidently planned and carried out an experiment and recorded their work. Predicting was still a weakness but it is clear that with practice this will improve. Pupils in the juniors benefit from a broad curriculum and they make satisfactory progress in their knowledge and understanding of life and living processes, materials and their properties, and physical processes. They have a satisfactory understanding of the position and function of bones and organs in the human body and there are sound links to healthy lifestyles. In work on materials, pupils distinguish between solids, liquids and gases and identify a number of ways by which mixtures can be separated. A very disappointing aspect of the work in Years 5 and 6 is the abundance of copying direct from a textbook. Although some pupils are developing a reasonable knowledge and understanding, their scientific, literacy and independent skills are being greatly restricted. Pupils' scientific vocabulary is developing satisfactorily but often the spelling is inaccurate and the presentation is untidy. Even some of the basic words are incorrectly spelt, for example 'does' is spelt 'dose', and these are not corrected.

99 The quality of teaching is satisfactory in the infants and juniors; although some good lessons were observed, there were also weaknesses. Throughout the school, all lessons are effectively planned with learning objectives linked to the scheme of work. In the best lessons, pupils know what they are going to learn because all teachers explain the purpose of the lesson. In the better lessons the teachers return to this objective throughout and at the end of the lesson. In the lessons seen work was set at different levels to meet the needs of all pupils. Analysis of work shows that this does not happen very often and difference is solely by outcome; higher attainers do more than lower attainers. During the inspection week, pupils in most lessons were interested because of the brisk pace of the lessons. Where teaching is good, teachers review the previous work well to assess prior knowledge and build on pupils' understanding. In some lessons, pupils are not encouraged to research and try things out for themselves. Because of this, they fail to realise that it is alright to be wrong and sometimes experiments need to be repeated. Subject knowledge is secure and there is a reasonable emphasis placed on developing vocabulary. Pupils are challenged by investigative lessons and those in Year 3 and 4 were thrilled to carry out their experiment. They appreciated the opportunity to develop social skills by working in groups. On the other hand, pupils in Year 6 complained bitterly that they do not do enough experiments and often spend hours copying from books. Teachers relate well to their pupils and encourage moral development well by their expectations of good behaviour. Analysis of work shows that all work is marked but there are few examples of teachers using marking to develop learning by asking questions and setting challenges.

100 Teachers find occasional opportunities for pupils to apply their numeracy skills effectively in science. Measurements are taken and graphs are used to record investigations. Literacy skills are also promoted well. For example, in a Year 1 and 2 lesson, the teacher

astutely told the story of 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar', and compared this fiction book to the information books needed to find out information about the life cycle of a butterfly. However, on too many occasions pupils are directed in their recording. There is satisfactory use of ICT in the subject through the use of research and presentation skills.

101 There is currently unsatisfactory management of the subject, mainly because the teacher has not scrutinised work or satisfied himself that teachers are providing a consistent approach to investigative and experimental work. However, on finding out about the problems, teaching improved during the week and the staff now have a better understanding of what is required and show a clear commitment to raising standards in experimental work. There are sound assessment procedures in place, but unless the delivery of lessons improves, the results of these cannot be used to provide individual targets for pupils because copying from a textbook is no certainty of understanding. There are good resources which can be used effectively to develop learning and raise standards.

ART AND DESIGN

102 By the end of Years 2 and 6, standards in art are above expected levels and pupils achieve well. This is due to very good teaching and provision, coupled with the enthusiasm and expertise of the co-ordinator. Standards have been maintained at this high level since the last inspection.

103 Although no lessons were seen in Years 5 and 6, displays of work show that consistently high standards are achieved. Pupils have gained good observational skills and use these well in their drawings of footwear and of artefacts studied as part of their work on the Second World War. Pupils have developed a good eye for proportion, and use line and tone well. They have gained good skills in using a range of media, including paint, charcoal and pastels. These are seen in the impressive pictures of religious scenes related to Easter. Artwork is displayed prominently throughout the school, and makes a very good contribution to the creative ethos of the school and to the pupils' cultural development.

104 Pupils in Years 3 and 4 were completing a unit of work on African art during the inspection. This work shows how their skills are developed systematically. They learn about pattern making, practise mixing colours to make them 'earthy', use appropriate vocabulary and appreciate the essential nature of African art by looking at artefacts. They use a range of media, including pastels, paint and fabric paint on hessian. They work skilfully, showing good control and achieving good results for their age. This is a result of good planning, good use of a range of exciting resources and very good direct teaching of skills.

105 Art education is equally good in Years 1 and 2, and provides a very good basis for future work. Year 1 pupils, for example, print in sequence, varying colour and shape. In Year 2, pupils paint vivid pictures of daffodils. They mix colours and use different brushes to good effect, dabbing off excess paint on a sponge. They use pastels effectively, smudging lines to create different shades. Work is varied and draws appropriately on the work of past masters such as Van Gogh. The good standards achieved reflect the quality of planning, organisation and systematic teaching of skills and techniques.

106 Teaching is very good overall, and one lesson seen during the inspection was outstanding. Although not all teachers have the same level of expertise in art, they are well supported by the quality of planning, availability of good quality resources and the motivating influence of the co-ordinator. The co-ordinator is effective, despite the lack of priority given to the development of art in the school's development plan in recent years and the lack of time for checking and supporting teachers' work formally. There is growing use of ICT in art, and

future work is planned to extend three-dimensional work. Recent expenditure on high-quality original pieces of artwork has given status to the subject.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

107 By the end of Years 2 and 6, standards in design and technology are above expected levels and pupils achieve well. This is due to good teaching, the expertise of the co-ordinator and provision that follows the national guidance closely. As a result, standards have risen since the last inspection.

108 No lessons were seen in Years 1 and 2, but other evidence shows that pupils develop their skills well. Pupils in both year groups have used different methods of joining during their work on puppets. They have joined a range of materials using split pins, glue and stitching, for example. Their finished puppets are bold and very imaginative. Links with art and with literacy are strong. Characters from stories, for instance, have influenced the design of the puppets.

109 Teachers in Years 3 and 4, and those in Years 5 and 6, follow the same units of work. This allows for joint planning and shared expertise and this lifts the standard of work. The planning follows the processes well that require pupils to design, make and evaluate products. The work on photograph frames by pupils in Years 3 and 4 illustrates this. During the inspection, pupils in Years 5 and 6 were designing and making a moving toy using a cam. They worked together very well in pairs. When they ran into difficulties getting their mechanisms to work, they could explain why. The work challenged their thinking and led to very good problem solving, especially by the high attaining pupils. Some lower attaining pupils found it difficult to crack the problems they encountered, but most persevered and were well supported by the teacher and teaching assistant. The emphasis on evaluation led to good quality discussion. Some of the finished toys were decorated very neatly.

110 It is not possible to give an overall judgement on teaching, as too few lessons were seen, but other evidence indicates that it is effective. Work is planned well and there are sufficient resources to allow pupils to develop their ideas. Skills and techniques are taught systematically.

111 The co-ordinator has good expertise and has a positive influence on the subject. Ideas picked up on courses have been disseminated well to colleagues. Staff have engaged in useful discussions about the best way to use the time allocated to the subject. They have formed a shared view of standards by assessing pieces of pupils' work together. Currently, though, the co-ordinator does not have any additional time to check teaching and the subject is not included in the school development plan.

GEOGRAPHY

112 The standards that the pupils attain by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are in line with the national expectations and represent a satisfactory level of achievement.

113 Most of the work up to the end of Year 2 is based on the travels of Barnaby Bear. When pupils or staff go on holiday they take photographs of the bear and send postcards to record his travels. In Year 1 Barnaby has travelled to Spain and Norway. The pupils have drawn pictures of the bear and dressed him in appropriate clothes according to the climate in those countries. In a good lesson in Year 1 pupils dress in African clothes and listen to music to develop an awareness of a different culture. Pupils in Year 2 respond to a good lesson on Barnaby's travels in Thailand. By studying a world map they understand the distance from Britain to Thailand. They study a model of a Tuk-Tuk and compare the difference with taxis in

Doncaster. Unfortunately on this holiday a monkey kidnapped Barnaby and he is now a resident of Thailand!

114 By Year 6 pupils have produced their own travel brochures on Aviemore and Doncaster to advertise the range of amenities for visitors, for example accommodation and things to see. In Year 5 the pupils have compared the rainfall in different regions of the United Kingdom, interpreted contour lines and produced a fact file on volcanoes. In Years 3 and 4 pupils have contrasted the features of Kenya with Britain. The good displays in the Year 3 and 4 classrooms are enhanced by the effective use of artefacts, for example a range of musical instruments and fabric designs from Kenya.

115 In the three lessons observed and by looking at the range of the pupils' work, the judgement on the standard of teaching is that it is good overall. The teachers make good use of artefacts to illustrate the features of the cultural differences in countries. In the lesson in Year 2 pupils use the computer to record their findings that they have found from sources of information and in Year 1 they use the digital camera to view artefacts. Pupils are encouraged to use secondary sources of information to extend their knowledge of geographical facts, for example in Year 2 to research information about Thailand. The pupils' studies are reinforced by visits, for example a residential stay for Year 6 pupils in Northumberland and a town trail around Doncaster town centre. The co-ordinator of the subject would like to increase the number of these visits.

116 The pupils' progress in their learning is checked through the use of a nationally recognised scheme of work and is recorded on the computer. The co-ordinator intends to extend these procedures by producing a file to record examples of pupils' work.

117 There is good co-ordination of the subject by an enthusiastic teacher. Since the last inspection there has been a good improvement in the range and the quality of resources.

HISTORY

118 By the end of Year 2 pupils' standards of attainment are average; by the end of Year 6 they are above average. In both the infants and the juniors pupils produce a good range and volume of writing in history and, although some pieces are copied, others show a deep engagement with the subject. For example, Years 3 and 4 pupils produced a good range of writing on the buildings of the Roman settlers in Britain, covering villas, watch-towers, bath houses and shrines. In Years 5 and 6 pupils produced a wealth of writing, much of good quality and well presented, on the Second World War, covering the London Blitz as well as personalities like Churchill, Hitler and Stalin, and features such as the Home Guard, Fire Fighters, Air Raid Wardens and the Women's Land Army. There was also some deeply-felt empathetic writing, such as letters from wartime evacuees, which showed insight into the plight of youngsters evacuated during the war.

119 Pupils have positive attitudes to the subject and, when asked, said how much they enjoyed it. They learned to place events on a time-line, developed an understanding of cause and effect and were beginning to understand some of the reasons leading people to act as they did. Young pupils learned the difference between things in the past and things today by studying toys of the Victorian era and comparing them with toys of today. Younger juniors were able to give reasons for the Roman invasion of Britain. Older juniors learned to work with primary sources.

120 No teaching of history was seen in the infants but scrutiny of the pupils' work indicates that teaching is not less than satisfactory. Two lessons were observed in the juniors and these, together with a scrutiny of the pupils' work including the many pieces of historical

writing displayed around the school, indicated that teaching was not less than satisfactory and often good. Teachers gave clear instructions, had good subject knowledge and communicated their enthusiasm to the pupils. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 enjoyed delving into newspapers from the time of the Second World War and learning at first hand about the major personalities and, for example, about the impact of the Blitz. They learned to place events in chronological order and developed an insight into the conditions endured by ordinary people.

121 The subject is supported by a sound range of books and artefacts. Pupils visit museums and many places of historical interest. Learning is occasionally enlivened by visitors to the school such as the 'Rotten Romans' visitor who talked about Roman civil engineering. The subject co-ordinator is knowledgeable and enthusiastic, monitors teachers' planning and has a sound overview of the standards being attained throughout the school. The teaching of the subject is enhanced by the many attractive displays of artefacts, posters, photographs and pupils' writing around the school.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

122 The school has made very significant progress in ICT since the last inspection. There has been a high level of investment in both equipment and staff training. The quality of teaching has improved and the leadership of the subject is strong and effective. Planning has improved. Class teachers teach specific lessons to develop the skills laid down by the national programme of work linked to the school's topics. As a result, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, are developing their skills in a logical and systematic order. A positive feature is the way pupils can apply their skills across all subjects. At the time of the last inspection, standards in ICT were in line with expectations at the age of seven and below expectations at the age of eleven. The current inspection evidence paints a much better picture although standards are the same. There has clearly been very good progress in developing the subject. This is because pupils of all ages benefit from the opportunities to use good quality computers and do so more regularly. The computer suite has only been operational for a couple of years and pupils in the upper juniors have not had the time to fully develop their skills. However, in all other year groups, pupils are now confident computer users and are doing well.

123 In the infant classes, pupils have good keyboard and mouse skills and are confident in using the computer for word processing. They learn the basic skills of how to use the space bar, make capital letters and change the size of the font as they write work about autumn. They also insert *clipart* pictures to enhance their work. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 move pictures around the screen to sequence the story of a frog's life-cycle and how a bean grows. Pupils in the same year groups use a painting package to draw pictures and create symmetrical and repeating patterns. This was seen to good effect as pupils in Year 2 created pictures in the style of Mondrian. In Year 1, pupils use the computer to create a pictogram showing the weather over a period of time. An area to develop is ensuring pupils are aware of the many uses of computers in the home and environment and the benefits that computers have in presenting work, for example being quicker and more accurate.

124 Junior pupils are confident users of word processing packages and use these to present their work in different styles, sizes, colours and layouts. In their history work about the Second World War, Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have produced various accounts and reports, combining text with *clipart*, images and graphics downloaded from the Internet and CD-ROMs. Pupils in Year 6 have also had the experience of putting together multi-media presentations in their geography work on mountains. Pupils in Year 5 use equipment which enables them to identify changes in temperature and this area is developing well. This shows

that they are aware that a computer can find information a lot quicker and more efficiently than a person can do manually. Pupils know how to set up and use simple spreadsheets, but there is little evidence of their knowledge of how to use spreadsheets to model and investigate different situations. In Years 3 and 4, pupils were fascinated to view a range of materials including sand, sugar and hessian through the microscope which was attached to the computer. Pupils throughout the junior classes make regular use of the Internet, especially the websites that may help them in their research, and most pupils have had the opportunity to use e-mail. One child made contact with a school in New York following the terrorist attack and from this an e-mail link with the school was established.

125 The standard of teaching is judged to be good throughout the school. The good teaching is characterised by the teachers' secure subject knowledge and the way that they demonstrate clearly what pupils need to know through the effective use of the interactive whiteboard. As a result, pupils clearly see what they are expected to do and make good progress in the tasks set. Pupils demonstrate full involvement and a commitment to achieving success. This was seen to very good effect in a Years 3 and 4 lesson where pupils were asked to create an African-style 'repeating' pattern. Pupils built well on their previous understanding of the need to use symmetrical shapes and 'earthy' colours.

126 The pupils' attitudes to their work are good and they work with enthusiasm. They are keen and thoroughly enjoy using the range of information technologies. Teachers have established effective routines of working which make best use of the equipment in the classrooms and the computer suite. This means that they use time and resources well. Pupils are self-disciplined when working with minimal supervision. Volunteer and support staff provided useful guidance during the inspection.

127 The work in ICT is clearly supporting work in all subjects, including art, literacy, geography, history and science. The ICT curriculum is well managed and meets National Curriculum requirements. Pupils get a wide range of experiences and all elements of the subject are taught or planned to be taught. The school recognises that the next stage is to build upon the newly introduced assessment procedures so that teachers can be sure how well pupils are achieving and what needs to be done next. The subject co-ordinator has not 'formally' monitored the teaching but she is aware of the work that pupils produce and she does collect teachers' planning. She leads the subject well and has prepared an effective development plan for ICT to show a long-term strategic direction for the continued improvement and development in the subject. ICT is now securely based in the school and teachers have grown in confidence as a result of their training.

MUSIC

128 The standards achieved in music by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are above national expectations. This is particularly the case in the juniors where the pupils receive a wide range of additional opportunities to extend their musical ability. There has been satisfactory progress in the subject since the last inspection. A positive development is the way that the specialist co-ordinator is helping to develop the rest of the teachers to feel confident in the delivery of music.

129 By the end of Year 2 pupils learn to appreciate the rhythm and pitch of tunes. They are able to sing with control and expression. In a Year 2 lesson the majority of the pupils can beat out the rhythm of a new song called 'Handa's Surprise'. Pupils provide a percussion accompaniment and manage to keep a steady beat to the 'sweet' singing of the girls. All the pupils in Year 2 learn to play the ocarina.

130 In the juniors the pupils are offered a rich 'diet' of musical experiences. In Year 3 the pupils are introduced to new notes as they play the recorder. They are able to play the tune 'Elephants' with unison and good rhythm. As part of their geography studies in Year 3 and 4 the pupils are learning about the structure and sounds of musical instruments from Kenya. Pupils in Year 6 develop a good understanding of the structure of verses and the chorus. They appreciate that the chorus often comprises 'catchy' lyrics and a repetitive melody. Pupils listen intently to 'My Love' by Westlife and are able to provide a range of interpretations of the lyrics. This activity creates a good opportunity for the pupils to discuss their ideas with a partner and to arrive at some interesting conclusions.

131 The strength of the music curriculum lies in the range of extra activities that are organised for the junior pupils by the very competent subject co-ordinator and visiting music specialists. Pupils are given the opportunity to receive additional tuition in a range of instruments, for example the cello and recorders, and can develop their singing by joining the school choir. Pupils display a good level of skills in these sessions, for example combining melodious singing with well co-ordinated actions. The choir performs for elderly groups in the local community

132 The teaching is very good overall. This is because of the very good specialist knowledge of the co-ordinator who oversees the planning of the wide range of learning experiences and has high expectations of the pupils' musical development. Because of this, pupils are motivated to produce high quality performances and show high degrees of enthusiasm as they participate in the activities.

133 At the end of each topic there are arrangements to check how well the pupils are learning and these are recorded on computer. There is a very good range of resources and these are to be increased with the purchase of keyboards to be linked with the computer suite. The co-ordinator has identified the need to extend the opportunities for the development of singing in the infants and further training for the teachers to improve their levels of confidence in delivering appropriate activities.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

134 The standards in physical education are above the national average throughout the school and the pupils show good progress in their skills. This is because of the very good planning of a wide range of activities and the very good teaching. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support that allows them to be fully involved in all the activities. In a Year 4 lesson a pupil with autism shows good progress in the development of hockey stick control because of the good support from a classroom assistant.

135 By the end of Year 2 pupils are able to create movements in response to music and poetry; for example, in Years 1 and 2 they convey the idea of automation in a dance topic entitled 'The Dream Machine'. In a very good Year 1 gymnastics lesson the pupils produce high quality movements and balances. They display imagination and ingenuity to develop rocking movements using different parts of the body. They are able to move very quietly around the hall making good use of the space.

136 By the end of Year 6, pupils have experienced very good ranges of activities, for example golf, dance, hockey, orienteering and tag rugby. Both boys and girls have the opportunity to represent the school in football matches against other local schools. In a very good Year 3 dance lesson, groups of pupils produce high quality movements and balances. They are responsive to the music and the words that the teacher uses as a stimulus. For example, they create strong shapes to represent the movements of animals. In very good

lessons in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 pupils are able to transfer the skills of ball control in hockey, netball, football and rugby to a game situation. They are aware of the need to move into space to receive a pass and show very good accuracy in passing and shooting. Pupils are developing a good tactical awareness of defence and attack because of the good teaching of these specific skills. Pupils in Year 5 have swimming lessons and by the end of Year 6, 90 per cent of the pupils can swim 25 metres.

137 The teaching overall is very good. All the teachers seen during the inspection have high expectations of the pupils' performances. For example, in the Year 1 gymnastics lesson the teacher demonstrates the quality of rocking movement that is expected. This has the immediate effect of raising the pupils' level of performance and the effort that they make to reproduce the movement. In a Year 6 games lesson, the teacher occasionally stops the play to reinforce the skills that the pupils need to use, for example the accuracy of their passing. In all the lessons pupils are made aware of the reasons for warming up prior to the main activity. The activities are well organised and the very good range of resources is used to good effect. In response to the very good teaching, all the pupils show good development in their skills and high levels of enthusiasm in all the activities. At the end of the Year 6 lesson the pupils 'moaned' with disappointment because the session had finished.

138 There is good co-ordination of the subject by an enthusiastic teacher. The pupils in Years 5 and 6 are offered a good variety of out-of-school activities and effective use is made of visiting coaches to extend the skills of the pupils, for example the input of a representative from a local golf club. The co-ordinator would like to extend the out-of-school activities to involve pupils from Years 3 and 4.

139 There has been a good improvement in the subject since the last inspection. The opportunities for pupils to comment on their own performance and the performance of other pupils are now an integral part of all the lessons.