

INSPECTION REPORT

**CASTLEFORD HALF ACRES JUNIOR AND INFANT
SCHOOL**

Castleford

LEA area: Wakefield

Unique reference number: 108238

Headteacher: Mrs M Pickles

Lead inspector: Mr C Smith

Dates of inspection: 28th June – 1st July 2004

Inspection number: 255734

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Primary
School category: Community
Age range of pupils: 3 –11
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 247

School address: Temple Street
Castleford
West Yorkshire
Postcode: WF10 5RE

Telephone number: 01977 723010
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Appropriate authority: The governing body
Name of chair of Mrs J Box
governors:

Date of previous April 1998
inspection:

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Half Acres is an average size primary school close to Castleford town centre in West Yorkshire. The former mining area has experienced some decline over recent years and the nature of the intake of children has changed. This has been recognised in the school's involvement with Family Literacy and Numeracy Programmes for parents of children in the Foundation Stage, Year 1 and Year 3. Since the last inspection, the number of children entitled to free school meals has doubled and now stands at 27 per cent, which is above the national average. Forty-three children have special educational needs (19 per cent), which is broadly average but the figure is rising. Their needs are mainly related to learning difficulties, although a small number have either speech, hearing, visual or physical impairment. Six of these children have statements of educational need for which they receive some additional support. The area around the school is undergoing regeneration. Two hundred and twenty five children attend the school full time; 102 boys and 123 girls. In addition, 32 boys and 12 girls attend the nursery part time. Almost all of the children are white and English speaking. Three children from Pakistani backgrounds, speak English as an additional language, although the older ones are fluent speakers in English. An even smaller number of pupils are from travelling backgrounds. Much has changed in the school over recent years, coinciding with the appointment of the headteacher and deputy headteacher. The school has been awarded 'Investors in People' status, for the way in which all staff are involved and work together. During the inspection, temporary staff absences in the nursery/reception unit and in one of the Year 6 classes were covered by supply teachers. Children enter school with a wide range of levels of attainment but for the majority it is lower than expected for their age.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
2521 1	Mr Colin Smith	Lead inspector	Mathematics
			Science
			Music
			Physical education
			English as an additional language
1253 6	Mrs Sylvia Bullerwell	Lay inspector	
2388 7	Mr Peter Nettleship	Team inspector	English
			Religious education
			Foundation Stage
2767 9	Mrs Sue Twaits	Team inspector	Information and communication technology
			Art and design
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			Geography
			History
			Special educational needs

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Half Acres Primary is an effective school that gives good value for money. Good leadership and management ensure that pupils achieve well. From a below average starting point when they enter school, pupils reach standards that are higher than similar schools in English, mathematics and science before moving on to secondary school. Teaching and learning are good overall. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and their behaviour is very good.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils achieve well in English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology (ICT) and music.
- Standards are rising because targets for improvement are clearly identified and tackled.
- Pupils like school, they work hard and their behaviour is very good.
- Teaching is good in Years 3, 5 and 6 but there are weaknesses in Year 4.
- Teachers' marking does not provide enough guidance to help pupils to improve their work.
- The more able pupils are not sufficiently challenged in geography and religious education.

Good improvements have been made since the last inspection. The difficulties of the past have been overcome and the headteacher has created a successful school. Many aspects of the school's provision have improved. Leadership and management are stronger, teaching and learning are more effective, pupils are achieving more and standards are higher. There has been a positive response to the previous inspection issues. Pupils' learning is more rigorously assessed, the rate of attendance has increased and planning for future developments is stronger.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	B	E	A	A*
mathematics	A	C	C	A
science	D	D	B	A

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average
Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.*

Pupils' achievement is good. Children's achievement in the nursery and reception classes is satisfactory. Children make a good start in their personal, creative and physical development to reach the goals expected by the end of the reception year. In their language, mathematical development and their understanding of the world they achieve steadily, although a quarter of the children do not reach the goals expected in these areas of learning. Infant pupils make satisfactory progress in reading, writing and science, although standards are below the levels expected by the end of Year 2. They achieve well in mathematics and standards are at the levels expected. The chart above shows that standards achieved by Year 6 pupils have been rising over recent years. In 2003, standards in English were in the top five per cent nationally when compared to similar schools. Standards in Year 6 currently are not as high. This is a different group of pupils who are still achieving well in English to reach the levels expected. Pupils in Years 3, 5 and 6 are achieving well in mathematics and very well in

science. Standards in these subjects are currently above the levels expected. Infant pupils achieve well in religious education and infant and junior pupils achieve well in ICT to reach the standards expected. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets set for them. The very small numbers of pupils with English as an additional language are achieving well.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness, develop very successfully. Attendance has improved and is satisfactory. Most pupils enjoy school, have good attitudes to learning and behave very well.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is good and teaching is effective overall. Teaching in the nursery and reception classes is satisfactory. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and mainly good in Years 3, 5 and 6. In these classes the atmosphere for learning is relaxed yet purposeful and teachers ensure that pupils know what they are expected to learn. In Years 3, 5 and 6 the level of challenge in the work provided is particularly high. Pupils respond well and give of their best. However, there are weaknesses in teaching in Year 4, particularly in securing pupils' interests and setting work at the right level, which slows their learning down. In a small number of classes, pupils' work is not marked as helpfully as it could be and their completed worksheets are left undated and disorganised in folders. This makes it harder for them to reflect on how well they are learning.

The school provides a good curriculum. The good range of activities outside normal lessons enriches pupils' learning by bringing added enjoyment. Pupils are very well cared for and their personal development benefits from the good links with parents and community. They are encouraged to offer their views and have a voice in how the school operates.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management of the school are good. Governance is satisfactory. Governors are supportive of the school and proud of its achievements. They ensure that all statutory requirements are met. The headteacher inspires and motivates the staff leading to effective teamwork. Priorities for improvements are precise and focus clearly on raising standards. This is why the school is so effective in its work. However, there are still some inconsistencies in challenging the more able pupils and in marking and organising pupils' completed work, which require broader application of monitoring and evaluation in order to remedy them.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are very happy with the education provided for their children and appreciate the many extras that the school provides. Pupils enjoy school and develop a strong sense of belonging. Their involvement is increasing through projects such as the school council and 'Investors in Pupils'.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important things the school should do to improve are:

- Raise the quality of teaching and learning in Year 4.

- Improve pupils' achievement by ensuring that the more able pupils are always given sufficiently challenging work and the inconsistencies in marking and the organisation of pupils' work are removed.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Children enter school with attainment below the levels expected for their age. They achieve well overall to reach standards that are broadly in line with the levels expected in most subjects and above the levels expected in mathematics and science by the time they are ready to leave primary school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are rising faster than the national trends.
- Pupils achieve well in English, mathematics, science and ICT, in most classes and there is good achievement in religious education in Years 1 and 2.
- There is some underachievement in Year 4.
- Foundation Stage children achieve well in physical, creative and personal development.
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress.

Commentary

1 Standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science have risen well over recent years and are significantly higher than those in similar schools. This has been achieved through a whole school effort, concentrating on the weaknesses identified through assessing pupils' learning and devising strategies to remedy them. This has led to significant improvements in writing, particularly in the way pupils understand how to plan stories and create suspense. Pupils' achievement in mathematics has increased because they have a better grasp of how to untangle and solve problems. Similarly in science, pupils are frequently engaged in investigating ideas and devising their own fair tests. This has improved their reasoning skills and their knowledge of living things, material and forces. The vast majority of teachers have understood the reasons for the changes of approach and the former weaknesses have become strengths.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	15.8 (15.4)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	14.7 (14.0)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	16.3 (15.7)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 30 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2 Overall, pupils are now achieving well in English, mathematics, science and ICT. Infant pupils achieve well in mathematics to reach the levels expected by the end of Year 2. Pupils in Year 1 and 2 also achieve well in religious education and their work approximates the levels expected for their age in Wakefield schools. Achievement in science, reading and writing in the infant classes is satisfactory. Standards in these subjects are below average but satisfactory given pupils' low starting points. A greater focus on teaching phonics is strengthening reading, although more work needs to be done on reading with understanding to enable some of the more able pupils to fulfil their potential.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
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English	29.1 (25.0)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	26.6 (26.6)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	29.9 (27.6)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 30 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

3 Pupils' achievement accelerates in Years 3, 5 and 6. Current standards in English in Year 6 are average. This is not as high as the 2003 results indicated, but nevertheless pupils have made good progress over time. Standards in writing have caught up to those in reading. Pupils enjoy writing and can explain clearly how to plan and develop their ideas. This reflects the effective training provided for teachers on how to teach the skills of writing. In most junior classes, pupils achieve well in mathematics because they have been taught effectively how to use different methods to calculate answers and solve mathematical problems. Standards in Year 6 are now above average and higher than the results of 2003. Pupils in Years 3, 5 and 6 achieve very well in science. Their understanding of how to plan and carry out scientific tests is impressive. There is good achievement in ICT and standards are at the levels expected. The systemic teaching of ICT skills has compensated well for pupils' limited home experience of using computers.

4 Pupils' achievement slows in Year 4. Although they achieve just about adequately in English, mathematics, science and ICT, they underachieve in some other subjects, such as religious education and history. This is because instructions are not always made clear and the tasks they are given to complete are sometimes too easy or too difficult. When this happens, some pupils lose interest in the lesson. In a minority of classes, pupils could achieve even more if their completed worksheets were marked, dated and sequenced helpfully, as they are in Years 3 and 5, thereby enabling them to reflect on the progress they are making.

5 Children in the Foundation Stage are making satisfactory progress overall. There is evidence that their achievement is better than this when permanent staff are present. Many children entering the nursery have limited social skills and very restricted use of language. The provision of worthwhile and stimulating learning experiences encourages them to talk and mix together. Children respond positively and make good progress in their physical, creative and personal development and reach the goals expected for their age in these areas of learning. Their progress in mathematical and language development and their knowledge and understanding of the world is satisfactory, although in these areas of learning, a significant minority of children fall short of reaching the goals expected for their age.

6 Pupils with special educational needs respond well to the good support they receive and make good progress towards the targets set for them. More able pupils attain higher than average levels in the core subjects and achieve well. However, in subjects such as geography and religious education the more able and gifted ones are not sufficiently challenged, largely because their needs have not been fully considered at the planning stage. Pupils with the specific abilities in music and sport, participate in the good range of activities outside normal lessons where their talents are nurtured. A very small number of pupils have English as an additional language. They rapidly learn fluency in spoken English and are generally achieving at least as well as their peers. This is also true of the very small number of pupils from travelling backgrounds. With similar levels of attention, support and encouragement, boys and girls are now performing equally well.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes are good and behaviour is very good. Pupils' spiritual, moral and social and cultural development is very good, overall. Attendance is improving and is now broadly satisfactory. Most pupils arrive punctually.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Relationships and behaviour are very good in most classes.
- Pupils show a great interest in school life and are involved in all it has to offer.
- Specially arranged theme weeks enrich pupils' personal development.
- Procedures for promoting attendance have improved, although unauthorised absence is high.

Commentary

7 Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development have all improved since the last inspection. Their spiritual development is nurtured well. Many opportunities are taken to involve them in events and performances to raise their self-esteem. Their motivation to learn is fostered through opportunities to explore and investigate their world. Pupils clearly enjoy what the school provides for them; clubs are well attended and many pupils take the opportunity to learn a musical instrument. Pupils are involved in devising rules and in taking responsibility for others, which supports their social and moral development very well. This shows in the way that pupils work happily together and show tolerance and respect for others. Pupils are polite, friendly and move around the school sensibly. They understand the difference between right and wrong and in most instances respond well to teacher's high expectations of behaviour. There have been no exclusions in the last year. The school council invites pupils to share in making decisions and work for the common good of everyone. For example, they are very proud to have organised the selection of picnic tables and basketball hoops in the playground. 'Half Acres Helpers' enjoy supporting younger pupils at break times. The school functions as one happy family. However, in one class the lack of challenge in some of the work provided and insecurity in managing pupils' behaviour leads to some pupils not listening attentively or taking part in activities as well as they should.

8 Pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. Through studies in religious education, group discussions and theme weeks, they develop an understanding and respect for other cultures. The school's policy for racial equality is evident in relationships and in what pupils say. The theme weeks, involving topics such as science, the arts and particular countries, develop pupils' awareness of their own and other cultures effectively. They also forge strong relationships with the community. On these occasions, pupils work harmoniously with visitors, parents and the local community, in and out of school. They share what they learn with other classes at the end of each week. For example, during Chinese week, pupils learnt the origin of the dragon dance, watched a performance, looked at differences in dress and culture and then made displays about what they had learnt.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (94.0 %)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.1	School data	0.9
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

The table gives the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – any other White background
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani

No of pupils on roll
187
2
2

9 The attendance rate has improved and is now satisfactory. Absences are continuing to reduce in response the effective procedures for tracking and improving attendance. The headteacher discourages parents from taking children on holiday during term time, particularly when it is likely to have an adverse affect on their progress.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided is good. Pupils benefit from good teaching, a well-planned curriculum and good levels of personal support. Effective links with parents enable pupils to make the best of the many worthwhile opportunities provided.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are good overall. The assessment of pupils' learning is satisfactory and there are a number of good elements.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is strong in Years 3, 5 and 6 and there are good elements elsewhere.
- The weaknesses in teaching in Year 4 adversely affect pupils' learning.
- Good support for temporary staff ensures that children's learning is maintained in the Foundation Stage.
- There are good procedures for assessing pupils' learning but the marking and organisation of their finished work could be better.
- Good support is provided for pupils with special educational needs.
- There are weaknesses in planning work for the more able pupils in geography and religious education.

Commentary

10 The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection. Strong teaching in Years 3, 5 and 6 makes a significant contribution to pupils' good achievement. In these classes, the level of challenge is high and pupils' different learning needs are well catered for. Relationships between teachers and pupils are very positive, as they are in almost all classes. This ensures that pupils are well-motivated and eager to give of their best. Pupils are informed of what they are expected to learn and encouraged to reflect on their success. This encourages them to take responsibility for their own learning. Teachers explain clearly and make good use of demonstration and illustration, using large screen projections, to help pupils to understand difficult ideas. The pace of lessons is good, although there are isolated occasions when the teacher talks for too long and pupils' interest wanes.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 48 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	6 (13%)	23 (48%)	17 (35%)	2 (4%)	0	0

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages where 30 or more lessons are seen.

11 The effectiveness of teaching in Year 4 is dampened because relationships are not as strong as they should be between teachers and pupils. Pupils do not always listen when the teacher is explaining tasks. Consequently, their understanding of what they are expected to learn and their application in completing their work are sometimes lacking. The teaching of English, mathematics, science and ICT is satisfactory. The support provided by the headteacher and school advisers has helped to ensure that lessons in literacy and numeracy are clearly structured and the work provided is suitably match to pupils' learning needs. This has enabled lessons to flow and has helped in managing pupils' responses. However, in religious education and aspects of other subjects, such as history, teaching is unsatisfactory. Lessons are sometimes unimaginative. The work provided is not well matched to pupils' levels of understanding, which limits their achievement.

12 The good support provided for temporary and newly qualified teachers enables pupils' learning to be maintained. This is particularly true in the Foundation Stage where the thorough planning and the good organisation of activities and the well-established assessment procedures make it easier for teachers new to the school to operate. The leadership and management of the combined nursery-reception unit enable staff to work together as a team. This ensures that teachers new to the unit are observed and supported well.

13 Pupils' learning is rigorously assessed, particularly in English, mathematics and science. The assessments are carefully analysed to reveal where an individual pupil might be faltering. Once detected, any slippage is acted upon swiftly, targets are set and additional support is provided. Improvements are then tightly monitored and shared with parents. Day-to-day assessment is more variable. In more than half of the classes, the tasks provided to cater for pupils' different learning needs are made explicit in the planning. Even when different tasks are not specified, teachers usually cater for their different needs in the lesson, particularly in English and mathematics. However, this is not always the case in other subjects, such as history and geography, where the same tasks are sometimes given to all pupils, irrespective of their different stages of understanding. When this happens, the learning of the more able ones suffers most because their learning is not sufficiently extended. The marking of pupils' work is variable. There are examples of meticulous marking which recognises pupils' successes and points the way forward to enable them to improve further. However, there are also examples where their work is only cursorily marked and their completed worksheets are left disorganised in folders. This does not provide information for pupils about how they could improve their work further.

14 Classroom assistants and class teachers play a valuable role in supporting pupils with special educational needs. Classroom assistants usually hold quiet conversations with these pupils to ensure that they can participate when the teacher is addressing the whole class. When the group work begins teachers and classroom assistants provide good levels of support for them. They are encouraged to think for themselves and work independently but staff are close by and ready to ensure that any barriers to learning are successfully removed.

The curriculum

The curriculum provided is good overall. The school provides many good additional activities. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good provision is made for pupils with special educational needs.
- Developments in writing, problem solving in mathematics and investigative skills in science. have significantly strengthened the curriculum in English, mathematics and science.
- Successful changes to the Foundation Stage curriculum are promoting children's development more effectively.
- There are some minor weaknesses in the ICT curriculum.
- The good range of activities outside normal lessons and the well constructed Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education (PSCHE) programme, enrich the curriculum and enhance pupils' personal development

Commentary

15 Staff support pupils with special educational needs well. Individual education plans are well constructed. They provide good guidance for staff and focus clearly on the targets pupils need to aim for to improve. There is a strong commitment towards including all pupils evident in the 'Inclusion Now' and 'Investors in Pupils' projects, which are being pursued earnestly. Consequently, increasing attention is given to pupils' different needs and how they can be met. There is now a greater focus on evaluating the provision for the more able pupils. Their needs are identified in a range of subjects and a register is kept informing staff of their specific needs. Good links have been established with the secondary school to provided

support for gifted and talented pupils in their sporting and musical talents. However, there is more to do in this area. The needs of the more able and gifted pupils are still not consistently identified when all lessons are planned. Consequently, in some lessons, the level of challenge is insufficient to ensure that they fulfil their potential.

16 In recent years the school has made extensive changes to the mathematics and science curriculum to encourage pupils to explore, investigate and find out things for themselves. Consequently, their problem solving and enquiry skills are developing well. Similarly, pupils' skills in writing have received a boost. Pupils now enjoy writing and standards in English are rising, as they are in mathematics and science. The new Foundation Stage unit has been effectively planned to compensate for children's limited experiences and understanding of the wider world. The activities provided stimulate their curiosity and enrich their use of language to good effect. The school is working to overcome the weaknesses in using ICT to support pupils' learning in other subjects. The lap-top computers and the large interactive boards are helping but classroom computers are still not used enough in everyday lessons.

17 The school provides a good range of additional activities, during the day and after school, which significantly extend pupils' learning and interests and increases their personal development. Blocked teaching of subjects such as history and geography allows pupils to study topics in depth. The school arranges event weeks, where pupils' attention is focussed on projects such as music, dance or literature. Many of these broaden pupils' understanding of other cultures, such as those of Africa, India and China. The planning for personal, social, and health education includes provision for sex and relationships education, alcohol and drug misuse as well as citizenship.

Care, guidance and support

There are very good procedures to ensure pupils' health, safety and well being. Pupils' learning and personal development are carefully assessed and good levels of support and guidance are offered. The school is effective in seeking and acting upon pupils' views.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff take very good care of pupils.
- The reward system is successful in promoting positive values.
- The school council enables pupils to play a part in decision making.

Commentary

18 There are well-understood procedures for child protection and for dealing with accidents and emergencies. Risk assessments and health and safety records are very thorough. Support for pupils' personal and emotional well-being is very well catered for through the use of 'feelings boards' in classrooms. Children in the nursery and reception class put their name on the appropriate board each day to say if they are happy, upset, worried or scared. This helps staff to sort out any concerns quickly by talking with children, ironing out any problems and noting the things that make them happy.

19 Teachers and support staff offer pupils good support and guidance. Pupils (and parents) are informed of the termly targets set to help them to improve and their personal perceptions are valued and shared in discussion sessions. Even though pupils' work is not always marked helpfully, teachers discuss their progress regularly. The school values pupils' views and opinions and genuinely tries to act on their suggestions. Most pupils respond

positively to the reward system. The collection of merits and stars, which are redeemable for a gift from the reward trolley, appeals to pupils and, as a result, their behaviour is usually very good.

20 The school council meets with staff every two weeks to discuss issues and canvas pupils' views. Pupils can raise points anonymously by leaving a note in the issue box in each class. At present they are discussing the introduction of 'golden time' when pupils will be rewarded with a choice of activity rather than a gift. They have also discussed changes to the school uniform.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has good links with parents and the community and very good links with other schools.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good links with other schools promotes friendship, co-operation and good standards.
- Parents value the education their children receive but would like a better explanation about how they can support their children with homework.
- Most parents give good support to the school.

Commentary

21 The school is twinned with a beacon school. This involves two-way visits to observe teaching in English, mathematics and science and working with a leading science teacher and an arts specialist to improve staff expertise. Some of the school's successes, particularly in raising standards in writing, mathematics and science can be traced to this strong partnership. Year 2 and 6 pupils are also working with other local schools to prepare a musical performance for the heritage festival. This paves the way towards making new friends in secondary school and enhances community spirit.

22 Parents are very happy with the provision made for their children. Parents are encouraged to bring their nursery, reception and infant children into class each day. This makes for strong relationships between teachers, parents and children and enables parents to find out how well their children are learning. Parents like the routine of pupils explaining and sharing their work with them, following the termly progress reports. Target sheets and class curriculum letters, each term, keep parents well informed about what their children are doing and how they are achieving. However, some parents are justified in feeling that they could provide even better support with homework if they knew more about the methods used in school. A good number of parents help in school and on educational visits. For example, six parents worked with Year 5 pupils, while they conducted local fieldwork. Parents offer good support for the school through fund raising and attending class assemblies, concerts and school events.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher has significantly improved the school, she is a good leader and is supported well by effective key members of staff. Governance is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteachers' strong and decisive leadership has turned the school around.
- The whole school approach to raising standards has been successful.
- Governors' understanding of how the school operates is increasing but holding the school to account is not as evident as it could be.
- Financial management and the day to day administration of the school are good.

Commentary

23 The leadership of the headteacher is good. She has been pivotal to the many improvements made in the school since her appointment. Before her arrival standards had fallen to well below average levels. The headteacher's clear vision, energy and teambuilding have boosted standards, which have risen more quickly than they have nationally. This has also been achieved at a time when social conditions in the area have been declining. The very strong team ethos created has been acknowledged by the 'Investors in People' award. The focus for improvement has been in the core subjects of English, mathematics, science and ICT. Using all the information available and seeking outside guidance, the weaknesses in writing, problem solving, experimental science and the development of ICT skills have been rigorously targeted. Effective staff training has been provided and improvements have been tightly monitored in these areas. Consequently, the school has been very successful in raising standards in all four subjects.

24 The leadership of other key staff is good. The deputy headteacher has had a strong impact on the school, developing the Foundation Unit and guiding staff in raising standards in English. Overall, subject leadership is good, particularly in the Foundation Stage, English, mathematics, science, music and the coordination of special educational needs. Leaders have been increasingly empowered. They have been helped in fulfilling their roles by support from advisory staff and the links with a Beacon school. However, there is still more to do in checking the work of the school in its wider context, to iron out, for example, the inconsistencies in the marking of work and lesson planning for the more able. Weaknesses in Year 4 have already been identified and acted upon leading to the quality of teaching improving in English, mathematics and science.

25 The governance of the school is satisfactory and all statutory requirements are met. Under the headteacher's guidance, governors are playing an increasing role in the daily life of the school. Some governors make regular visits, they work alongside teachers and all have links with year groups. This enables them to know more about how the school operates and subsequently improves their decision making. Governors are enthusiastic and proud of what their school is now achieving. They are now better aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and are beginning to report back to the full governing body about their areas of responsibility. However, they are not questioning or probing school policies and practice as much as they should.

26 Financial management of the school is good. Sound procedures have now been established. Prudent management of finances has helped to move the school from a deficit budget to one that is now in balance. This has required tough decisions to be made, including the lowering of staff numbers. Alternatives are considered so that the money is targeted to ensure the best possible value is achieved within the resources available.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	548,024	Balance from previous year	8,331
Total expenditure	550,365	Balance carried forward to the next	5,990
Expenditure per pupil	2,351		

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

27 The current provision in the Foundation Stage is **satisfactory**. There are 74 pupils in the Foundation Stage. The 44 children in the nursery class are split between the morning and afternoon sessions. The 30 children in the reception class attend full time. Children come from a diverse range of backgrounds. Overall, their attainment on entering the nursery is lower than that expected for their age, particularly their language, social skills and understanding of the wider world. The nursery and reception children are taught in a combined Foundation Stage unit. In both the morning and afternoon sessions, children spend part of the time in their respective classes and part of the time working and playing together. Teachers also work flexibly between the two classes on a rota basis. There are three termly intakes of children into the nursery and reception. Currently, the quality of teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage are satisfactory.

28 The leadership of the Foundation Stage is good. A strong, whole-team ethos has been developed with a clear focus on raising standards. Assessment and record keeping are good. Staff know their children's individual needs very well. Targets for this year, to improve reading and to develop an outdoor play area, have been successfully accomplished. Children's achievement is currently satisfactory. They achieve well in their personal, creative and physical development and reach the goals expected in these areas of learning. However, many experience difficulties with language, problem-solving and acquiring a wider appreciation of the world. In these areas of learning, a significant minority of children does not achieve the early learning goals. There are no children identified as having special educational needs, though the deputy headteacher keeps a close watch for any who may require extra help or others who may be gifted and talented.

PUPILS' PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in personal, social and emotional development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The unit provides good opportunities for nursery, reception and infant pupils to work together.
- Teachers and support staff are very effective in developing the children's social skills.

Commentary

29 Strong teaching enables children to learn very successfully. In this area of learning, children achieve very well and almost all of them reach the learning goals expected for their age. Children's personal, social and emotional development has improved significantly as a result of mixing the nursery with the reception children. The younger ones are set good examples of how to behave; the older ones take responsibilities very well for their younger charges. This was captured in a telling rebuke when one of the younger children committed a minor misdemeanour, "Hey mate, we don't do things like that round 'ere!" Staff have very high expectations that children will follow the class routines and rules. The warm relationships that exist between the staff, and those they form with the children, create a very happy and secure environment in which all feel valued. Children work co-operatively, especially on the outdoor activities, some of which they helped plan and build. Reception children also have a daily session alongside pupils from the infants to develop their reading skills. Consequently, very

smooth transitions are made from nursery to reception to infants because of this seamless organisation.

COMMUNICATION LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision in communication, language and literacy is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are valuable opportunities for children to think, talk and listen.
- The teaching of basic reading skills is regularly undertaken and skilfully developed.
- Children's early-writing skills are not sufficiently extended.

Commentary

30 In this area of learning the quality of teaching is satisfactory. Children achieve steadily, although their attainment is below the level expected overall. A significant number of them are not on course to reach the goals expected by the end of the reception year. Much emphasis is rightly placed on extending the younger children's vocabulary and developing their spoken language skills. The nursery nurse and the classroom assistant support this learning very well. A wide range of purposeful activities, both indoor and out, are designed to engage the children in conversations, such as the 'power wash' to keep the vehicles spotless, "Money first, then I'll wash your car" – prudent, practical *and* street-wise.

31 The deputy headteacher is particularly skilled at developing the older children's basic skills of letter and word recognition. The lessons demand total concentration as letters and clusters of letters are identified with their correct sounds and vigorous hand gestures. This is rigorous, totally engaging and highly effective teaching. As these daily sessions are taken in six different ability groups, the work is pitched very accurately at the specific levels of the reception children. In comparison to reading, writing is not given the same timetabled focus. There are opportunities to develop letter formations on paper, in paint and in a sand-tray. Some of the older children are beginning to spell a good range of familiar words and to use strategies to work out spellings for themselves. Post-cards 'from the seaside' are produced. However, less time is devoted to teaching writing skills and, given the choice, many children opt for the more exciting activities available. Few choose to write for themselves.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well with counting and on practical activities involving shape and measures.
- Insufficient use is made of computer programs to consolidate learning in the subject.

Commentary

32 Children achieve steadily in their mathematical development. Children's attainment overall is below the levels expected since only three-quarters of them are on course to reach the learning goals. The quality of teaching is satisfactory and very experienced classroom assistants provide good support. There has rightly been an emphasis on numbers, counting and calculating to develop children's understanding of mathematics. However, even when adding two digits together, many of the older children are unable to give quick, accurate answers. Not enough emphasis is placed on mental calculation. Currently, there are few

opportunities to use computers to extend children's number and thinking skills and this inhibits their learning. Opportunities are sometimes missed to question children to determine their levels of understanding. Consequently, there are occasions when the lesson content goes beyond their understanding. Good practical tasks provide opportunities for children to experience concrete activities that reinforce their mental learning. For example, they build towers of bricks to the height of the numbers printed on their card. Children make good progress in all areas that have practical applications, such as space, shape and measures. Class work is often reinforced by activities in the sandpit, the water tray and on construction apparatus. Good questioning transforms play activities into vital learning experiences. However, children find it more difficult to use mathematical ideas and methods to solve practical problems. This is the hardest area of the subject and is the one most in need of development.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are many exciting opportunities for children to explore and investigate.
- The children have a strong awareness of their local environment.
- Problems with hardware limit children's progress in developing skills on the computer.

Commentary

33 Teaching and learning are satisfactory in this area of learning. On entry to the nursery, many children have very limited background experiences. Staff work hard to compensate for this by providing a good range of rich, first-hand experiences that engage children's interests. Many parents contribute to the children's learning. For example, a father who is a bricklayer patiently talked pairs of pupils through the basics of his trade. Using a trowel they 'built' a three-layered wall in the sandpit [using sand instead of mortar]. Another parent has constructed a pulley system in a pebble pit to fill and hoist a small bucket before loading toy trucks. Children have valuable opportunities to use tools to assemble and construct using a variety of objects. More able pupils are challenged well. Following instructions on a card, they mixed the ingredients of a cake, before baking [and later eating] it. The children show a good awareness of health and safety issues. Regular trips to places of local interest develop their good awareness of their environment. However, opportunities are missed for children to talk with adults about their work and extend their knowledge, and vocabularies. Children are beginning to use a digital camera to capture images of their activities but have limited opportunities in other areas of ICT, especially in developing their computer skills. Although children achieve steadily in developing a knowledge and understanding of the world, their attainment overall does not reach the goals expected in this area of learning.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The outdoor play area provides a good range of physical and mental challenges.
- Children develop good skills of control and co-ordination and they play safely.

Commentary

34 Children achieve well and almost all of them are on course to reach the goals expected in this area of learning. Teaching and learning are good. Foundation Unit staff have been particularly effective in planning and constructing an outside play space that stimulates the children's interest and develops skills in all areas of learning. Some ingenious and innovative activities have been introduced, which encourage children to plan tasks together, such as obstacle courses. These activities provide good opportunities, not only for their physical development but also their social, thinking and speaking and listening skills. The older children are beginning to demonstrate good agility, balance, co-ordination and awareness of space. Younger and older children develop skills of manipulation, construction and the control of objects. Indoors, the finer hand-eye skills are extended through art and craft, baking and play in the water and sand trays. Consequently, with all the good support given, learning is secure and on going. Constantly, children are helped to be aware of health and safety issues, whether they are baking, balancing or building. Much of the play equipment and apparatus is not of a high quality, however, the use to which it is put, certainly is.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's creativity is stimulated and developed successfully.
- Children understand the purpose behind the activities and work enthusiastically towards the goal.

Commentary

35 Teaching, learning and children's achievement are good in this area of learning. Although some children have had very few creative experiences before starting school, they almost all leave reception reaching the learning goals expected for their age. They benefit from the good range of model making and painting activities. They acquire independent skills in baking, cutting, gluing, drawing and painting. Their creations are often produced for a purpose, for example, to use as a toy or to give to grandad. This gives the work added relevance *and* personal value. The children learnt three songs, which they sang with confidence and skill for an assembly, attended by mums, dads and grandparents. A child, who learnt one of these songs at *another* school, had taught it to the others! Role-play activities are similarly designed for a particular reason. Elements of 'The Seaside' were created in the classroom so that the children could practice paddling, fishing, writing postcards and buying ice creams. This was in preparation for a forth-coming trip to Bridlington to experience these activities for real! These activities typify the excitement and relevance of the education provided by the Foundation Unit.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching overall enables pupils to achieve well and standards are rising.
- Pupil listening skills are better than their skills of speaking.
- The basic skills of letter recognition and blending sounds are taught well.
- The action taken to improve standards in writing has been very effective.

Commentary

36 Standards in English are rising quickly because of the school's focus on improvement. Standards are average by the end of Year 6, as they were at the time of the previous inspection. However, more children are entering school with difficulties in language. Although standards in reading and writing are below average by the end of Year 2, pupils' achievement in Year 1 and 2 is satisfactory in relation to their starting points. Pupils in Years 3, 5 and 6 achieve well and reach the standards expected by the end of their primary years. Teaching and learning are good overall. Teaching is satisfactory in Year 1 and 2 but Year 2 pupils' learning is accelerating this term as new teachers adjust quickly to the needs of the pupils. Teaching in Year 4 is satisfactory but there are weaknesses in the management of pupils and worksheets are used too often, which makes learning mechanical and tedious. Teaching and learning are good in Years 3, 5 and 6 because the key skills of reading and writing are taught effectively and pupils develop accuracy and fluency in these areas. In the best lessons, the stimulating activities provided are well matched to pupils' particular levels of understanding. However, the quality of lesson planning varies. Some of the planning is detailed thorough and precise. However, there are instances where not enough consideration is given to meeting pupils' different learning needs. When this happens, the work provided is too easy for some pupils and too difficult for others. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because of the skilled support they receive from teachers and classroom assistants. Pupils with English as an additional language achieve well because teachers ensure that they understand the technical vocabulary.

37 Pupils' listening skills are better than their skills in speaking. Many pupils have limited vocabularies. Consequently, both their understanding and their ability to communicate effectively are hampered. Most pupils are keen to participate in discussions and ask and answer questions. However, some pupils, even in Year 6, are reticent to speak or unable to provide extended answers. Teachers are beginning to focus on pupils' speaking skills and good practice is already being shared. For example, the use of 'talking partners' is being introduced, where pupils work in pairs to discuss ideas prior to their writing. Role-play is also being extended, such as in Year 1, where Baby Bear was put in the 'hot seat', for pupils to question.

38 The strong development of teaching phonic skills, introduced by the deputy headteacher, is paying dividends. Year 1 and 2 are now achieving well in recognising letter sounds and blending them to read unfamiliar words. Most Year 2 pupils read the 'big books' confidently in literacy lessons. However, they find difficulty in grasping the meaning of the text, which is why relatively few Year 2 pupils reach the higher levels in reading. Stronger teaching of comprehension skills in most of the junior classes enables pupils to achieve well in reading. They develop a good understanding of how to use books for information and many read for pleasure. Pupils are encouraged to read at home and this helps them to move forward.

39 Standards in writing have improved markedly in recent times. Handwriting, spelling and punctuation skills are taught thoroughly, which improves standards of writing and presentation. Teachers assess pupils' progress regularly through half-termly tests and booster classes for the Year 6 pupils, enables them to perform to their best. The school has introduced a writing framework, called the 'Story Mountain', that has proved highly successful. It provides a clear structure to help pupils to plan stories by prompting them to consider and include all the elements of a good story, such as suspense. Pupils are keen to write and approach the task knowledgeably. Older pupils develop skills of redrafting and edit their work to make improvements. In some classes, but not all, pupils have targets for improvement to help them be aware of what they have to do to improve. Leadership and management in the subject are good. This is exemplified by the dramatic progress made in writing. The two subject leaders are now beginning to keep a check on pupils' work throughout the school so that the inconsistencies in planning, marking and the organisation of work sheets can be identified and the best practice shared.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

40 Satisfactory links are made between English and other subjects. There are many discussions to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills. They use their reading skills well to research for information and benefit from a range of writing experiences in different subjects. However, opportunities are missed to use examples from other areas of the curriculum as a stimulus for literacy lessons. Classroom computers are not used enough in English lessons but pupils benefit from additional literacy/ICT sessions using the large interactive board.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good leadership has resulted in effective action being taken to raise standards.
- Pupils' achieve well because teaching and learning is good in most classes.
- Good support is provided for pupils who find learning difficult.
- The more able pupils are not always sufficiently challenged and the marking of pupils' work is not helpful in some classes.

Commentary

41 Leadership and management are very effective in identifying what needs to be done to drive up standards. Analysis of assessments showed that although pupils' calculation skills were secure, they had difficulty in understanding how to solve mathematical problems. The curriculum has been adapted to include more teaching and experience of investigating problems. The strategy has paid dividends. Standards are rising at a good rate.

42 Pupils achieve well in most classes. From a below average starting point when pupils enter Year 1, they reach the standards expected by the end of Year 2. Good teaching in Year 2 is apparent in the way pupils are helped to visualise mathematical ideas, for example, by making patterns on pegboards to help them to understand that 4×3 means four rows of three. Strong teaching in Years 3, 5 and 6, enables pupils to reach standards higher than those expected before moving on to secondary school. In these classes, the level of challenge and expectations are high and the work provided is well matched to pupils' different levels of understanding. Mathematical processes are carefully explained and teachers use questioning to good effect to probe their understanding. Teachers know that pupils' learning strengthens when they are able to solve problems using a range

of different methods. This diverse approach to learning is strongly reinforced when teachers ask pupils to explain how they arrived at the answer. End of lesson discussions and homework are valuable in reinforcing and extending their learning.

43 Pupils, who find learning difficult, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. The tasks provided are carefully tailored to meet their particular learning needs. In the best lessons, when the teacher is talking to the whole class, Teaching assistants place themselves near these pupils to ensure that they understand new ideas and the associated vocabulary. Most teachers identify in their planning what provision is being made to cater for pupils' different learning needs. However, some teachers ask the more able pupils to complete the examples set for the rest of the class before moving on to the more demanding work, which is unnecessary. Similarly, not all teachers show all pupils what they need to do to improve when marking their work. These weaknesses, although not widespread, hold pupils' learning back.

Mathematics across the curriculum

44 Good links are made between mathematics and other subjects. This is particularly evident in science, where pupils learn to classify data and interpret the results. Although classroom computers are insufficiently used in mathematics lessons, all classes make weekly visits to the school hall where the large interactive whiteboard is located. By projecting a large version of a sorting diagram on the screen, Year 1 pupils developed a secure understanding of the properties of shapes.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Careful analysis of pupils' learning has had a marked effect on their achievement.
- Teaching and learning are good overall, particularly of the skills of investigation.
- There are weaknesses in the way pupils' written work is marked and organised.

Commentary

45 Pupils' achievement in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory. Standards by the end of Year 2 are below the levels expected, which is acceptable given their low starting points. The additional challenge, which is now being provided for the more able Year 2 pupils is effectively moving their learning on to higher levels. Pupils' achievement significantly increases in most of the junior classes because the teaching is strong. Standards are above average by the end of Year 6 and higher than they were at the time of the last inspection. The headteacher, in particular, has had a strong influence in raising standards. Good assessment procedures have been introduced to measure the quality of pupils' learning. Rigorous analysis of the outcomes showed that many pupils experienced difficulties in interpreting the data presented in charts and graphs, which adversely affected their ability to draw the correct conclusions. This aspect of science has been significantly stepped up by teaching pupils how to gather, sort and interpret numerical information. Pupils are now confident in handling and presenting the data from their experiments. This has also improved their mathematical skills and their writing of scientific reports.

46 The benefits of effective staff training over a three-year period are now reflected in the good teaching. The commitment to teaching science through practical investigation is now evident in pupils' enjoyment of the subject and in their depth of understanding. Year 1 pupils

are beginning to predict what might happen and record their results in simple labelled drawings. In Year 2, their predictions are influenced by a growing awareness that scientific tests need to be fair, for example, in deciding how to connect wires, bulbs and batteries together to make the best electric circuit. There are examples of very good teaching in Years 3, 5 and 6. In these classes, pupils' learning is highly productive. Many investigations are undertaken, such as devising fair tests to find out which type of soil is the most porous. These activities make significant demands on the learning of all pupils, particularly the more able ones. From Year 5, pupils are able to plan and carry out their own investigations. Their understanding of scientific language and ideas develops effectively. The quality of their understanding is evident in the high proportion of pupils working at levels higher than expected for the age, particularly in Year 6

47 Although teaching is at least satisfactory in every class, there are weaknesses in the marking and organisation of pupils' work, which holds their learning back. In some classes, pupils' work is marked meticulously with clear pointers for improvement given at strategic intervals and their work is dated and tidily sequenced. However, marking is less helpful in other classes and pupils' completed worksheets are not properly sequenced and organised. This makes it harder for teachers and pupils to note progress over time and whether pupils are repeating errors in their work. These weaknesses go undetected because checking on learning is not as rigorous as it should be.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good leadership has seen an improvement in facilities and standards.
- Teaching and learning are good and the basic ICT skills are taught well.
- Not enough use is made of classroom computers in lessons.

Commentary

48 Clear and decisive leadership and management, provided by the headteacher and subject leader, ensures positive and continuing developments in ICT. There are now better facilities for pupils to use, the curriculum now covers all the required areas and teachers are more confident and competent in teaching all aspects of the ICT curriculum. Pupils greatly enjoy the subject and are now on target to reach the levels expected for their age. This represents good achievement, in relation to their starting points and the limited experience they have of using computers at home. Teachers have a clear understanding of the purpose of their lessons and ensure that pupils know exactly what they are expected to learn. They provide effective demonstrations and encourage pupils to investigate and learn for themselves. For instance, in a good Year 5 lesson, pupils sent an email with an attachment to Year 3 pupils, sharing some information from their studies about the planets. Pupils become proficient in using graphics packages, which enhances their artwork. For example, Year 2 pupils recreated a picture in the style of a famous artist by using the program tools to explore form, shape and colour.

49 The introduction of the laptop computers has had a profound effect in driving up standards in the junior classes, although infant pupils have limited opportunities to use them regularly. Teachers compensate for this by taking classes into the school hall to use the large interactive board where pupils can take turns to enter data and follow procedures and observe the outcomes on the large screen. The use of the large whiteboard is of great benefit as a teaching aid, for example, to enable pupils to sort and classify shapes or learn to send and receive e-mail.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

50 Although classroom computers are not used enough to reinforce and extend pupils' skills in subjects such as literacy and numeracy, teachers do try to link ICT with others subjects. Most classes have a weekly session on the laptops and another using the large interactive board. Consequently, pupils are aware of the power of computers in learning other subjects such as English, mathematics and art and design. The use of the Internet is becoming a feature of research work in art, history and geography, but this is still at an early stage and tends to be done in ICT lessons rather than being offered as a resource for pupils to use across the curriculum. The headteacher is well aware of this weakness and the development of ICT across the curriculum is this year's priority.

HUMANITIES

51 Only two geography and two history lessons were observed, not enough to make a judgement on the provision in these subjects. Discussions with pupils and an examination of their work indicate that in these subjects, pupils achieve steadily, as they did at the time of the last inspection.

52 In **history and geography**, visits into the locality and to more distant places of interest provide a valuable starting point for the topics to be studied. Visitors into school also play an important part in stimulating pupils' interests. For example, a visit from a pretend 'Florence Nightingale' prompted some good role-play, which extended pupils' understanding of life in Victorian times. Year 6 pupils enjoy working on the Castleford regeneration project. They suggest ways of improving their local area and appreciate the likely impact the changes are likely to have on their lives. Year 5 pupils are eager participants in local fieldwork and enjoy gathering data for their investigations. Consequently, they have well-informed views about the historical and geographical features of their own locality. Good aspects of teaching in Years 3 and 5 captures pupils' imagination and interests well. Lessons are stimulating and challenging and tailored nicely to meet pupils' different learning needs. Pupils are encouraged to write extensively about their findings. By comparison, weaknesses in the management of pupils' behaviour in history in Year 4 led to some pupils not listening or giving of their best.

53 A common weakness in history and geography is the inconsistent way in which teachers respond to pupils' completed work. In some classes, the worksheets are ticked rather than marked and are stored haphazardly. This lack of organisation of pupils' finished work makes it harder for teachers and pupils to reflect on the quality of learning and does little to encourage pupils to take a pride in their work.

Religious Education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good in Years 1, 2 and 3.
- There are weaknesses in teaching in Year 4.
- There is insufficient monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning through the school.

Commentary

54 The quality of teaching is good in the infants and, on balance, satisfactory in the juniors. Teaching is best in Years 1, 2 and 3 because the studies help pupils to learn about different faiths as well as about themselves. This gives added relevance to the work. There is an emphasis on learning from meaningful activities, such as visits to places of worship. These provide rich and rewarding experiences through which pupils' understanding of faith develops strongly. Pupils gain an awareness of sacred texts by visiting a Church and seeing the Bible on its lectern. They see a Torah at a synagogue and are made aware of its sacred role in the Jewish faith. Good resources also give an added stimulus to lessons, such as seeing the special objects used in the ceremonies of Baptism, in Class 1 and Bar Mitzvah, in Class 3.

55 Standards are at the levels expected for Wakefield schools as they were at the time of the last inspection. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well in the infant classes and satisfactorily overall in the juniors. In Years 4, 5 and 6 the main emphasis is on factual information about different faiths. Learning is not as varied or as stimulating as in earlier years. Far fewer real learning experiences are provided. There are unsatisfactory aspects of teaching in Year 4. For example, in a lesson about religious symbols, there was a long talk and discussion about 'symbolism' in different faiths. This was followed by a dictation of sentences about features on the head of Buddha. All pupils were set the same task, irrespective of their different learning needs. The pupils had little challenge or involvement and the learning was never linked to their own experiences. Interest levels were low.

56 More work is produced in pupils' books in some years than in others. The subject leader has been absent, therefore checking on pupils' learning has not yet begun in religious education. Assessments, made at the end of every unit, allow good records to be kept on all pupils to measure their progress. By the age of 11, pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of Christianity and Islam. They enjoy their studies because, as one boy said, "We find out what (other believers) do that is different to us."

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

57 No art and design lessons and only one design and technology lesson was seen, not enough to make a judgement on provision. However, three music lessons and four physical education lessons were observed. Along with discussions with pupils, there is sufficient evidence to evaluate the provision in these subjects.

58 Pupils regard **art and design** as one of their favourite subjects. There are good examples of the development of pupils' understanding of tone, line and colour. In Year 6, for example, pupils have sketched and shaded designs well to match the corresponding half of a sweet wrapper. Volunteers help hold a well attended 'Craft' club' which introduces pupils to skills such as embroidery and sewing. Art and design is often linked to work in other subjects, for example, Year 2 pupils painted pictures of the Fire of London and Year 3 pupils made models of Diya candles to celebrate Diwali. ICT graphics packages are used imaginatively to experiment with changing effects. Pupils are gradually being introduced to the work of different artists but there are few inspiring displays to celebrate their achievements.

59 In **design and technology**, the process of planning designs, making models and evaluating and improving their work is done well, particularly in Year 3 and 5. Throughout the school, pupils learn to produce labelled drawings as a starting point for their work. There are good examples of designing purses and finger puppets. Pupils are then encouraged to select from a range of materials, which would be best for their products. In some classes, pupils make good written evaluations of their work. This is particularly evident in Year 3 where the designs and evaluations of making sandwiches are thought out and expressed.

Music

Provision in music is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Specialist teaching enables pupils to achieve well in all aspects of music.
- Additional opportunities increase pupils' enjoyment and experience of music.

Commentary

60 Teaching and learning and the leadership and management of the subject are good. Consequently, standards throughout the school are higher than expected. A specialist music teacher provides most lessons. Skills are taught consistently and a clear picture emerges of how pupils are progressing. This knowledge is used well in planning lessons and setting new challenges. Pupils enjoy music, largely because of the satisfaction they experience in performing well. Singing is good because pupils are taught the correct posture, breathing and how to project their voices. By Year 6, they perform two part pieces to a good standard. Pupils also acquire good knowledge of the elements of music, such as pitch, tempo and dynamics. These terms are used as part of everyday language when pupils sing, play, listen to and appraise different pieces of music. Composing is taught particularly well. Infant pupils

create interesting musical patterns using body sounds. Junior pupils are confident and adept in composing melodies, rhythms and lyrics. This is evident in the enthusiastic singing of, "Hello, welcome to our school," composed and produced by the pupils themselves.

61 Pupils are encouraged to participate in a good range of additional musical activities. Their musical talents are nurtured well. A large number of pupils learn to play keyboard successfully in response to sensitive teaching. Others play trumpet, violin and flute and one pupil is so proficient on electric guitar, he accompanies singing in the school hall. Pupils' interests in music are stimulated constantly. Performances, concerts and musical events are frequently arranged. Different pieces of music are played and thoroughly discussed, in lessons and during school assemblies. Consequently, many pupils develop a good knowledge of composers. They are also well acquainted with different styles of music, such as Indian Bhangra and African drumming rhythms.

Physical Education

Provision in physical education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The coaching of specific skills is good.
- Pupils are not always taught how to evaluate and improve their performance further.
- The good range of extracurricular sporting activities enhances pupils' physical and personal development.

Commentary

62 Lessons are well organised, safely managed and effectively controlled. Coaching of new skills is done well. Teachers explain clearly and make good use of demonstration to illustrate particular techniques. This ensures that pupils learn to throw or strike a ball correctly from the outset. Once learned, teachers encourage them to practise and perfect these techniques and then raise the challenge by working on accuracy and direction. Pupils who find learning difficult receive good support from classroom teachers and assistants. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Given the good coaching, the element of evaluating performance, with a view to making improvements, is not sufficiently developed in all lessons. In a good Year 2 gymnastics lesson, pupils' sequences of rolls and balances significantly improved when the teacher asked them to observe and comment on each other's performance. Constructive suggestions, such as adopting a good starting and finishing position and putting more tension into the movements, led to improvements in the pupils' sequences. However, this ingredient is not evident in all lessons.

63 Pupils' interests and talents in physical education are well catered for through a good range of sporting activities, such as football, netball and basketball and good opportunities to participate in matches, events and residential outdoor pursuit courses. These activities establish the principles of teamwork and sportsmanship and make a positive contribution to pupils' personal development. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall and standards are typical throughout the school. Over recent years, most pupils have achieved the national 25 metre standard in swimming.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP (PSHCE)

64 The school has introduced an effective PSHCE programme, which includes citizenship, sex and relationships education, healthy lifestyles and alcohol and the dangers of drug misuse. Many of

these aspects are taught as discrete topics, or through subjects such as science, when appropriate. Teachers ensure that pupils engage in short exercises and take deep breaths, known as 'brain gym,' to help them to think and concentrate. Many additional sporting activities are provided to improve pupils' fitness, skills and understanding of teamwork.

65 Pupils have good opportunities to share and refine their ideas about subjects such as the importance of having rules. In class discussion, pupils learn to listen to and respect the opinions of each other. In one lesson, for example, the teacher helped pupils to understand how new pupils might feel when they joined the class. They were encouraged to think and talk about how to help them settle in. In another class, pupils discussed the care needed with regard to encountering strangers, before making a geography visit into the locality. Teachers are increasingly encouraging pupils to become stakeholders in their own school and work together to make improvements. The school council is very effective in gathering their views and agreeing on projects. Through this, pupils' are gaining good insights into how democratic decisions are made.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	4
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

Inspectors make judgements on a scale: excellent (grade 1); very good (2); good (3); satisfactory (4); unsatisfactory (5); poor (6); very poor (7).