

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **DEARNE CARRFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Bolton-on-Dearne, Rotherham

LEA area: Barnsley

Unique reference number: 106597

Headteacher: Mr S Poxton

Lead inspector: Mrs J Morley

Dates of inspection: 19<sup>th</sup> - 21<sup>st</sup> April 2004

Inspection number: 255959

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

© Crown copyright 2004

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	243
School address:	Highgate Lane Bolton-on-Dearne Rotherham South Yorkshire
Postcode:	S63 8AL
Telephone number:	01709 893121
Fax number:	01709 888167
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs A Cross
Date of previous inspection:	16 <sup>th</sup> March 1998

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- The school caters for pupils aged from four to eleven.
- There are 243 on roll: 111 boys and 126 girls.
- One pupil is at an early stage of learning English.
- The remainder are white, British.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is a little above average.
- The proportion with special educational needs is also a little above average and the proportion with statements is double the national average. Pupils' difficulties relate to dyslexia; moderate learning; social, emotional and behavioural; speech and communication; learning impairment; physical and autism.
- Pupil mobility is fairly low.
- Staff mobility has been high over the last two years: of a total staff of ten, five have joined and three have left.
- Staff absence has been very high: 408 days of teacher absence and 116 days of non-teaching staff absence in the school year 2002-3 amongst nine classes.
- Social and economic circumstances in the area are below average.
- The school is in an Education Action Zone.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
25470	J Morley	<i>Lead inspector</i>	English; Art and design; Design and technology; English as an additional language.
13762	N Shelley	<i>Lay inspector</i>	
29186	G Ulyatt	<i>Team inspector</i>	Geography; History; The Foundation Stage.
20038	G Watson	<i>Team inspector</i>	Science; Information and communication technology; Music; Religious education.
25623	T Cox	<i>Team inspector</i>	Mathematics; Personal, social and health education and citizenship; Physical education; Special educational needs.

The inspection contractor was:

VT Education Ltd  
Old Garden House  
The lanterns  
Bridge lane  
London  
SW11 3AD

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be made initially to the inspection contractor. The procedures are set out in the leaflet '*Complaining about Ofsted Inspections*', which is available from Ofsted Publications Centre (telephone 07002 637833) or Ofsted's website ([www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

## REPORT CONTENTS

	<b>Page</b>
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS</b>	
<b>STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS</b>	<b>3</b>
Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
<b>QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL</b>	<b>6</b>
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
<b>LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE</b>	
<b>SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2</b>	
<b>PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS</b>	<b>24</b>

## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**The school provides a satisfactory and improving quality of education.** There are several important issues still to address, including the elimination of a small amount of unsatisfactory teaching. However, the headteacher knows what these issues are and how to tackle them. Children join the school with below average attainment but make good progress in the Reception class. Thereafter achievement is satisfactory overall but good in some classes. English and mathematics standards in the current Year 6 are too low, but this is not representative of other year groups. The broad – and more accurate - view is that standards are satisfactory, with the exception of writing where they are too low throughout the school. Taken overall, teaching quality is sound. Half is good or better. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

#### The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- English and mathematics standards in Year 6 are too low.
- The opportunities for pupils to develop writing skills are not good enough.
- The headteacher provides good leadership and is supported well by most senior managers.
- Provision for Reception children is consistently good.
- Much teaching is good although some is unsatisfactory in two classes.
- In some lessons there is too little challenge for pupils, particularly the most able.
- Pupils enjoy warm relationships with adults and benefit from the very good care they receive.
- Pupils behave well and respond eagerly to good quality teaching.

The school has fully dealt with the key issues from the last inspection (1998): these related to the quality of curriculum planning, the school improvement plan, the arrangements for assessing pupils and the provision for Reception children. Most standards in Year 2 have been maintained at the average levels reported in 1998, although in writing they are still below average, just as they were six years ago. In Year 6, standards in English, mathematics and science have fallen. However, this is largely related to the nature of this year's class: standards in other year groups are better and generally close to the expected levels. The proportion of good or better teaching has risen and the unsatisfactory element has been reduced, though there is still too much weak teaching. Overall, improvement has been sound.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*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.*

**Children enter the Reception class with attainment below that expected and they achieve well.** As a result, by the end of the year, they meet the standards expected in all areas of learning. **Thereafter achievement is satisfactory** overall, although there is variation between and within groups and classes, depending on the quality of teaching pupils receive. Pupils in the Year 2 class attain average standards: they are currently well taught but, due to staff absence, their achievement

last year was low and it has not yet been fully made up. Current Year 1 pupils often achieve above average standards and this bodes well for the future. Standards in the current Year 6 are weak in English, mathematics, geography and history. In other year groups, standards are average and, providing these can be successfully built upon, this too bodes well for the future.

**Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good** overall, as it was at the time of the last inspection. Pupils behave well. Their attitudes to work are good and can easily become very good when lessons are interesting, challenging and fun. Attendance is satisfactory and punctuality is good.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education is satisfactory.** All teachers have good relationships with pupils and are skilled at boosting their self-esteem. The half of teaching that is of good or better quality offers good levels of challenge and responds intelligently to the different ways that pupils learn. Most of the remainder is satisfactory. This offers more limited challenge, particularly to the most able pupils in the class. Almost one lesson in ten is less than satisfactory: such lessons are dull and fail to challenge adequately. Teaching is consistently good in the Reception class, good in several classes in Years 1 to 6, but relatively weak in two classes. Overall, **the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory.**

The curriculum is satisfactory. There is innovative use of assessment weeks each term: these allow teachers to assess how well pupils are doing, to plug gaps in knowledge or understanding, and to correct misconceptions. In addition, the younger pupils currently benefit from specialist music provision. The curriculum is led by subject co-ordinators: their work varies from good to unsatisfactory, but is sound overall. The school provides a very good level of care.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Leadership and management are satisfactory.** Leadership by the headteacher is good and he has a very strong sense of purpose. During his five-terms in post, he has prioritised sensibly and successfully led significant change. Most senior managers contribute innovatively and energetically to the development of the school but the contribution of the deputy headteacher is less influential. Overall, management by the headteacher and key staff is satisfactory overall. Governance is satisfactory. Key governors are knowledgeable about the strengths of the school and the areas where it needs to improve. They share the headteacher's vision and support him in his efforts to achieve it. They fulfil all of their statutory duties.

## **PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

Parents think well of the school and like the fact that the staff and the headteacher are available and approachable. Pupils are happy to come to school: they feel valued and liked.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Raise standards in English and mathematics in Year 6.
- Raise writing standards throughout the school.
- Eliminate teaching that is less than satisfactory.
- Ensure that all pupils, particularly the most able, are adequately challenged;

- Improve the leadership and management skills of the deputy headteacher.



## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

#### Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Achievement is satisfactory overall. Standards are below average in the current Year 6, but better elsewhere in the school. Over recent years, overall standards in Year 2 and Year 6 have been rising at a rate similar to that found nationally,

#### Main strengths and weaknesses:

- In Year 6, English and mathematics standards are below average.
- Writing standards are weak throughout the school.
- Achievement is consistently good in Reception and in half of the other classes. Elsewhere, it is satisfactory but with some pockets where it is unsatisfactory.

#### Commentary

1. Children achieve consistently well in Reception, benefiting from good quality teaching. They enter the school with skills that are just below those expected in the key areas of personal, social and emotional development; communication, language and literacy, and mathematical development. Their skills are clearly below those expected in their knowledge and understanding of the world, their creative and their physical development. Despite this below average start, they leave Reception meeting the standards expected of them in all six areas, having made consistently good progress through the year.

2. The table below shows that standards in the 2003 national tests for Year 2 pupils were average in reading, below the national average in mathematics and well below average in writing. When compared with similar schools, standards were above average in reading and mathematics and below average in writing. Currently standards are close to average in reading and in mathematics. Writing standards, however, are below average. Standards in the Year 1 class are, in relative terms, the best in the school. This bodes well for the future.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	15.5 (14.9)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	13.2 (11.2)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	16.0 (15.4)	16.3 (16.5)

*There were 38 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	22.5 (25.6)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	25.0 (27.7)	26.8 (26.7)
science	28.1 (28.4)	28.6 (28.3)

*There were 44 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

3. As is evident from the table above, the picture in Year 6 is less favourable than that in Year 2. The school's English results in the 2003 tests were in the lowest five per cent nationally; those in mathematics were well below the national average while science standards were below it. Comparison with similar schools still placed English standards in the lowest five per cent.

Science standards matched those in similar schools, but mathematics standards were below average for similar schools. Current standards are broadly average in science but below average in English and mathematics. It is, in particular, the writing element of English that reduces overall standards in the subject to this low level.

4. The low standards of Year 6 are not replicated in Years 3, 4 and 5: in these year groups, attainment is generally close to expectations. The current Year 6 cohort (split between a Year 6 and a Year 5 / 6 class) has been a consistently weak one – as is clear from their Year 2 test results in 2000. It contains a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs (SEN). In addition, in the Year 6 class (made up of pupils of average capability and above) there is some teaching that is unsatisfactory, largely because pupils are not sufficiently challenged. It is also too often the case in mathematics that the work set for these pupils fails to take account of the range in their ability.

5. Achievement varies from class to class. Children in Reception and in the Year 1 and Year 2 classes are achieving well. Throughout the year, they have benefited from stable and predominantly good teaching. Pupils in the mixed Year 1 / 2 class, however, have been disadvantaged by staff absence and more variable teaching quality, and their progress has been sound at best. The number of pupils in each cohort makes single age classes unrealistic for most of the older pupils. Hence there are classes for Year 3; Year 3 / 4; Year 4 / 5; Year 5 / 6 and Year 6. In two of these classes, teaching is consistently good and pupils achieve well. Elsewhere achievement is generally sound, although there is some underachievement in the Year 6 class. This variation in teaching quality between classes means that pupils in the same year group do not always have an equal chance to learn and make progress. The headteacher is very aware of the need to deal with this issue.

6. The school was dogged by staff absence through the last school year: there were 408 days of teaching staff absence and 116 days of support staff absence. There is little doubt that this impacted on its test results, particularly in Year 2. However, the problem is lessening and the greater stability now in place bodes well for pupils' achievement in the future. Without doubt, there is a determined and convincing commitment by the headteacher and most key staff to raise standards as quickly as possible.

7. Throughout the school, pupils attain the expected standards in science. By Year 6, standards also meet expectations in information and communication technology (ICT), religious education and art and design. History and geography standards meet expectations in all year groups except Year 6, where they fall short of them. There was insufficient evidence to make secure judgements on standards in design and technology, music and physical education. Writing standards are too low in the school as a whole. The main cause is the inappropriate writing 'diet' fed to pupils. This issue is dealt with in detail in the English section of the report.

8. Almost a quarter of the school is on the register of special educational needs (SEN). Eight pupils have statements of special educational needs, a proportion that is double the national average. Pupils with SEN benefit from the specific support they receive in lessons. Their individual education plans are satisfactory but the targets are often too broad and vague. This means that it is not easy to measure progress. The achievement of pupils with SEN is satisfactory, which matches that of other pupils. Provision for the one pupil for whom English is an additional language is good in every aspect: the parent is fully justified in his pleasure at what the school has put in place.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities**

Pupils' attitudes to school are good. Attendance is satisfactory and punctuality is good. Pupils' behaviour is good, as is their overall personal development (including the spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects).

## Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Procedures to promote attendance are good.
- Older pupils are keen to take responsibility.
- Pupils have relatively few opportunities to appreciate the traditions of cultures other than their own.
- Reception children achieve well in their personal, social and emotional development.

## Commentary

9. Pupils behave well. In the school's 'no blame' culture, they are confident to express their opinions and ideas, knowing that their classmates will listen to what they have to say. They clearly understand when their behaviour is unacceptable. Carefully planned assemblies encourage pupils to consider the importance of their three school rules: 'Best work. Best manners. Best behaviour.' Pupils are polite and welcoming to visitors and show true concern for others; they support those who are feeling unhappy. They play well together at lunch and break time. There were no exclusions in the last school year. The school's successful Learning Mentor programme and lessons (called 'circle time') dedicated to discussion of issues causing concern help pupils deal swiftly with any incidents or issues.

10. Attendance is satisfactory: it is in line with the national average and has improved since last year. Unauthorised absence is low. However, absence due to family holidays taken during term time remains too high, although the school vigorously discourages the practice. Pupils arrive on time for the start of the school day. Attendance is closely monitored and well promoted. The procedures to follow up and account for absence are effective.

### ***Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)***

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	6.4	School data	0.2
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.*

11. Pupils enjoy lessons and the extra-curricular activities available to them. Older pupils prepare the overhead projector for assemblies, run the tuck shop and willingly help the teachers who work with the younger pupils. All pupils in Year 6, through well-organised election campaigns, have the opportunity to be part of the school council and to plan for different aspects of school life. They suggested changing the food in the tuck shop to healthy options, and asked for improvements to playground equipment. Both suggestions have been implemented, which shows the value that the school places on pupils' views.

12. Pupils learn to think about spiritual matters. For example, an adult led a thought-provoking assembly in which she changed coloured water to clear. Pupils reflected about the effect that Jesus could have on our lives. Pupils use reflection time respectfully and recite the school prayer with feeling. As a result of good guidance on moral issues, they hold mature discussions in circle time and other lessons. For example, Year 3 pupils considered the problems and difficulties the Celts faced when the Romans arrived. They linked this to difficulties that pupils must face when joining the school knowing no one. Year 5 pupils go on a residential visit. This helps them to live alongside others away from their families. Visits to places of local interest, and theatre groups, musicians and other visitors to the school enhance pupils' cultural awareness. They take part in the Dearne Valley Dance Festival each year. The school is aware that there is more work to be done to teach pupils about other cultures so that they are better prepared for the multi-cultural society in which they live.

13. Most children in the Foundation Stage achieve well. They reach the expected goals in personal, social and emotional development because staff provide many daily opportunities for independent learning. Through well-planned discussions and good role modelling, children learn to care for others and their environment.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The overall quality of education is **satisfactory**.

### Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Assessment systems are good but have been too recently introduced to have yet had an impact on standards.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Teaching is good in five of the nine classes. It is satisfactory overall in the remainder, although there is some weaker teaching in two classes.
- Teachers manage pupils well and establish warm relationships with them.
- Variation in teaching quality between classes means that pupils do not always have an equal opportunity to learn and make progress.

### Commentary

#### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 41 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
1 (2%)	5 (12%)	15 (37%)	16 (39%)	3 (7%)	1 (2%)	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.*

14. All teachers establish a relaxed yet effective discipline in their classrooms and pupils are well behaved and ready to learn. There are pupils in some classes who find it difficult to behave well but their problems are managed skilfully in nearly all instances. On the one occasion where this was not the case, a pupil refused to engage in the activity with his classmates and there was no alternative task to tempt him to work.

15. The quality of teaching seen ranged from excellent to poor. Half was good or better. The particular characteristics of the very good and excellent lessons that distinguished them from those that were good was the infectious enthusiasm of the teachers, the unflinching pace of the lessons and the uncompromising expectations of pupils, particularly the more able. These features were most evident in an excellent English lesson in the Year 5/6 class.

16. Good teaching is typified by work being intelligently matched to the full age and ability range in the class. Support staff are used well – for example to support the seven Reception age children who had just ‘moved up’ into a Year 1 class. Relationships are warm and encouraging and pupils are left in no doubt that their contributions are valued. Pupils achieve well because the work set is appropriate for them. Over time, the way that pupils’ work is collated and the way that it is displayed in classrooms and in common areas of the school are features indicative of the value teachers place on what pupils do.

17. Pupils make satisfactory progress when teachers have a secure understanding of the curriculum, teach key skills adequately and set work that keeps pupils actively engaged. However, this is not enough for pupils to make the good progress needed if they are to reach the expected

levels for their age, and not all staff realise that more is needed. In satisfactory lessons, teachers tend to accept answers from those pupils who offer them, but are insufficiently aware that others in the class are not contributing enough. They do not always set work that gives pupils the best opportunity to learn.

18. In two classes, a small amount of unsatisfactory and poor teaching was seen. In one class, the lessons were dull and it is to the credit of the pupils that they behaved as well as they did. The pace was slow. In addition, there is evidence that over time significant quantities of work are being copied. While this large amount would be inappropriate for pupils of any age, it is particularly inappropriate for the oldest pupils in the school. In addition, the same tasks are set too often for the whole class, ignoring the range of ability within it. In the second class, some of the teaching of a temporary teacher was unsatisfactory and some was poor. Pupils' behaviour was unacceptable. When expected to work independently of their teacher, they spent far too much time being silly and not getting on with their work. As a result, they failed to make the progress they should.

19. The use made of support staff is satisfactory overall. Sometimes their skills are used well. This is because the teacher has planned their work specifically and has given clear and precise instructions, particularly in terms of what the pupils should know and are to be able to do by the end of the session. On these occasions, their work is of real value and pupils benefit as a result. On other occasions, teachers allocate support staff to work with an individual or group without specifying what these pupils should achieve to be successful. As a result, the pupils concerned are not given clear enough guidance. There is almost full time support in each class in the school, which is a very costly resource, but as yet there is no clear understanding of the impact of this expenditure.

20. In the majority of lessons, satisfactory provision is made for pupils with SEN. In the best lessons, teachers use questions well to assess what pupils know and to pose questions which make them think but also give them a chance of success. Particularly good arrangements have been made for a pupil with SEN but who is showing a talent for mathematics. This pupil is taught alongside a group of more able pupils and has almost reached their standard. However, there are weaknesses in the way that pupils with SEN are taught overall. In some classes, pupils of all abilities are given the same work. In a Year 6 English lesson, no special task was provided for a pupil with SEN with the result that he did no work. Similarly, in the same class, pupils identified by the school as gifted and talented were not given special work in a mathematics lesson.

21. The school is committed to being inclusive, though strengths and weaknesses in its provision mean that it is satisfactory overall. Key strengths include:

- \* the good quality work of the learning mentor (especially in relation to attendance and home-school links);
- \* the quality of provision for pupils with behavioural or emotional difficulties;
- \* the clear emphasis on maintaining the current equitable balance between the attainment of boys and girls. There are, for example, books of special interest to boys displayed in classrooms and teachers are careful to ensure that boys are as actively engaged in lessons as the girls;
- \* the high quality support for the pupil at the early stage of learning English.

However, there have been significant differences in the opportunities available to particular groups of pupils and these have been particularly marked where one year group has been split between two classes. Long periods of staff absence (and the deployment of short term supply teachers) have disadvantaged some pupils, while their peers have benefited from good quality teaching. Some Year 2 pupils, for example, are still making up their shortfall in progress from last year. In addition, the variation in teaching quality means that some pupils have better opportunities to learn than others.

22. Assessment systems are good overall and these are beginning to be used to raise standards. There is a growing acknowledgement amongst staff of their accountability for the progress their pupils make but this remains an area for development, particularly in building it into the school's performance management system. The school is aware of this and is working towards it. Nevertheless, it has needed to develop a system from scratch and has made good progress in the time available.

23. The school is 'data rich': it has plenty of information at its fingertips to indicate how well pupils are doing. For example, in addition to national test results, the school uses the national optional tests for pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5. Furthermore, it has a school-wide assessment week at the end of the autumn and spring terms. On these occasions, teachers devise their own tests in reading, writing, mathematics and science, based on what they have taught. During the first three days of the week, pupils take the tests and their teachers mark their work. The last two days are used to clear up any misconceptions or to 'plug' gaps in knowledge or understanding. Group targets are set for pupils and displayed in their classrooms. As a result, most individuals understand their own targets and can see what their next targets are likely to be.

## **The Curriculum**

The curriculum is satisfactory. Opportunities for enrichment, and the quality of accommodation and resources are all satisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses:**

- The headteacher has introduced innovative ideas to raise standards and pupils' esteem.
- There have been good improvements to the Foundation Stage curriculum.
- Not enough attention is paid to developing writing skills across the curriculum.
- The ratio of computers to pupils is too low and the ICT suite is barely adequate.

## **Commentary**

24. In bringing new ideas to the curriculum, the headteacher has taken care to address the need to raise both standards and pupils' esteem. Pupils have been introduced to SMART (easily measurable) targets. They know how well they are learning and are also able to celebrate their skills in non-academic areas. Their thinking skills are also being developed, in particular in Year 4 where they are undertaking a course of 'Philosophy for children'. The headteacher has introduced assessment weeks.

25. The high level of staff absence in recent years has meant that the provision for music is weaker than at the time of the previous inspection. However, the school works hard to overcome this. Funds from the Education Action Zone (EAZ) are used to provide expert music tuition for younger pupils. Professional musicians, who are members of well-known popular music groups, have given live performances with pupils taking part, funded by the Parents' Association. The school makes good use of funding from the EAZ. A dance festival held last year with other local primary schools was so successful that it is being repeated and it is hoped that it will become a permanent event.

26. The school has secured significant improvement to the curriculum for the youngest children in school – a key issue at the time of the last inspection. This improvement means that children are well prepared for transferring to Year 1. They are adequately prepared for transfer to Year 3. Preparation for transfer between Year 6 and Year 7 is broadly satisfactory, although academic standards in the current Year 6 are low.

27. Curricular provision for SEN is satisfactory, as is the quality of pupils' individual education plans. The plans are easy to read and they follow a common format. However, it is difficult to tell from the plan the exact nature of the pupil's problem. This makes it difficult to tell if the targets set for pupils are appropriate. Targets are often too broad so that it is not easy to measure progress. Pupils on the special needs register are adequately supported by teachers and by generous time allocation to classroom assistants. This enables these pupils to access all areas of the curriculum. However, the work they are given is not always matched to their specific needs because, on some occasions, all pupils are given the same work. This shortfall in provision is not confined to pupils with SEN: there are occasions when it applies also to the most able pupils.

28. The school has identified the need to raise standards in writing. However, not enough thought has been given as to how this can be done by developing writing in subjects such as history, geography and religious education. Too often pupils write in response to questions or complete worksheets. When they do write down their own ideas, their writing is often short and this does not give them the opportunity to develop a theme or their writing skills. Opportunities for pupils to use mathematics in other subjects are also limited.

29. In relation to ICT, there are seven computers in a space adjoining the library. This area accommodates a part class only and is therefore not ideal for teaching the ICT curriculum.

30. The school is one of a cluster of primary schools that falls within an EAZ. Pupils benefit from the good range of sporting activities that is arranged with the cluster. The initiative funds a mentoring service that contributes good quality support for pupils who have difficulty coping in school and promotes a range of school activities. Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education (PSHE) is good.

### **Care, guidance and support**

Pupils are very well cared for, and the guidance and support provided are satisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses:**

- Pastoral care is very good.
- The school takes good care to listen to pupils' views and act on them.
- Pupils receive sound guidance on how well they are doing.

### **Commentary**

31. Relationships between teachers and pupils are very good. Pupils respect and trust their teachers and are confident to refer to them for assistance. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their own community. Their views are considered through the school council and are respected and acted upon.

32. Pupils' welfare needs are well met and external agencies provide a range of relevant specialist services. Child protection procedures are very well implemented. The arrangements to ensure a healthy and safe environment are satisfactory overall. Early morning breakfast is available for pupils and healthy snacks can be purchased at break.

33. The facilities of a local study support centre are used to help a small number of pupils to raise their standards and achieve their potential. A local venture group supports Year 6 pupils with ICT. A performing arts group promotes dance in school. Booster lessons are provided within the school day prior to National Curriculum tests. Pupils benefit from all of these initiatives.

34. Pupils have easy access to information about academic levels because it is clearly displayed in classrooms. Academic targets are set each term for ability groups. Pupils have an accurate

picture of their progress and can use the information available to see what their next target is likely to be.

35. Pupils with SEN are generally supported well by school staff. They are quickly identified and strategies to support their achievement are put in place. However, in some classes they are not given work matched closely enough to their needs. Good arrangements are in place to support a pupil who shows a talent for mathematics but the work set for more able pupils does not always provide a good level of challenge.

### **Partnership with parents, other schools and the community**

The school has a satisfactory partnership with parents. It has good links with other schools and the community.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses:**

- Pupils benefit from the strong links with other schools and the community.
- Parents express positive views about most aspects of the school's provision.
- Annual school reports are very good although some communications with parents are less informative.

### **Commentary**

36. Parents are pleased with the quality of education and care that is provided. They are generally supportive, and relationships between school and parents are positive. The minority of parents that expresses some concern about pupil harassment is not entirely justified. Some harassment occurs but it is not of significant proportions compared to other schools and is almost always effectively dealt with.

37. Parents' dissatisfaction with some communication is justified. For example, formal documents (such as the prospectus) are uninspiring, and information and guidance to parents about how to more effectively help their children with work at home is limited. However, the recently redesigned annual school reports provide very good quality information about pupils' progress, and two consultation evenings are arranged for parents each year. Attendance at these is good. Whilst teachers are very approachable, alternative arrangements have not yet been made for those working parents who have difficulty accessing the school during normal hours. Some consultation has taken place with parents about school matters.

38. The special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) works closely with parents in trying to obtain the most appropriate form of help for pupils. She helps them complete the necessary forms and gives them support at meetings with various agencies. Parents are given suitable opportunities to discuss their children's difficulties and progress with school staff. These can be informal, for example in the daily contacts between parents and staff. They can be more formal on occasions such as the termly consultations for parents and reviews of pupils' individual education plans and statements of special educational needs

39. The friends of school association supports the school well. A few parents help regularly in school. Parental turn out at performances is high. Recently run workshops, however, were poorly attended. Whilst parents co-operate well by promptly providing reasons for their children's absence, many parents choose to arrange family holidays during term time. Absence for this reason is much higher than in most other schools.

40. Links with other schools are good. They help pupils to make a smooth transfer. The school, along with other primary schools, takes part in sporting events at the secondary school as part of the EAZ. Advanced skills teachers from the secondary school enhance work in art and design, ICT and the



humanities, and help is being given with collecting information about pupils' progress. Arrangements with other institutions provide good support for teacher training, student placements and

work experience for high school students. A local football club provides study support. Other county initiatives promote learning experiences in ICT and dance. Local employers offer sponsorships and the school uses community facilities such as the swimming pool and a church. Residential outdoor centres provide pupils with a range of personal development experiences.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. The governance of the school is satisfactory. The leadership and management of the headteacher are good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses:**

- The headteacher has a very clear vision for the school.
- The school's development is strategically planned, based on realistic self-evaluation.
- Most key staff provide energetic and innovative leadership.
- Financial management is good and is aligned to the school's development planning.
- Not all subject leaders have a clear understanding of standards and progress data relating to their subject(s).

### **Commentary**

41. Since taking up this post five terms ago, the headteacher has quickly identified areas for development and established a shared understanding of the need to improve achievement in several subjects. The school development plan is a well-structured blueprint for the immediate and longer-term improvement of the school. It relates to subject provision as well as to other aspects, such as buildings and staff development. Each priority is an achievable target: it is costed and a completion date is identified, together with an indication of what will signal success. The headteacher is aware that, to date, he has been the main author of these targets and he is keen to give all subject leaders an opportunity to make suggestions based on their own evaluation of their subject.

42. The headteacher has organised a new management structure that includes two co-ordinators with the responsibility to oversee provision for the younger and older year groups, and a SENCO. Their innovative ideas, good classroom practice and energy will make them effective in motivating and influencing colleagues through periods of change. The longer standing deputy headteacher (and Year 6 teacher), although fully supportive of the headteacher, is less influential, both in these respects and in the co-ordination of the subjects on which he takes the lead: mathematics, ICT and physical education.

43. Financial management is good. All procedures are well established and are capable of responding to authorised purchasing requests from individual teachers. The administrative staff have been trained in the management of the school's new bank account. This enables them to provide up-to-the-minute financial data when needed.

44. Some subject co-ordinators are relatively new to their areas of responsibility, though they have made a sound start to co-ordination. They give good support to their colleagues in planning lessons. The co-ordinator of mathematics, ICT and physical education, however, has no clear understanding of the standards pupils achieve or where improvements are needed in order to raise achievement.

45. The SENCO manages the provision for SEN well. Reviews of individual education plans, written by the class teachers, are carried out regularly. The SENCO has established good links with the support services. The school has identified a small number of Year 6 pupils as being gifted and talented. However, these pupils are seldom set work that matches their abilities and needs.

46. Arrangements are in place to include teaching assistants in performance management. Jointly funded by the EAZ, midday supervisors have received 25 hours training in the current academic year

from an external provider. The headteacher has regular meetings with them to discuss and develop their duties.

47. Governors are now well informed about how well the school is doing and where it needs to improve. They are happy to share the vision for the school expounded by the headteacher. Most governors have an accurate understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school but do not yet have the capacity to hold it to account for the standards it achieves. Nevertheless, the realistic evaluation of the headteacher with regard to how well the school is doing, and the willingness to convey this honestly and openly to governors means that it is not a significant shortfall.

***Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004***

<b>Income and expenditure (£)</b>	
Total income	508,030.00
Total expenditure	511,754.00
Expenditure per pupil	1,945.00

<b>Balances (£)</b>	
Balance from previous year	115,720.00
Balance carried forward to the next year	111,996.00

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

### **AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

The quality of provision in the Foundation Stage is **good** in all six areas.

48. The school admits children to full-time places in the Reception class at the beginning of the term in which they will be five years of age. Children born between January and August are offered part-time places until the term of their fifth birthday. Therefore, the youngest children only spend one term of full-time provision in Reception before moving to Year 1.

49. The quality of teaching and learning is predominantly good; consequently children achieve well and make good progress in all six areas of learning. By the end of Reception, the majority reach the Early Learning Goals and are well prepared for Key Stage 1. Staff work very well together to ensure that children feel settled and have equal access to the rich range of experiences on offer. The staff appointed to the Foundation Stage have made good improvements since the last inspection. Assessment is particularly well developed and very effective in supporting teaching. Planning is much improved and covers focused activities and self-chosen activities both indoors and outside. Children make good progress in all six areas of learning because the activities provided match children's stage of development. Standards in all six areas of learning are at the expected level. The Foundation Stage curriculum is managed very well and led with great enthusiasm and dedication. The self-evaluation schedule is honestly written, showing very appropriate developmental points. Facilities for outdoor provision are very new, but staff have already developed a good range of learning opportunities for children, covering all six areas.

### **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

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

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses:**

- Children show high levels of interest in the activities provided.
- Children learn how to work and play together because adults are good, caring role models.
- Children are very well behaved and have a good understanding of right and wrong.

#### **Commentary**

50. Children work very well with staff and independently because staff provide an extensive range of interesting activities from which they can choose, including using the microphone, musical instruments or paints. They show good levels of confidence when speaking with adults, to a group or the whole class because staff respond to their ideas and suggestions with encouragement and praise. They listen carefully to what children have to say, which helps develop self-esteem. Many children have established friendships, sharing equipment and taking turns; they play very well together in small groups with sand, water or when dressing up. They collaborate well when constructing large models outdoors. Staff are vigilant and positively reinforce good relationships by talking in a caring manner with all children. Behaviour is very good and children are very aware of right and wrong. Class assemblies are used very well to coax positive thoughts from children. In stories, they criticise the actions of the 'ladybird' for example by saying that he '...speaks nastily to others and is a bully...' Children show true care and consideration for each other, listening carefully when friends are speaking.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses:**

- Children learn well because staff adopt a systematic approach to teaching basic reading and writing skills through a range of practical activities.
- Good emphasis is given to speaking and listening skills.

### **Commentary**

51. Children learn to read and write letter sounds and new words through a range of practical activities. They learn about patterns and rhythms in words through well planned clapping and musical activities. Groups for focused activities are very small. This close interaction and one-to-one teaching secures their learning and ensures that all achieve well. Children are learning to read and they enjoy sharing books with adults at school and at home with parents. Children develop good listening skills and this has a significant impact on their learning. Teachers give good emphasis to the development of thinking skills and use stories such as the 'Bad Tempered Ladybird' to encourage them to express their ideas about good actions and bad actions. Many children explain their ideas in well formed sentences. However, during whole class sessions, not all children have the opportunity to express their thoughts and consolidate their ideas. Children are learning to write; they spontaneously express their ideas through detailed drawings and write simple short phrases with plausible and sometimes accurate spellings.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses:**

- Children make good progress because staff know exactly what they understand and can do.
- Teachers place good emphasis on number activities.
- Children are taught to become independent learners.

### **Commentary**

52. Teachers work with children in small groups and plan a range of practical activities. They know children well and make sure each child achieves as much as possible. For example, some children are well able to sequence numbers beyond ten, though others need one-to-one support to reach five. Nevertheless, teachers are very encouraging and supportive, with the result that each child experiences success. Teachers place good emphasis on number skills and have a good understanding of the way children learn. They teach them good self-help skills so, for example, children can be seen referring to the number line to help them sequence their sailing boats in the correct order. This good practice consolidates learning because children quickly identify the number missing in their line or the number that comes next. Children make repeating patterns. They are taught to write numbers clearly and know how to record the correct number of objects contained in a box. Children learn about shapes by constructing large models outdoors. They learn about length and shape through planned practical activities.

## **KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses:**

- The hands-on approach to learning ensures that children make good progress.
- There is a good range of activities covering all aspects of this area of learning.

### **Commentary**

53. Children achieve well because there is a good range of activities on offer. There are daily opportunities to investigate and explore through topics. For example, children explain that wet sand sticks and dry sand flows. In water play, they experiment with ice cubes and play with a range of creatures that live in water. Children access an extensive range of construction equipment and make interesting models. They are confident with scissors and know how to fasten objects together. They are competent in choosing glue or tape. The computer is always available and children know how to use the mouse to drag objects. Teachers discuss significant events with them and help them to develop a sense of time. Children learn to move in specific directions, developing a sense of place. They celebrate festivals from different faiths as they occur throughout the year and learn, for example, that the rainbow is God's promise to us.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in physical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses:**

- Children achieve well because they have regular access to challenging equipment outdoors.

### **Commentary**

54. Children master the art of balancing and climbing on the rope ladder. They develop good bodily co-ordination and control through regular use of the 'adventure playground' equipment. The outdoor curriculum offers daily opportunities to run vigorously and develop skills in handling large and small equipment. They develop their fine finger skills by controlling brushes, glue spreaders and pencils. They pour liquid from cups into containers as they play with water. Children know they have to wash their hands and when to do it.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in creative development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses:**

- Good focused teaching ensures children achieve well in artwork.
- The programme used to teach music develops children's understanding well.

### **Commentary**

55. Teachers have good expertise and demonstrate well. Hence, children learn to look closely at the shape of objects. They know how to mix paint to create the colour they want. For example, they mix yellow and blue to make a green stalk for the sunflower. There is a good range of creative materials available each day and adults encourage children to experiment for themselves. Children

paint spontaneously or use the good range of collage resources. They are very proud of their artwork. Staff plan good lessons to teach children to tap out simple rhythms, sing songs and rhymes. They learn to change the tempo when singing and to sing in a high, low, or sweet voice. Children play with imagination, and dressing-up clothes are available for them to wear whenever they wish. This creates a relaxed atmosphere and children often wear cloaks while engaged in maths or reading activities.

## **SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2**

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses:**

- Writing standards are below average in Year 2 and well below average in Year 6.
- The basic skills of writing are adequately taught but poorly developed.
- The subject leader is new to the post but has made a good start.
- Speaking and listening standards meet expectations throughout the school.
- Reading standards are average in Year 2 but below average in Year 6.

#### **Commentary**

56. Standards in Year 2 are much as they were at the time of the last inspection; they meet expectations in speaking, listening and reading, but fall short of them in writing. By Year 6 however, standards have fallen since 1998 when they were above average in all four elements. Currently they meet expectations in speaking and listening, fall below them in reading and are well below average in writing. These below average standards in Year 6 are not replicated in Years 3, 4 and 5: in these year groups, the overall standards in the subject are close to expectations. The subject co-ordinator (who is also assessment co-ordinator) and the target, tracking and transition co-ordinator have been in post for just a short time. They had to start from scratch on assessment systems and on all elements of monitoring such as regular scrutiny of pupils' written work and observations of teaching. Their work has had insufficient time to impact on standards in the subject, but their ideas are good and it is difficult to envisage what more they could have achieved in the time.

57. Listening skills are satisfactory. Where teaching is good, pupils listen well because their lessons are interesting. An ostrich egg, for example intrigued Year 2 pupils. They were not told what creature had laid it, but had a wonderful time guessing and building up a story around their imaginative ideas. Where teaching is dull, pupils either drift in and out of concentration or are discourteous to their classmates. The first was true of a Year 6 lesson where pupils were taken through a past test paper, and pupils in the Year 1/2 class paid scant attention to their classmates who had been invited to read their work at the end of the lesson.

58. Most pupils are articulate on a one-to-one basis and are capable of using an adequate range of appropriate vocabulary. They are happy to contribute ideas in front of the class because they know from experience that their contributions will be valued. However, the 'wind-up' sessions at the end of lessons are not always used productively as speaking opportunities. Teachers do not routinely plan a clear learning outcome for these sessions. Hence, more of value could be gained from them than is currently the case.

59. Reading skills are built upon satisfactorily in the school as a whole. However, this overall judgement conceals variations between classes. For example, pupils in the Year 1 class and the Year 2 class make better progress than those in the Year 1 / 2 class. In most instances, the books pupils read are well matched to their skill levels. Hence, while the text is challenging, it is not so

difficult that it destroys the child's enjoyment of the book. However, in Year 6, the pupils of average, above and below average capability are all reading the same text. This is inappropriate because there is significant difference in their ability, both to read the actual words and to understand their full meaning.

60. The teaching of basic writing skills is satisfactory overall. However, the writing standards that result from it are below average, and in the current Year 6 they are well below. This is because, to date, the school has concentrated on the detail of teaching writing, rather than on standing back and looking at the big picture of the writing opportunities that it is offering to pupils. As a result, weak writing standards are largely the result of an imbalance in the nature of the writing opportunities on offer and of expectations that are too low. Opportunities for writing need urgent review, not only in English but also across the full curriculum. The following are the key points:

- \* In almost every class, there is a high proportion of heavily supported writing opportunities that take the form of handwriting practice, spelling tests or practice, worksheets, copying text or completing 'exercises'. Such tasks far outweigh those where pupils write from scratch and have the opportunity to try out the skills and techniques they have been taught. These tasks provide low levels of challenge, and the balance needs redressing. It is notable that the balance is best in the Year 1 class. As a result, these pupils make good progress and their writing standards are closer to those expected than in any other class. In Year 6, on the other hand, almost all writing is heavily supported and only a tiny proportion is wholly independent. The proportion of copied text, in particular, is unacceptably high. In addition, a disproportionate amount of writing takes the form of handwriting practice and spelling lists or tests.
- \* In some classes, too much unproductive chatter is tolerated and this reduces the quality and quantity of the work that pupils produce. This was the case in a Year 1/2 lesson. In others, particularly for the oldest pupils, work is too prescriptive and leaves little opportunity for developing independence.

61. The quality of teaching seen in English lessons ranged from very good to unsatisfactory. It was the ability of the teacher to motivate, challenge and inspire that was evident in very good teaching. It was the lack of these features that generated the unsatisfactory teaching.

### **Language and literacy across the curriculum**

62. Opportunities for pupils to practise and consolidate writing skills in other subjects are not planned well enough. This is not only because too much writing takes place in English lessons and too little elsewhere, but also because copied text and worksheets predominate across the curriculum. There is an urgent need to review and amend these opportunities in order to raise standards. Most pupils read well enough to enable them to read what they need to in other subjects. Where this is not the case – mainly for pupils who have SEN – the targets in individual education plans do not always focus sharply enough on what these pupils should achieve.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses:**

- The work planned does not always match pupils' ability.
- The quality of teaching seen during the inspection was good.
- Pupils are not given enough opportunities to use and apply the mathematics they know.
- Leadership and management of the subject are ineffective.



## Commentary

63. Standards are average in the current Year 2 but below average in Year 6. Last year's Year 6 were also weak. Their results in the national tests were well below the average of all schools and below the average of similar schools. This means that standards have fallen since the previous inspection. However, the overall progress (the value-added) of pupils who were at this school for both tests in Years 2 and 6 was close to that of pupils in similar schools. Furthermore, standards in Years 3, 4 and 5 are close to expectations. Pupils with special educational needs achieve as well as their classmates.

64. Most teaching seen during the inspection was good. A small amount was very good and an equally small amount was poor. However, teaching is satisfactory overall. This is because pupils' recorded work over time shows that there are too many occasions in some classes where all pupils are given the same work to do. In addition, opportunities for pupils to explain, use and apply the mathematics they know are limited.

65. In a very good Year 1 lesson, the teacher used the lively mental session to direct questions to pupils she knew had problems in the past, and used praise very well to boost their confidence. By hiding 3-dimensional shapes in a bag, the teacher encouraged pupils to show the extent of their learning in asking questions to find out what the shapes were. Pupils were eager to please and used the correct vocabulary, such as *edge* and *face*, in describing the differences between *cube* and *cuboid*. Particularly good arrangements were made for the classroom assistant to support a group of Reception children who had joined the class at the beginning of the week. A feature of this and some other good lessons was the way teachers encouraged pupils to explain their answers. For example, in a good Year 3 lesson, the teacher expected pupils to explain the fractions they had made and this led them to try very hard. Both these teachers have high expectations of what pupils should achieve. Lessons are less successful when the pace is slow. This leads to pupils losing focus and becoming restless. As a result, a large number of pupils become 'followers', leaving a small number to answer questions.

66. Liaison with a local secondary school has highlighted that higher achieving pupils are not made to work hard enough. Planning in a Year 6 lesson made no allowance for this, nor was work specifically provided for two pupils identified by the school as being especially gifted and talented. Most work is marked although some incorrect work is marked as correct. Teachers do not make enough use of ICT to support mathematics lessons.

67. The co-ordinator has only been responsible for the subject for two terms. Records are being collected to enable the progress of pupils to be checked as they pass through the school but records are not complete for all age groups. Very good arrangements have been made to teach a pupil with SEN, who shows an aptitude for mathematics, alongside more able pupils. However, overall the leadership and management of the subject are unsatisfactory. There is no structure for the regular monitoring of teaching, learning and planning. Consequently, the co-ordinator is not able effectively to raise standards.

## Mathematics across the curriculum

68. Opportunities for pupils to use mathematics in other subjects are limited. In a Year 3 science lesson, pupils estimated the number of 100-gram weights needed to compress a sponge. Pupils in a mixed Year 4 and 5 science lesson used Venn diagrams to classify animals as carnivores, herbivores and omnivores. Pupils who run the school tuck shop are expected to reconcile the money taken with sales and log the items sold.

## SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory** overall.

### Main strengths and weaknesses:

- The majority of teaching is satisfactory, with good teaching in some classes.
- The subject management is good, with clear strategies for improvement.
- The organisation, quality and amount of recorded work vary too widely across the school.

### Commentary

69. At the time of the last inspection, standards were judged to be above expectations in Years 2 and 6, but present standards are in line with expectations. The current Year 6 is a relatively weak year group and this largely explains the drop in standards. However, the work of these pupils also goes some way to explain the slight downturn in standards. It is often copied text, which does not necessarily demonstrate that the individual has made satisfactory gains in science knowledge and skills. There is too little planning for pupils of different abilities: those of lowest and highest ability invariably cover the same work in the same way. This restricts pupils in making progress in line with their ability and, overall, limits the numbers of pupils achieving standards beyond expectations.

70. Where teaching was good the teacher:

- \* planned the lesson carefully, taking into account the needs of different groups of pupils and the degree of support for them;
- \* used questioning very effectively in order to give all pupils opportunities to contribute their ideas and feel secure in offering answers;
- \* made very clear the ways in which their work in a lesson would develop their learning from earlier years in the same topic.

71. As an example, a lesson in Year 2, starting a new topic on plants and animals, was particularly well structured, with a clear introduction. The teacher skilfully guided pupils to consider what questions they might need to find answers to through a scientific investigation. A short video refreshed their existing understanding and gave them some key facts before they started a sorting exercise based on plant and animal characteristics. The pupils responded very well to the structure and pace of the lesson. As a result, they are being trained to make choices in planning their investigation. This will give them a much clearer understanding than if they were to follow a pre-determined structure, shared by all in the class.

72. The co-ordinator for science has a clear understanding of what needs to be done in order to raise standards. She has already identified the need to observe more teaching and to monitor pupils' work to ensure that they all make good progress. She has a good understanding of learning styles and aids that should be used in an investigatory approach where pupils can make decisions in their work.

## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

73. Not enough ICT lessons were observed to make an overall judgement on provision. However, from past work and discussions with pupils, it is possible to conclude that, by the end of Years 2 and 6, the standard of pupils' work is in line with expectations. This was the case at the time of the previous inspection.

74. Pupils from Year 6 talk about a good range of ICT applications that they have used. These include a program that simulates the creation on-screen of an electrical circuit and incorporates the function to make changes and test the results. They are particularly keen to describe their use of a program that enables them to present their topic work in a 'slideshow' format. The program to

which they refer will have involved them in a wide range of options, decisions and format controls. Pupils of younger age groups learn to issue single commands and sequences of commands in order to programme the movement of a floor robot. Graphics work on display shows satisfactory progress in using computers to draw and design. Pupils of several year groups have used the Internet and CD-ROMs to research information. For example, Queen Boudicca has been receiving and responding to facsimiles sent by Year 3 pupils in their history topic! They also use computers in music to plan and play sequences of melodic motifs that they can store and modify. The absence of this use of technology was an issue at the time of the previous inspection.

### **Information and communication technology across the curriculum**

75. Past work shows that ICT resources have been used by pupils in their work in other subjects, such as history, geography and science. More recently, the teacher of the Year 5/6 class has used computers to encourage boys' writing. However, the extent to which teachers in all year groups use ICT in other subjects needs further development. Teachers do not always judge appropriately the usefulness of printouts from Internet and CD-ROM research. Some Year 2 pupils, for example, have extensive printouts of information on China and the Great Fire of London. The reading challenge of much of this information is too high for them. During the inspection, ICT resources were used infrequently in pupils' learning. Some teachers use overhead projectors but the recently installed interactive whiteboards were not used to make teaching more effective. The interactive functions of some of these boards are not fully operational but this does not prevent teachers from using them with the computer-linked 'data projectors'. The co-ordinator is not taking enough decisive action to ensure that :

- \* current requirements for the ratio of pupils to computers are met;
- \* interactive whiteboards are fully functional and teachers are confident in their use; and,
- \* the workstations are powerful enough to cope with the processing demands of the operating system and the software that pupils use.

## **HUMANITIES**

### **HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY**

Provision in history and geography is **satisfactory**.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses:**

- Standards are sound overall, as at the last inspection, but fall below expectations in Year 6.
- Teaching does not always take enough account of different learning styles and ability ranges.
- Resources are not used enough to enhance learning in junior classes.

#### **Commentary**

76. On the basis of past work and lessons seen, standards meet expectations in most year groups. They fall short of them in Year 6 because, although the curriculum is covered, the projects studied do not go deep enough to secure a satisfactory standard. As a result, these pupils do not achieve as well as they should.

77. Pupils learn satisfactorily. In **geography**, they learn about differences between physical and human features in their locality and in a seaside town. They learn about coastal and mountain regions. In **history**, they learn about changes across different periods through a range of topics.

78. Standards are at the expected level for pupils at the end of Year 2. By looking at primary evidence such as postcards and photographs, they make clear observations about changes in the past and learn to differentiate between 50-year gaps in time. They learn to compare differences between features of island life and features within their own area.

79. In all lessons seen, pupils listened very carefully to the teacher. They applied themselves well to the work planned for them. They were keen to answer questions and they worked well in pairs, using the opportunity to discuss issues related to their work. Much of the work is closely directed, which means that older pupils have limited opportunities to become responsible for their own learning.

80. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Pupils learn many interesting facts, but activities lack challenge. In the majority of classes, all pupils do the same work and the outcome is too prescriptive. This means that they do not get the opportunity to develop their own ideas and to actively research information for themselves. For example, pupils in Year 6 are taught the names of mountains, but the quality of information provided is superficial and so does little to engage or motivate them. Teachers sometimes lack subject knowledge, hence they are unable to develop the depth of pupils' understanding. In both subjects, and throughout the school, writing is limited. As a result, there is a missed opportunity for teaching pupils to write in different forms and for different purposes. Teachers plan visits to help pupils improve their understanding. They take them to coastal areas to support topics in both subjects. Pupils therefore benefit from the first-hand experiences and see interesting physical features, including cliffs, beaches and caves.

81. Resources are not used to full advantage, particularly in junior classes. For example, pupils make little use of computers to research information in lessons. When learning about life before 1948, no books were used to help pupils identify major points. By contrast, the teacher in Year 2 used well-chosen coloured and black and white postcards for pupils to analyse differences between 1900, 1950 and the present day. This had a positive impact on the way they learned. Last term these pupils created an historical role-play area to support their learning about the Great Fire of London. This 'hands-on' approach brings history alive for pupils and accelerates their learning.

82. Assessment is in place for these subjects and curriculum leaders are beginning to identify gaps in learning.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

Provision is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses:**

- Pupils have a sound understanding of the work they cover but seldom record it well.

83. Teachers use the locally Agreed Syllabus as the basis of their work and requirements are being met. Year 6 pupils spoke confidently about a range of faiths that they have studied throughout school, including Christianity, Buddhism and Sikhism. They were able to talk about texts that are considered sacred by the followers of these faiths. They have a developing understanding of the complexities of modern day conflicts around the world and the importance of tolerance. During a Year 6 lesson, pupils thought carefully about people and things in their lives that are precious. The teacher skilfully encouraged them to consider how many precious things have little monetary worth and, in order to underpin this, he shared some of his personal 'treasures' with them. They responded with sensitivity and understanding.

84. Whilst not all learning in religious education will be recorded on paper, there is a lack of written work and what is done is often copied. This makes it difficult to reach an accurate understanding of pupils' progress and standards. The current co-ordinator is very new to the post. She understands the need to monitor planning and pupils' work so that all staff can share a clear understanding of

progress throughout the school. At present, the subject has a medium-level priority for development. Next year it will be one of the school's high priority areas, and the co-ordinator and her colleagues will have opportunities to develop their planning and to extend the range of resources to support pupils' learning.

## **CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS**

Too little teaching was seen in **art and design**, **design and technology** and **music** to support firm judgements on provision.

85. In classrooms and around the school there was much **artwork** on display. This showed standards that met expectations throughout the school and, in some instances, exceeded them. Work from the Year 5/6 class is generally of a good standard: for example, that inspired by the work of Mackenzie Thorpe and the collage work on trainers. Lessons in art contribute well to pupils' cultural development. For example, they have studied the work and techniques of Bridget Riley, David Hockney, Georgia O'Keefe and of an Inuit artist, Pitloosie Salla.

86. Very little **design and technology** work was on display although Year 6 pupils have produced some work of a sound standard using construction kits. The planning for the subject indicates that the curriculum is appropriately covered.

87. In **music**, discussions with pupils and the contribution of a visiting specialist music teacher were used as evidence. Reception and Year 1 children benefit from the high levels of expertise of a visiting teacher from a local performing arts organisation. Using a well-known system that focuses on the individual's ability to 'hear inside', he skilfully develops singing and their understanding and recognition of pulse. These young children were engrossed in their work and made good progress through the lesson. The class teacher took full advantage of this opportunity, joining in and making notes to support her own development in music teaching. When the whole school sing in assemblies, it is tuneful and well controlled, while showing feeling for the words and music.

88. There is a good range of percussion instruments that includes tuned instruments of low pitch that would add depth and resonance to pupils' compositions and performances. However, pupils have little recall of using these instruments, and never in composing their own work. Due to long-term absence, music has not had the benefit of a co-ordinator to monitor and manage the subject. A newly appointed co-ordinator is to take up her responsibilities very soon. She has significant musical expertise and a good understanding of the need to ensure that pupils' musical experiences are broad, regular and result in progression towards high standards.

### **Physical education**

89. Teaching was very good in the one lesson seen. Pupils in Year 1 obviously enjoy physical education lessons. Squeals of delight accompanied the warm-up session when pupils played the 'traffic light game', after which they were able to say the exercises made their hearts beat faster. Pupils' enthusiasm continued as they moved confidently round the room, having discussed in groups how to put together a series of movements. They were able to improve their performance because the teacher gave them the chance to watch each other at work and identify good points. The teacher has high expectations of behaviour and pupils tried hard to meet them.

90. Pupils have good opportunities to extend their learning beyond lessons through coaching by Barnsley Football Club Study Centre and a local golf professional. They take part in sports such as hockey, orienteering, soccer, tag rugby and basketball.

## **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP**

91. The school places great emphasis on developing its pupils as good citizens. The three school rules: 'Best work, best manners, best behaviour', underpin what the school does, and pupils' behaviour shows they are responding positively. Relationships between staff and pupils are good. Pupils are given SMART targets, which enhance their self-esteem and improve their attitudes to learning. They know that their ideas are valued. For example, through the school council, pupils have suggested ways of improving play areas, and their ideas have been acted upon. Consequently, pupils are developing into responsible young people who care for each other. Two examples exemplify this. Firstly, the school council recognised qualities in a pupil who had found it difficult to behave well in the past, and recommended that he be put on the council. Secondly, in a Year 2 mathematics lesson, one pupil was insistent that the efforts of another pupil be recognised when, unusually, he finished his work on time. Coverage meets requirements and includes sex education and drug awareness.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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