

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **DUNNINGTON CE VC PRIMARY SCHOOL**

York

LEA area: City of York

Unique reference number: 121530

Headteacher: Mr Roger Highton

Lead inspector: Mr Brian Gosling

Dates of inspection: 28 – 30 June 2004

Inspection number: 256004

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll;	222

School address:	Pear Tree Lane Dunnington York North Yorkshire
Postcode:	YO19 5QG

Telephone number:	01904 489615
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Doug Low

Date of previous inspection:	March 1998
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## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Dunnington Primary School is situated in the village of Dunnington to the east of the city of York. It is about the same size as most primary schools and is growing, with two temporary classrooms replaced this year and two additional classrooms planned for next year. There are 222 pupils with broadly similar numbers of boys and girls, many of whom come from socially advantaged backgrounds. The proportion of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportions of pupils with special educational needs and pupils with statements of special educational needs are also below average. A few pupils have English as an additional language. There is also a small number of travellers' children, but these children were not in school at the time of the inspection. The proportion of pupils who join the school other than in reception is about average, although this varies between year groups. The school benefits from the pre-school group that shares its site, and the attainment of children when they start school exceeds national expectations, although the school's records show that this varies from year to year. The school was awarded the Basic Skills Quality Mark in 2002 and the Artsmark at the gold standard in 2004.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
22453	Brian Gosling	<i>Lead inspector</i>	Mathematics
9736	John Brasier	<i>Lay inspector</i>	
18709	Nina Bee	<i>Team inspector</i>	Science Art and design Design and technology Music Physical education Foundation Stage
20614	Don Kimber	<i>Team inspector</i>	English Information and communication technology Special educational needs
22841	Pat Jackson	<i>Team inspector</i>	Religious education Geography History English as an additional language

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**Dunnington CE VC Primary School is an effective school.** Children start school with good standards of attainment, and they attain high standards by Year 2 in English and mathematics that are maintained in Year 6. Although there is some variation in the standards of attainment from year to year, pupils' achievement is good or better. This is secured by imaginative approaches to the curriculum and good teaching across the school, with a significant amount of very good teaching. The leadership and management of the school are good and do much to promote imaginative approaches to the curriculum. However, this is not monitored and evaluated well enough to secure continuous improvement. The school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards are high in English, mathematics and science.
- The provision for pupils' personal development is very good, and promotes pupils' very good behaviour and very positive attitudes to learning.
- Teaching is good across the school.
- There are many creative approaches to the curriculum, which make it very interesting for pupils.
- The headteacher is very effective in inspiring and encouraging colleagues to ensure that the curriculum is presented to pupils in interesting and stimulating ways.
- The school has established a very good partnership with parents.
- The time available for teaching is not always organised effectively.
- The curriculum is not monitored and evaluated well enough to identify clearly what is working well and what might not be.
- The monitoring role of subject co-ordinators has not been developed sufficiently to identify and share best practice across the school.

The school was last inspected in 1998 and has secured good improvement since then. The areas identified for improvement in the leadership and management of the school have been addressed effectively, and although there is more to be done, this has led to the establishment of good teamwork in the school. There are beneficial partnerships between the staff, governors and parents, who are now fully consulted about proposed changes. There have been improvements to the curriculum and to the buildings, to provide for an increased number of pupils. These improvements have benefited the pupils and led to higher standards of attainment.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

**Pupils' achievement is good across the school.** Standards exceed national expectations by the end of reception, and pupils' attainment is high in English and mathematics in Years 1 and 2, and in Years 3 to 6. Standards in science are good in Years 1 and 2, and very good in Years 3 to 6.

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

The results of the national tests are generally high, although there is some variation from year to year. (A\* means the results were in the top five per cent of schools.) The reason for the lower results in mathematics in 2003 was that fewer pupils attained the higher Level 5. However, the

school has sought to improve this by providing regular and systematic practice of basic skills, and the results of the national tests in 2004 show that a greater proportion of pupils attained the higher Level 5. Consequently, standards are higher in mathematics currently, and the evidence of the inspection is that pupils' attainment is high in all three core subjects this year. Standards are also high at the end of Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics, and they are good in science. Standards are satisfactory in information and communication technology, and in religious education. Pupils' achievement is good across the school, including in the reception year, in which children exceed the goals they are expected to reach by Year 1.

**Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are very good.** Pupils' behaviour is also very good and they have very positive attitudes to learning that are promoted very effectively by teachers. Attendance is very good and well above the national average, and this allows pupils to benefit fully from the school's good educational provision.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education provided by the school is good. Teaching is good overall,** although there is a significantly higher proportion of very good and excellent teaching in Years 1 and 2. This is because assessment is used very skilfully in these classes to ensure that the work set matches the pupils' varying learning needs, and tasks with differing levels of difficulty are set for pupils of different abilities. These practices are not consistent across the school, and this is one of the principle causes of variation in the quality of teaching and learning. Imaginative approaches to learning help pupils to enjoy lessons, and they respond with much enthusiasm.

The curriculum is enhanced by a very good range of visits and visitors, and there are many creative approaches to planning pupils' learning experiences. However, the impact of these initiatives is not sufficiently monitored to enable the best practice to be shared across the school, and the time available is not always organised effectively. The care, guidance and support that pupils receive are very good. A significant improvement since the previous inspection is the very effective partnership with parents, who are informed and consulted about developments at the school.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**The leadership and management of the school are good.** The headteacher leads the school well, and effectively encourages creative approaches to teaching and learning. The management of the school is good, but the monitoring of the curriculum and of teaching have not been developed well enough for subject co-ordinators to be fully effective in their roles. The governance of the school is good, and governors are developing their roles well. Statutory requirements are met fully.

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

Pupils like their school very much. They have high opinions of their teachers and are very pleased with the friendships they have made. Parents too are very pleased with the school. They think their children are well taught and make good progress. They also think that the school is well managed and that the staff are very approachable. Both parents and pupils like the wide range of extra activities available.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

The most important things the school should do to improve and to sustain high standards are:

- Develop the monitoring role of co-ordinators fully.
- Monitor and evaluate curriculum initiatives to ensure their effectiveness.

- Reconsider the organisation of the school day.



## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

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

Pupils attain high standards and they achieve well. Achievement is good in Years 1 and 2, and in Years 3 to 6. Children's attainment when they arrive at the school is above average, but varies from year to year. Pupils attain high standards in English and mathematics in Years 1 and 2, and these are maintained in Years 3 to 6, although again there is some variation from year to year. Standards in science are good in Years 1 and 2, and very good in Years 3 to 6.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are high in English, mathematics and science, and pupils achieve well.
- The trend in the school's results is rising in line with the national trend.
- High results in the national tests are not always sustained from year to year.

#### Commentary

1. By the end of their time in reception, the majority of children are on course to exceed the Early Learning Goals<sup>1</sup> expected for their ages. Children achieve well because most of them only have two terms in school in which to achieve these goals. Positive attitudes to learning and good support from all adults contribute to this good progress.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.5 (17.4)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	15.3 (15.4)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	17.5 (18.8)	16.3 (16.5)

*There were 37 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

2. The school's results<sup>2</sup> in the national tests at the end of Year 2 in 2003 were not as high as in the previous year. However, there has been a change of teachers in Years 1 and 2, and a significant amount of very good teaching was seen in this age group during the inspection. This has led to higher standards, and the judgement of the inspection is that standards are high again this year in reading, writing and mathematics. This judgement is supported by the results of the

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<sup>1</sup> On Early Learning Goals: QCA (Qualifications and Curriculum Authority) has produced a set of early learning goals for children in the Foundation Stage of education. These outcomes are a set of skills, knowledge and understanding that children might be expected to achieve by the time they start the National Curriculum in Year 1 in six areas of learning: communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; knowledge and understanding of the world; creative development; physical development; and personal social and emotional development. The Foundation Stage continues until pupils enter Year 1, when they begin Key Stage 1 of the National Curriculum.

<sup>2</sup> On the school's results: An average points score provides schools with a single statistic with which to compare the overall grades attained by their pupils with the grades attained by pupils in other schools. At Key Stage 1, the National Curriculum levels of attainment are given a score. For example, in mathematics Level 1=9 points and Level 2=15 points, and so on. The average test score achieved by a school is calculated by adding up all the scores achieved by the pupils and then dividing by the number of pupils who took the test. These comparisons are the ones used in the figures printed in the summary of the report. When the percentage of pupils attaining a particular level is compared to that in other schools, this is stated clearly in the text.

national tests in 2004, in which a substantially greater proportion of pupils attained the higher Level 3<sup>1</sup>. Standards in science and religious education are good, while pupils' attainment in information and communication technology meets national expectations.

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

<b>Standards in:</b>	<b>School results</b>	<b>National results</b>
English	29.4 (29.3)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	27.2 (28.3)	26.8 (26.7)
science	30.1 (30.7)	28.6 (28.3)

*There were 25 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

3. Standards in the national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2003 were well above average in English and science, but average in mathematics, which is lower than in the previous year. Compared to schools with similar prior attainment at the end of Year 2 in 1999, the results were very high in English (very high means the results were in the top five per cent of these schools), well above average in science, and average in mathematics. This is mainly because fewer pupils attained the higher Level 5 in mathematics, although it is also the case that more pupils than usual did not attain the nationally expected Level 4. The reason for this is most likely linked to the insufficient use of assessment to plan lessons to include tasks of varying levels of difficulty that take full account of individual pupils' previous learning and what they need to learn next. There was also a higher than usual proportion of pupils who joined the school during Years 3 to 6 in this group. Nevertheless, the school analysed the results of the national tests in 2003 and took effective action to improve standards in mathematics by ensuring that pupils had regular and systematic practice of basic skills. This has been successful, and the results of the national tests in 2004 show that a greater proportion of pupils attained the nationally expected Level 4 or better, and more pupils attained the higher Level 5 than in the previous year. Consequently, the judgements of the inspection are that standards are high in English, mathematics and science. Standards in information and communication technology meet national expectations, and standards in religious education meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus.

4. The achievement of pupils, including those with special educational needs, is generally good. The few pupils who have English as an additional language also achieve well, and they are working at the standards expected of pupils of their age in English. Many pupils achieve high standards in Year 2, and these are maintained through to Year 6. However, standards show too much variation from year to year, and the school does not sustain high standards each year. This is because of inconsistencies in teaching and learning across the school. Boys and girls do equally well, although again there is some variation from year to year.

5. The school sets targets for pupils' attainment at the end of Year 6 in English and mathematics. These targets for the proportions of pupils attaining Level 4 or better in both subjects are suitably challenging. However, cautious but realistic targets were set for the proportions of pupils attaining Level 5. Even so, although the results well exceeded the target in English, the target in mathematics was not met. The trend in the school's results is broadly in line with the national trend in Year 2 and Year 6. The results of the national tests are analysed well to identify weaknesses in pupils' learning, and effective action is taken to ensure that any gaps in pupils' learning are addressed. However, there is insufficient monitoring of teaching and learning by subject co-ordinators to identify why these deficiencies arose in the first place. Their role is not developed fully enough for them to identify any weaknesses in teaching, as well as best practice that can be shared across the school to raise the quality of teaching and to ensure that standards of attainment are more consistent from year to year.

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<sup>1</sup> On Levels: The National Curriculum has been written on the basis that, by the end of Year 2, pupils are expected to attain Level 2 in all National Curriculum subjects. Those who achieve Level 3 are therefore attaining above nationally expected levels. It is a national expectation that all pupils should reach Level 4 by the end of Year 6. Pupils who reach Level 5 are therefore attaining above the nationally expected level for their age.

## Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes, behaviour, personal development and relationships are very good. This represents a significant improvement since the previous inspection. Attendance and punctuality are also very good.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' enthusiasm and their interest in lessons promote their learning well.
- Pupils are aware of the cultural traditions of some other communities in this country and in the rest of the world.
- The attendance rate is very good, and this contributes to pupils' good achievement.

### Commentary

6. Pupils are very keen to answer questions and to contribute their own ideas to lessons. They listen with respect to each other's opinions and also show pleasure in the achievements of others. Pupils say that everyone works hard, and this was evident in the great majority of lessons observed. It was exemplified in an art lesson in Year 5, in which some very fine clay work was achieved in an afternoon, and pupils showed appreciation of the efforts of their classmates. Pupils exhibit mature behaviour in almost all situations. For example, in assemblies they listen well to what is said and show excellent attitudes towards the occasion. They appreciate what is expected of them and are keen to comply; consequently, there is very little challenging behaviour. Pupils and parents say that there is no bullying and that behaviour is very good. There have been no exclusions.

7. Children in reception achieve well because personal and social skills are consistently promoted. This results in independent skills being developed well. The many good opportunities all children have to select activities and to work in adult-focused groups, enables them to learn how to work successfully with others. Behaviour is very good, and children quickly develop very good relationships with each other and with the adults who work with them.

8. The school provides many opportunities for pupils to appreciate the diversity of world cultures, and there is a great interest in Ghana across the school, resulting from an exchange of teachers. There are also links with Canada, Japan, Spain and South Africa. Pupils are less secure in their knowledge of Britain as a multicultural society, but a recent visit to a mosque in York has provided some insights. Pupils have many opportunities to reflect on fascinating discoveries they make in lessons, and there are particularly good, timetabled opportunities to think about things more deeply at the end of the school day. Religious observances, such as the prayer at the end of the day and the grace before meals, encourage reflection. However, the limited experience of religious education in some years does not sufficiently promote pupils' spiritual awareness. Pupils' moral development and their social development are very good, because teachers consistently emphasise both the importance of considering the needs of others and what the school expects of pupils.

9. Attendance is well above the national average and has improved a little in the current year. Pupils arrive at the school punctually and this, together with their regular attendance, helps them to benefit fully from the good education that the school provides.

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

Authorised absence	
School data:	4.2
National data:	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data:	0.3
National data:	0.4

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

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is good. Teaching and learning are good, and the care, guidance and support that pupils receive is very good. The school has established very good links with the community and with partner schools, and pupils benefit particularly from the school's much improved partnership with parents, which is now very good.

### Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is good across the school. Assessment is satisfactory overall. It is good in Years 1 and 2, and satisfactory in the Foundation Stage and in Years 3 to 6.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- A substantial proportion of lessons are very good or excellent.
- Lessons are calm and productive occasions because teachers organise them well.
- Teachers employ imaginative strategies to enhance pupils' learning, although these are inconsistent across the school.
- Assessment is not used well enough to plan lessons, particularly in Years 3 to 6.

### Commentary

#### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 39 lessons*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
1 (3%)	9 (23%)	20 (51%)	8 (20%)	1 (3%)	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.*

10. Three quarters of the lessons seen were good or better, and one quarter was very good or excellent. Teaching is consistently good in the Foundation Stage, and three quarters of the lessons seen in Years 3 to 6 were good or better. Teaching is better in Years 1 and 2, in which almost a half of the lessons seen were very good or excellent.

11. Adults work very well together as a team in reception. They give good support when the children work in groups, and they interact well with children when they work alone. In addition, personal and social skills are promoted well in many activities. This results in children developing positive attitudes to learning. Learning is good as the children acquire new knowledge, develop ideas and increase their understanding in all areas of learning. Interesting activities are planned, and adults use a satisfactory assessment system that shows the progress individuals make in all areas of learning.

12. The most noticeable features of lessons are good organisation and the teachers' insistence on high standards of behaviour. This contributes to the very good relationships that teachers maintain, and enables lessons to be happy and productive occasions. Consequently, pupils work in a calm atmosphere and engage in their tasks without unnecessary distractions. Teachers use a variety of methods that make lessons stimulating and interesting, and good use is made of visits and visitors to enhance pupils' learning. For example, a visitor brought a number of animals into school during the inspection for pupils to observe and touch. This created a good deal of enthusiasm, and the activity was linked well to extension work in science and English. These imaginative approaches add to pupils' enjoyment of lessons, and they respond well to them. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress, because they are well supported in lessons, either by support staff, or by the ways in which the teacher organises the classroom settings and resources. Teachers frequently adopt approaches that involve pupils actively, and this particularly benefits those with special educational needs. Teachers sometimes offer particular encouragement

by giving pupils with special educational needs responsibilities in lessons, such as helping with visual resources for the whole class. There were no travellers' children in school during the inspection. The few pupils with English as an additional language have a secure grasp of English and take a full part in lessons.

13. There are inconsistencies between classes that result in variations in the quality of teaching and learning. Some teachers have developed imaginative approaches, such as in collaborative teamwork to problem solving, but these are not shared across the school. In the best lessons, learning intentions are shared clearly with the pupils, and the plenary session at the end of the lesson is used to consolidate and reinforce learning. Additionally, the teacher of the oldest pupils has developed an effective strategy whereby pupils themselves assess how well they have achieved the learning outcomes. In contrast, some of the less successful lessons do not involve pupils so fully, and they are unclear about the intention of the lesson. The pace of these lessons is less brisk, and the tasks are less suited to pupils' learning needs. This was apparent in the one unsatisfactory lesson seen, and led directly from weaknesses in medium-term planning that did not provide enough guidance and support for the teacher.

14. The most important inconsistency is the effectiveness with which the assessment of pupils' learning in one lesson is used to plan tasks for the next lesson. All teachers make informal assessments of pupils' learning, but how this is to be done is not described in their planning. There is no established procedure across the whole school for how learning is to be assessed and recorded, and consequently, this is more effective in some classes than it is in others. In Years 1 and 2, assessment is often used very well to plan tasks that take full account of what pupils have already learned, or may not have learned, to plan the next lesson, and this ensures that all pupils are working at tasks with a suitable level of challenge. Where this happens, the rate at which pupils learn is very good. However, in too many lessons, pupils are set the same task and this does not ensure that the rate of learning of all pupils is as good as it could be. This was particularly noticeable in mathematics lessons for the oldest pupils and probably contributed to the lower national test results in 2003. The reason for these inconsistencies is that subject co-ordinators do not monitor teaching and learning in their subjects well enough to establish the most effective practice, so that this can be shared across the whole school. Parents commented on the variations in teaching in different classes, and inspectors agree that some teaching practices do vary across the school.

15. Little use was seen of computers in subjects other than information and communication technology during the inspection, and there were few examples of applications in pupils' books. Numeracy skills are developed suitably in subjects such as science, and design and technology. However, literacy skills are insufficiently developed in other subjects, particularly science, in which written records of experiments are not made often enough.

## **The curriculum**

Curricular opportunities are good, and they include a wide range of activities that support learning outside the school day. The provision for children in the Foundation Stage and for pupils with special educational needs is good.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The children are given a good start to their school life in the reception year.
- The curriculum is organised imaginatively to stimulate pupils' interest.
- The curriculum is not monitored effectively.
- The teaching time available for some subjects is limited.
- Visits out of school and visitors from all over the world greatly enrich the curriculum.
- There is a good range of out-of-school activities.

## Commentary

16. The provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good. Activities are interesting and planned thoroughly in accordance with national guidance. There is a strong emphasis on the promotion of personal and social skills, on the need to listen carefully, and on the development of basic vocabulary. There is an outside area that is secure and is satisfactorily used to promote learning in all areas, although it is not directly linked to the reception classroom.

17. The school has successfully developed an exciting curriculum that embraces all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. The headteacher is very effective in inspiring and encouraging colleagues to develop the curriculum in interesting and exciting ways. As a result, pupils work at activities in a stimulating environment, which motivates them well. There are clear links between subjects, and a strong emphasis on pupils working happily together. Lessons are organised in imaginative and stimulating ways in certain classes. For example, a 'carousel' of activities is offered daily to pupils in Year 2 that is well planned and reinforces skills previously taught in many other subjects, including personal, social and health education, literacy, numeracy and religious education. In Years 3 and 4, science, religious education and the non-core subjects are taught each afternoon, with each teacher specialising in certain subjects and teaching them to all three classes. This was not seen during the inspection as sessions were taken by a visitor to the school, and no planning was available to show how these lessons are organised. In Year 6, pupils work collaboratively for one afternoon each week, when they focus on various subjects, such as science, religious education, and art and design. Planning for these sessions is detailed, and pupils were seen working well at interesting activities. However, there is no evidence of any of these sessions being monitored suitably or evaluated, so that the best practice can be shared with other classes.

18. Curriculum planning is satisfactory, but yearly planning does not clearly reflect the fact that Years 3 and 4 are taught together. The headteacher is aware of the need to review future yearly plans and to make sure that they take full account of the way classes are organised. The previous inspection reported that the time given to certain areas of the curriculum was uneven and, to a certain extent, this still applies. The length of sessions allocated to developing literacy and numeracy skills is sometimes too long and, perhaps as a consequence of this, lessons do not always start and end on time. This also means that there is limited time for some non-core subjects, and this is reflected in the limited amount of pupils' work in these subjects. The programme for pupils' personal, social and health education is satisfactory, and all classes have 'circle time' in which issues related to this area are addressed. Visits develop pupils' personal and social skills well, and older pupils learn to live together for a few days during a residential trip. When the whole school focuses on the need to keep themselves safe during 'Safety Week', visitors, such as the local police, come into school and reinforce the avoidance of potential dangers.

19. Visitors from the local area and the wider world enrich the curriculum to a great extent. The school's policy on 'Global Citizenship' (York/Fanteakwa in Ghana) has been taken up by the British Council and published on their website. Photographic evidence shows that visitors, including those from Japan and Ghana, promote many areas of the curriculum very well. Pupils' cultural development, art and design, geography and design and technology are all enhanced very effectively when these visitors came into school and worked with the pupils. The outside speaker who brought in animals from different countries, helped pupils in Years 3 and 4 to learn enthusiastically about food chains and the habitats of different animals from all over the world. Geographical skills were reinforced and improved as the pupils looked on a world map to see exactly where these animals came from. There are planned visits in all year groups that reinforce

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<sup>1</sup> On 'Circle time' - this is the provision of a discussion period which provides good opportunities for pupils to talk about issues that face them in everyday life.

and develop learning very well in many subjects. For example, the school is regularly involved in the York Drama Festival and, during the week of the inspection, pupils in Years 3 and 4 visited a local nature reserve, which promoted learning in science, art and geography.

20. Parents are pleased with the after-school opportunities that the school offers, and pupils take part in a good range of activities that reinforce and build on what has been taught in lessons. There are numerous sporting clubs as well as those that support music, information and communication technology, and art and design. In addition there is an archaeology club and an Oware Club, in which a Ghanaian game is played.

21. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) has greatly improved the quality of support for pupils since the previous inspection. This improvement is particularly apparent in the development of individual education plans: they are now of high quality while, previously, they were judged to be unsatisfactory. They are used effectively in lessons to sustain pupils' progress. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are now better informed and consulted, and more fully involved in supporting their children's learning.

22. The committed and enthusiastic team of teaching and non-teaching staff work very well together to meet the demands of the curriculum and to develop it further. The accommodation is satisfactory and well maintained, and effective use is made of the available space, including a computer suite. Resources are satisfactory and the outdoor facilities are good, and include a large field and a wild nature area.

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

All aspects of the care of pupils are now very good and have improved since the previous inspection. Pupils are very involved in the life of the school, and they receive very good support, advice and guidance.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pastoral care, based on trusting and caring relationships with teachers and teaching assistants, is very good.
- There are very good arrangements for child protection, pupils' welfare, and health and safety.
- Academic support and guidance are very good.
- The school council is very effective.

### **Commentary**

23. Pupils and parents told inspectors how happy pupils were in the school, and how pleased they were with the way in which they had been introduced into it, which was clearly a very good foundation for pupils' learning in school. The headteacher and other teachers talk caringly about pupils and the difficulties they might be facing; it is clear that child protection concerns are well embedded in their thinking. The headteacher is a member of the local child protection committee, and training for child protection is thorough. Health and safety is prominent in the life of the school. The headteacher takes a keen interest in risk assessments for external visits and ensures that these are done well. Regular safety inspections are carried out efficiently. Lunchtime supervisors take an interest in the pupils and look after them well; pupils find them helpful and think they do a good job. Pupils' welfare is well provided for, with several members of staff having been trained in handling critical medical conditions. There is a club before school and an after school club that provide good support for those pupils that use them.

24. Induction arrangements are very good and result in most pupils settling quickly and happily into school routines. Academic support and guidance benefits from the detailed records that are maintained on the long-term progress of individual pupils, the records of the performance on each project and teachers' day to day observations. Pupils have individual targets, predominantly for

literacy and numeracy skills. They are well aware of these and happily talk about their progress in meeting them. There is good support for pupils with special educational needs. Parents are fully informed and receive helpful information on individual education plans to help them give guidance to their children at home.

25. The elected school council provides an effective forum for pupils to express their views. Its activities are widely known and supported throughout the school, and it has a number of achievements to its credit, including the improved playground equipment. It has worked well with a local authority group studying inclusion, and it organised a conference of 26 school councils in York Guildhall. There were workshops on Fair Trade, walking to school, health and safety, inclusion and bullying. The school presented a play on inclusion about a girl with a disfigured face. The chair and vice-chair were the spokespeople for the pupils at the conference, and they handled relations with the press. The governors' annual report contained a report on the school council that was written by its chair.

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

The school's partnerships with parents, the community and other educational institutions are all very good. Concerns expressed in the previous inspection report regarding communication with parents have been addressed well, and links with the community and other educational institutions are now far more comprehensive.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The information provided for parents is good.
- Parents provide very good practical support for the school.
- Links with the community have a very good impact on the curriculum.
- Links with other educational institutions enrich the curriculum.

### **Commentary**

26. Parents are very pleased with the school, with very few disagreeing with the positive statements in the questionnaire. The school provides good information for parents in the prospectus, the governors' annual report, newsletters and reports on pupils. School reports are individual to each pupil, and the accounts of progress in subjects are evaluative and thorough. Personal development is described well and targets are appropriate, but there are no references to National Curriculum levels of attainment other than in Year 2 and Year 6. Curriculum information is provided at the start of each year, but parents generally would like to receive curriculum information every term; only parents of pupils in some classes do so currently. Three parents have been given experience in the school in preparation for training for educational roles, and Workers Educational Association (WEA) courses on parenting skills take place in the school.

27. Parents are supportive in many ways: they raise funds through the parent teacher association, have reclassified the library after training by York library service, help in class, read with pupils, give expert demonstrations, for example on archaeology, dog handling, baby care and climbing, as well as helping with homework and reading. Parents are welcome in school and are involved in plans to tackle any behaviour problems. There is one consultation evening and one open evening each year, and a variety of events to which parents are invited, including assemblies. Parents are also welcome to meet with teachers informally throughout the year. Parents are consulted about wider issues through questionnaires and meetings. This has included meetings about the mixed age classes in Years 3 and 4, which were held on three evenings and were attended by the Chair of Governors, who had previously observed the classes involved and could therefore answer queries from first-hand experience. The most recent questionnaire shows an increase in satisfaction with the school between 2002 and 2004.



28. The very good links with the community are exemplified by the conference of school councils referred to earlier. In the local community, there are very good links with the Methodist and St Nicholas' churches. The elderly are invited into school for performances, and the choir performs for them at Christmas. The school makes a good contribution to the village's effort to win prizes for the quality of its gardens and, in return, receives help on environmental projects. A number of the villagers help with reading. The York Business and Education partnership provided the impetus for a study of the local disused railway that culminated in a 'Victorian Day'. A local business provided a laptop computer for a disabled pupil, and the local history group has helped with projects. There are also valuable links with the local education authority's Arts Service and with the local history group. These links serve to enrich the curriculum and enhance pupils' learning.

29. Pupils benefit from the extensive links that the school has developed with other schools and educational institutions. For example, the local playgroup is based on the school site and receives some services from the school. There is a strong collaboration that helps to enhance the attainment of pupils on entry to the school. The local cluster of primary schools, centred on Fulford School, runs athletics meetings at the school and organises a public speaking competition. They employ a computer technician, and Fulford invite schools to specialist science days. On transition to secondary school, there are three introductory sessions in Science and mathematics, and there are strong links between the heads of years 6 and 7, the special educational needs co-ordinators, and the headteachers and deputies. There is collaboration with the University of St John on initial teacher training and on setting up the links with Ghana. There is also involvement with the citizenship project to which the headteacher has made a major contribution, and links also with Canada and Singapore. The University of York has helped set up a science day and has chosen the school for joint projects on a 'music midi box' and a computerised reading tutor.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher leads the school well and encourages the development of imaginative approaches to teaching and learning. The management of the school is good, although the monitoring role of subject co-ordinators has not been sufficiently developed. Governance is good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher inspires and encourages colleagues to develop imaginative approaches to teaching and learning.
- The challenges presented by an increasing number of pupils are managed well.
- The monitoring role of subject co-ordinators is underdeveloped.
- The governors are well led by the chair of governors, and they are developing their roles effectively.

### **Commentary**

30. The headteacher has established an effective team that is mutually supportive, and parents are very pleased with the way the school is run. He enjoys a good, professional relationship with the chair of governors. The headteacher has clear ideas about the need for pupils to enjoy school and their learning, and he inspires colleagues to enhance the curriculum with imaginative approaches to teaching and learning that stimulate and motivate pupils. There have been a number of significant improvements to the way the school is led and managed since the arrival of the present headteacher three years ago. The post of deputy headteacher has been established, and the headteacher is now supported well by the deputy headteacher and the Key Stage 2 co-ordinator, who form the senior leadership team. They meet regularly and work well together to provide a clear strategic direction for the school.

31. The results of national tests are analysed carefully to identify areas of weakness in pupils' learning, and effective action is taken to address these weaknesses. For example, there has been a redeployment of teaching staff, and immediate action was taken to address standards in mathematics in Year 6. A particular challenge for the school is the management of increasing numbers of pupils in all year groups, due to the school's admissions policy. This requires yearly changes in the structure of classes that are managed well, and the school takes advantages of opportunities that arise. For example, there are three mixed age classes in Years 3 and 4 in the current year, and opportunities have been taken for joint planning and for the setting of pupils in English and mathematics. This met with parents' approval and was helped by the chair and vice chair of governors meeting with parents to explain the arrangement. However, the creative approaches adopted by individual teachers are not monitored and evaluated sufficiently to ensure they are effective and to enable the best practice to be shared between teachers.

32. Subject co-ordinators are enthusiastic and knowledgeable. They seek to promote their subjects and support colleagues in order to raise standards. However, their monitoring role is underdeveloped and does not allow them clearly to establish strengths and weaknesses in their subjects, so that the most effective practice can be shared across the school. Consequently, there are inconsistencies between classes that contribute to fluctuations from year to year in standards and in the school's national test results. Although planning for lessons is made available to co-ordinators, the school has yet to establish clear procedures for subject co-ordinators to monitor pupils' work and to observe lessons in their subjects regularly and with sufficient frequency. This is a significant constraint on their effectiveness. However, the school has identified the need to develop the monitoring role of co-ordinators in its evaluation of the school's performance. These constraints have less impact in the Foundation Stage, where clear systems that everyone understands and implements, enable all adults to work together very successfully as a team. Additionally, the special educational needs co-ordinator has developed well her own expertise and understanding of her role, so as to provide effective support for colleagues. She works effectively with outside agencies, and ensures that they are quickly and appropriately involved when pupils are identified as a cause for concern.

33. The school improvement plan is a succinct, annual document that provides a good basis for school improvement. It usefully identifies nine priorities for improvement and six further items of strategic intent. There are also clear action plans for subjects, such as English, mathematics and information and communication technology. Success criteria include improvements in pupils' attainment, but there is little reference to how these will be achieved through improvements to teaching and learning. This is likely to be linked to the limited opportunities available for subject co-ordinators to monitor teaching and learning in their subjects.

34. The governing body benefits from the strong leadership of the chair of governors. He is a frequent visitor to the school and ensures that governors are developing their role well. He is also effective in ensuring that parents are fully informed about changes in the school's organisation, such as the introduction of mixed age classes in Years 3 and 4, holding meetings to enable parents to raise concerns and to ask questions. This has had a beneficial impact on the improved partnership with parents. The governing body is well organised with a suitable number and range of committees, that are well led. Almost all governors visit the school with an agreed focus, to observe a lesson at least once each year. These visits are recorded and shared with the full governing body, both verbally and in writing. However, there is no formal arrangement that would ensure that this good practice is maintained and developed, following the anticipated changes in the personnel of the governing body. Nevertheless, governors have a sound understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school, and this allows them to make a positive contribution to strategic development. Governors join with the school staff each year for well planned discussions that lead to the identification of the priorities for school improvement. Statutory requirements are met fully.

**Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003**

<b>Income and expenditure (£)</b>	
Total income	540,303
Total expenditure	591,517
Expenditure per pupil	2,700

<b>Balances (£)</b>	
Balance from previous year	96,992
Balance carried forward to the next	45,778

35. Financial management is good, and careful attention is paid to the financial requirements of a growing school with many additions to the buildings. The amounts carried forward shown above are in excess of the recommended level. This is due to careful planning for the costs of two new classrooms this year, with two more classrooms to be added next year, and for the costs of furnishing and equipping these rooms.

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

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

36. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good. The school has maintained its level of provision since the previous inspection. Induction procedures are very good, and the children quickly settle into established routines. At the time of the inspection there were 30 children in reception. Six children are taught alongside pupils in Year 1 for part of the day. Information collected when children start school shows that, although their attainment varies from year to year, it generally exceeds national expectations in all areas of learning. By the end of reception, the majority of the children are on course to exceed the goals expected for their age. Their achievement is good, particularly because the majority of them spend only two terms in reception. Activities are interesting and well planned in accordance with national guidance. Assessment is satisfactory and tracks how well the children are doing in all areas. Resources are satisfactory for all areas of learning.

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

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

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

- Personal and social skills are promoted well in all the children do.
- Listening skills are well promoted.
- Behaviour is good.

37. Children's achievement is good, as a result of consistently good teaching. Most children concentrate very well, approach new learning with confidence and share resources sensibly. They are given many opportunities to speak about what they do, and this develops their confidence well. In addition, listening skills are effectively promoted at every opportunity. Children behave very well and they are happy during their time in school. Structured outdoor play is well planned and promotes many aspects of personal and social development, as well as reinforcing skills taught in other areas of learning. For example, children undertook an activity in which they imagined that they were ordering pizzas by telephone and writing out lists. Children learn about Christianity as they listen to stories from the Bible, and they have good opportunities to begin to develop the idea that people have different cultures and beliefs. Most children are on course to exceed the expected levels in this area.

### **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

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

- Children achieve well and have positive attitudes to learning.
- Speaking and listening skills are taught well.
- Writing skills are not always well promoted.
- Teaching assistants support the children well.

38. Children achieve well and most are on course to exceed the expected level in communication, language and literacy by the time they enter Year 1. Speaking and listening skills are developed well. Children have good opportunities to use their imagination and develop speaking and listening skills as they play in the 'estate agent's shop' that has been set up in the classroom. Children enjoy

listening to stories and learning the words of songs, such as their 'quiet song', which they sing as they line up for lunch. They quickly learn initial sounds, which they begin to put together as they read and write. Higher attaining children begin to blend two sounds together as they read, and most children read above or well above the standard expected for their ages. They are confident and show a good understanding of simple texts. Teaching is good, because activities are planned well and teaching assistants provide good support for children. There are good opportunities for children to practise their writing skills. Many children begin to write simple sentences independently, for example in producing information sheets on houses for the estate agent. However, adults do not always take opportunities to show children how to write their letters correctly during writing activities, and there are times when opportunities to develop basic dictionary skills are missed.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children show enthusiasm for the activities that they are offered.
- Activities are planned in an interesting way.
- Children have good opportunities to explain what they are doing.

39. In their mathematical development, children's achievement is good. They count easily up to ten and beyond. Higher attaining children confidently count in 5's and 10's up to 100. They all begin to develop a good understanding of the words associated with time, such as 'the day before' and 'the day after', as they learn the sequence of the days of the week. Learning is good in lessons, because children always work hard and concentrate well. In addition, teachers plan interesting activities, which effectively stimulate children and lead to enthusiastic responses. In lessons, adults give children good opportunities to explain their reasoning. Children's written work shows that they can handle information and can draw well-presented graphs, for example of their favourite fruits. They recognise well the names of two-dimensional shapes, and they are constantly reminded of the names of three-dimensional shapes as the mathematics groups are named after these. Teaching is good, and most children are on course to exceed the expected level.

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

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Visits into the local community, and visitors invited to the school enrich the curriculum.
- Computer skills are developed well.

40. Achievement is good and children's knowledge and understanding of the world is above the expected level by the time they start in Year 1. They begin to understand how they have changed since they were babies; their understanding was enhanced by a visitor who brought her baby to school for them to see. Teaching is good, because the children have good opportunities to reinforce and develop their understanding of past events. Visitors who come into school and well-planned visits greatly enrich the curriculum. For example, all reception children took part in The Early Years Art Festival in York during the inspection. They have recently visited the local village and named places they recognised, such as the estate agents and the pub. Children used computers to write sentences about their visit. Vocabulary, such as 'space bar', is promoted well, as they listen very carefully to instructions before beginning to write using the computers. As they develop their computer skills, opportunities are taken to reinforce learning in other areas, such as the need to start a sentence with a capital letter. Learning is good because the children concentrate well throughout

lessons and work hard. Children look at living things, and learn the names of different parts of the body and of plants. A microscope attached to the computer is used well to show children what 'mini beasts' look like. Whole-school initiatives, such as 'European Day', give the children an insight into the wider world. They learned about Italy, and they had great fun in working on activities that enhanced their knowledge of the country. They worked excitedly with pupils in Year 6 to make pasta.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

41. There is too little evidence to make a judgement on the provision for physical development. No teaching was seen in this area, and opportunities were limited because the children were out of school for one day during the inspection. Planning and photographic evidence shows that provision for physical development is planned well, and children are likely to exceed the expected level by the time they enter Year 1. Children use the hall and the spacious outdoor areas to develop their physical skills. There is a secure outside area, which is used to promote all areas of learning, although it is not directly linked to the reception classroom. Children develop their co-ordination skills well, including through the regular use of scissors, brushes and pencils.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

42. Too little teaching was seen to make an overall judgement on the provision for creative development. Planning and photographic evidence indicates that children have many opportunities to experiment with colour, to paint, to use crayons and to develop three-dimensional art. Teaching was good in one interesting activity that was seen. The teacher gave children good opportunities to use their imagination as they listened to the beat of a tambour as they acted out parts of a Bible story. Good links were made with previous work on how seeds grow, as children listened carefully, pretending first to be the seeds, then the rain and the sun. Learning was good in this lesson, because the teacher gave clear instructions and told the story effectively, so that the children remembered the sequence correctly.

## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

### ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils attain high standards and achieve well across the school.
- Teaching is good and stimulates pupils effectively.
- Information from analysing pupils' performance is used well to form teaching groups on the basis of attainment.
- Curriculum initiatives promote pupils' learning effectively.
- Although the subject is managed well, the co-ordinator does not have sufficient opportunities to monitor and evaluate standards of teaching and learning.
- Opportunities for writing are not fully exploited in other subjects.

#### Commentary

43. Good teaching overall enables all pupils, including those with special educational needs, to achieve well and to enjoy their lessons. Standards of speaking and listening are very good across the school. Standards in reading and writing are also very good at the end of Years 2 and 6, and a greater proportion of pupils attain above national expectations. The high standards attained by Year 6 pupils in the national tests in 2003 are being maintained. Standards have improved since the previous inspection.

44. Evidence from the inspection, and initial results of the 2004 national tests, show that Year 2 pupils are again attaining high standards. This represents a rise in standards from 2003 when the performance of Year 2 pupils was above the national average. This has been facilitated by changes in the deployment of teaching staff in infant classes over the last two years, and by curriculum improvements. The latter includes the introduction in Years 1 and 2 of activities that give pupils increased opportunities for reading and writing. There has also been greater stability in the Year 2 group of pupils. Last year, the significant number of pupils who joined Year 2 had a marked effect on overall levels of performance in the national tests in 2003.

45. Pupils enjoy their learning and this has a positive effect upon their good progress. Most pupils in Year 2 are enthusiastic readers. They talk keenly about some of their favourite authors and books, including the Harry Potter stories. Some use the local village library. Many Year 2 pupils learn to use interesting words to enliven their writing. When talking about how the school helps them to learn, pupils in Year 6 were very appreciative, as well as enthusiastic, in identifying some of the teaching approaches that enlivened their learning. These included helpful feedback from the teacher that shows them how to improve, the helpful structure they are given for story writing, collaborating with other pupils to write a story before writing independently and assessing their own learning by putting their thumbs up if they have achieved the learning intentions of the lesson. Interestingly, many of these comments reflect positively upon some of the school's curriculum initiatives, such as group reading, group writing, and increased self-assessment. Throughout the school, pupils have been involved in setting their own targets.

46. The quality of teaching and learning is good across the school, although it is inconsistent. Teachers make very good use of resources to provide a visual stimulus to support pupils' understanding. They also ensure that pupils are actively engaged in their tasks, which increases their interest and concentration. These methods, allied to very good subject knowledge and the good use of homework, contribute strongly to pupils' learning. In lessons, information and communication technology is used well to support the work of pupils with special educational needs,

but it is not used extensively to support the work of other pupils. In some lessons, the pace is too slow, and pupils do not produce enough work. Sometimes the learning intentions for the lesson are not shared with pupils and, although learning may be assessed at the end of the lesson, often teachers do not record these assessments.

47. The subject is managed well. Pupils benefit from the very good analysis of performance data, because this is used well to ensure that pupils work in groups that are suited to their capabilities and needs. However, the subject leader does not have sufficient opportunity to evaluate learning in the subject by observing teaching or by scrutinising pupils' work; this limits his ability to identify strengths and weaknesses in the subject and to extend the best practice to other classes.

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

48. Speaking and listening skills are often developed well in other lessons, as pupils are encouraged to talk, whether in pairs, groups or in whole class discussion. However, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills in other subjects, such as science and the humanities.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are high and pupils achieve well across the school.
- Pupils enjoy lessons and are enthusiastic.
- Teaching is good across the school, although there are some inconsistencies.
- The co-ordinator's role is underdeveloped.

### **Commentary**

49. Standards are high at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6, and pupils achieve well across the school. This accords with the results in national tests in 2003 in Year 2, and reflects an improvement on the results in Year 6. The reason that the results in national tests in Year 6 in 2003 fell to above average was, predominantly, that fewer pupils attained the higher Level 5, although it was also the case that too many pupils failed to attain the nationally expected Level 4. The school has responded to these results by focusing on the regular and systematic development and practice of basic skills, and this has successfully improved standards this year; this is reflected in the improved results in the national tests in 2004. Standards have improved since the previous inspection.

50. Pupils develop a very good understanding of the number system. In Year 2, they have a very quick, mental recall of number facts and some multiplication facts while, in Year 6, they recall all multiplication facts to 12x12 quickly and use this knowledge to solve multiplication and division problems with ease. This allows pupils to engage in the tasks set for them with confidence and to enjoy the challenges set for them by teachers.

51. Teaching is good across the school, although it is variable, and some of the best practices are inconsistently applied. In the best lessons, the learning objectives for the lesson are shared clearly with pupils, so that they are aware of what they are learning and why they are learning it. There is a brisk pace to the lesson and pupils are very productive, because the teacher has high expectations of what they can achieve. Pupils respond well, showing enthusiasm and much concentration. Assessment of pupils' learning is used very well to plan tasks with different levels of difficulty that match the varying learning needs of the pupils; this ensures that all pupils are working at tasks that are suitably challenging and maximises the rate of learning. However, in some lessons all pupils are given the same task, because assessment is not good enough to inform the planning of



the next stage of each pupil's learning. This was particularly so in lessons seen during the inspection for the oldest pupils and contributes to the variations in the results in national tests at the end of Year 6. Relationships are good, and this allows all teachers to admonish pupils gently yet effectively when necessary. Good use is made of homework to extend pupils' learning, but little use was made of information and communication technology in the learning of mathematics during the inspection.

52. The co-ordinator leads the subject well and provides good support for colleagues. She analyses the results of the national tests well and is clear about aspects of pupils' learning that need improvement. However, the co-ordinator's monitoring role is underdeveloped, and she is, therefore, unable to develop a clear understanding of strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning across the school. This is needed to make it possible to share the most effective practice and ensure that high standards are maintained from year to year. There are also insufficient, planned opportunities to monitor pupils' written work. This monitoring is particularly difficult to undertake, because there are times when little recorded work is available for scrutiny; this means that the evaluation of learning by observing lessons is all the more important.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

53. Pupils' numeracy skills are suitably developed in other subjects, particularly science, and design and technology. They make careful and accurate measurements, and good numeracy skills enable them confidently to engage in carrying out experiments and to undertake design projects.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision for science is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are very good in Years 3 to 6.
- Visits and visitors enhance pupils' learning.
- Work is not always matched well to the needs of all pupils.
- There is no effective system to monitor the quality of teaching and learning.
- Marking of pupils' work does not sufficiently show them how they can improve their standards.

### **Commentary**

54. Achievement is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2, and good in Years 3 to 6. Standards are above average at the end of Year 2; this is an improvement on the teacher assessments in 2003 and is similar to those reported at the previous inspection. The reason for this is that the number of pupils reaching the higher Level 3 has increased significantly this year. Standards are well above average in science by the end of Year 6. This reflects the results of national tests in 2003 and is an improvement on those at the time of the previous inspection.

55. Pupils' written work is limited in most year groups and particularly in Year 6. However, pupils' work shows that they have many opportunities to take part in practical activities to develop and reinforce scientific skills. Work is sometimes unfinished, and teachers' marking is weak and does not effectively inform the pupils of what they need to do to improve. The skills of scientific enquiry are not promoted as effectively as they could be, and throughout the school, there are too few opportunities to use scientific terminology to record, in a variety of ways, what pupils have done.

56. Only two lessons were seen and it is, therefore, not possible to make a secure judgement about teaching and learning. However, it is likely to be good, on the basis of evidence of the progress pupils make, conversations with pupils, and an examination of pupils' work and teachers' planning. In the lessons seen, most pupils listened well during initial discussions, although, because

these were too long, a few did not. Teachers questioned pupils well, and many pupils were keen to show what they knew. The use of assessment to plan activities that took account of pupils' previous learning was inconsistent, and the more able pupils are not always sufficiently challenged. There is little evidence of information and communication technology being used to support learning in the subject. During the inspection, a visitor came into school to talk to the pupils in Years 3 and 4 about animals and their habitats. This session was literally brought to life, as the speaker brought in a selection of animals to show to pupils. Later on during the inspection, these classes visited a local nature reserve to do pond dipping and take part in other activities. Such visits and visitors to the school enhance pupils' learning in the subject.

57. The subject is satisfactorily led and managed. The co-ordinator has a very accurate perception of standards in Years 2 and 6. However, systems in place to monitor the quality of teaching and learning in science are ineffective and do not provide the co-ordinator with a clear view of the quality of pupils' written work. Resources are satisfactory.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Curriculum planning has developed well and makes appropriate use of national guidance.
- There is insufficient monitoring of teaching and learning by the subject co-ordinator.
- There is insufficient use of ICT to support learning in some subjects.

### **Commentary**

58. Standards of attainment in Year 2 and Year 6 meet national expectations, but are not as high as they were judged to be at the time of the previous inspection. All pupils achieve satisfactorily, including those with special educational needs. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 develop basic keyboard skills to produce text, simple charts and graphs. Older pupils use spreadsheets, have experience of sending email and use the internet for research. Only two lessons were observed during the inspection. However, the evidence from these, from talking with teachers and pupils about their work in the subject, from examining pupils' work in files on the computer and on paper, and from looking at teachers' planning, indicates that the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory.

59. There have been improvements since the previous inspection that include the development of both the computer suite and of staff expertise, and the appointment of a subject co-ordinator. However, there is insufficient monitoring of lessons by the subject co-ordinator. In the two lessons observed, some good teaching and learning was seen as pupils worked very effectively together at computers. Year 1 pupils showed a good understanding of the bar charts they were producing to show their favourite fruits. Year 6 pupils worked on sequencing the switching on and off of kitchen equipment, such as kettles, toasters and radios. They agreed that it was challenging, but enjoyable, and they developed their understanding and skills of control technology well. The school draws successfully upon national guidance as a basis for planning, and this ensures that pupils experience all elements of the subject. Pupils enjoy regular use of the computer suite, although classroom computers are used less effectively.

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

60. Some useful links are made to support work in other subjects and the school is developing its provision in this area. Examples of this include word processing in history, the use of a graphics program in art and of the internet for research in geography. However, opportunities to use ICT for recording pupils' work and for data handling in science and mathematics are not exploited fully.

## HUMANITIES

61. No history lessons and only one geography lesson were seen during the inspection. Work recorded this year from a cross section of pupils in every class was scrutinised. Very little work was in evidence from pupils in Year 6. However, **geography** and **history** are being taught to all pupils in line with the requirements of the National Curriculum. It was not possible to make firm judgements on standards at the end of each key stage, though indications are that they are broadly in line with expectations. On their recent field trip to Lindisfarne, a great deal of work was completed during the week, particularly in history. Throughout the school, good use of the local area, and the attention to fieldwork and mapping skills in geography have been well maintained since the previous inspection.

62. A scrutiny of pupils' work indicates that the quality of teaching in both subjects is satisfactory overall. In geography, numeracy skills are very well used for graphs, pie charts and map reading. Although literacy skills are reinforced in history through the use of a wide variety of writing styles, in neither subject is sufficient attention paid to handwriting, spelling and punctuation. It is evident that pupils are given appropriate opportunities for independent research, using both texts and the internet.

63. In the geography lesson seen, the teacher showed good knowledge and understanding of the subject, and provided challenging activities appropriately matched to the different abilities of pupils, including one with English as an additional language. However, this was not evident in the scrutiny of pupils' work in either subject, where the work set was generally the same for pupils of all abilities.

### Religious education

Provision in religious education is **good** and improving.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Improvements in the management and monitoring of the curriculum are leading to improvements in standards of attainment.
- Pupils in Years 3 to 6 are underachieving.
- Teaching is good in Years 1 and 2.
- Religious education makes a significant contribution to pupils' personal development.

### Commentary

64. Standards are good in Years 1 and 2, and they have improved since the previous inspection. Standards in Years 3 to 6 are similar to those reported at the previous inspection, when they were broadly in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Recognising the need for improvement, the school made this subject a priority for development in the current year. The weaknesses in provision and delivery have been addressed, and the new locally agreed syllabus has been adopted and implemented. This clear guidance, which has been well received by members of staff, now ensures that pupils' knowledge and understanding are built upon from year to year. The co-ordinator enthusiastically supports colleagues and has a clear vision of what needs to be done in order to raise standards, and this is proving effective in Years 1 and 2. Simple assessment procedures have been introduced, but these do not provide sufficient information for individual progress to be monitored.

65. The work seen in lessons and that recorded in pupils' books, is broadly in line with expectations. However, considering the capabilities pupils demonstrate in English, this represents underachievement. The small amount of work produced by Year 6 pupils over the year and the pace at which Year 5 pupils worked in the lesson seen, confirm this. Some of the reasons for their

underachievement are the inconsistent school approach in previous years, a lack of teacher expertise, and deficiencies in the monitoring of pupils' learning. These weaknesses have now been recognised and are being addressed, but this has not had sufficient time to have a real impact on standards of attainment of the oldest pupils.

66. From the scrutiny of work and the lesson seen, teaching is satisfactory overall, although it is sometimes very good in Years 1 and 2. It was very refreshing to witness young pupils in Year 1 reflecting on a visit to the local church by recounting what they had seen, heard and smelled, and how this had made them *feel*, rather than just drawing and writing about what they had seen. In one lesson, the teacher used skilful management and questioning techniques to help create a very calm, peaceful atmosphere. The pupils felt confident and listened sensitively to each other as feelings were recalled, and this contributed to their spiritual development. Literacy skills are sensitively and effectively reinforced. In addition to the good opportunities for speaking and listening, writing skills are also developed. For example, in Year 2, pupils wrote invitations to special events, such as a wedding and a celebration of Hanukah.

67. Pupils throughout the school are provided with good opportunities for social development. They are encouraged to respect and listen to the views of others, with religious education lessons playing a significant part in this aspect of their development. Pupils in Year 6 were seen working very co-operatively in small groups as they recalled what they had seen on a visit to Durham Cathedral. Through visits to places of worship, such as a mosque and the local church, and learning about Christianity, Judaism and Islam, pupils are helped to compare their own beliefs and customs with those of others. The pupils behaved impeccably in all the lessons seen. However, particularly in Years 3 to 6, they were not always sufficiently motivated to generate real enthusiasm and excitement, nor helped to deepen their understanding of faith.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

68. No lessons were seen in physical education and only one lesson was seen in each of music, art and design, and design and technology. It is not possible, therefore, to make secure judgements about the quality of the provision in these subjects. There was too little evidence of pupils' work to make secure judgements about standards of attainment. However, inspectors spoke to teachers and pupils and scrutinised planning documents. Pupils were also observed taking part in some extra curricular activities. From this evidence, it is clear that curriculum planning is satisfactory. Visitors enrich the creative subjects well. For example, a visitor has worked with most pupils in the school to develop skills needed when using clay. However, there is little evidence of monitoring of teaching and learning by the subject co-ordinators.

69. Pupils' cultural development is reinforced very well when teachers plan lessons about art from other countries in **art and design**. This work is often stimulated by visits from people from across the world. For example, as a result of talking to and working with visitors from Japan, pupils used paper to develop three-dimensional faces of cats and dogs. Pupils in Years 1 and 3 made toys from recyclable materials in the style of those found in Africa. One very good lesson was seen in which pupils in Year 5 used clay to make thumb pots. The teacher's initial explanation was very good and this enabled all pupils to understand exactly what they had to do. In particular, all instructions on how to work with clay were followed very accurately by pupils as they developed delicate designs on their pots. Pupils in Year 6 followed their designs carefully as they made moving vehicles in a **design and technology** lesson. They worked very well in groups as they sensibly and safely used tools, such as hand drills and saws. Pupils used measuring skills, learnt in mathematics, accurately to measure lengths of wood. The teaching seen was good, with some very good aspects. The teacher explained clearly how to use the tools at the beginning of the lesson and reinforced the need for safety very well. As a result of this good teaching and the pupils' very positive attitudes, all worked confidently and co-operatively. The teacher interacted well with groups of pupils, showing secure subject knowledge and his very good relationships with the class. Pupils' attitudes are also very good and this contributes positively to their learning. There is little evidence of ICT being used to support either subject.

70. In **music**, pupils are enthusiastic and enjoy singing. They sing tunefully in assembly with all taking an active part. Resources are used well, and some of them promote multicultural awareness effectively. Satisfactory planning draws upon a commercial scheme and reflects national guidance. In the lesson observed, pupils in Year 5 showed good awareness of beat, rhythm and pulse as they responded well to good classroom management and clear guidance from their teacher. Pupils' learning is further enriched by groups which visit the school, such as 'World Music', and is reflected in the recent achievement by the school of the national Artsmark award. In **physical education** pupils experience a broad range of curricular activities which cover all the required aspects of the subject. Swimming is offered to pupils in Year 3. Dance is an activity that has increased in prominence and has been positively received by boys and girls in Years 3 to 6. The pupils benefit from good facilities for physical education. They also take a full part in the range of club activities that includes football, rounders, rugby and dance, which give them additional opportunities to increase both their skills and their enjoyment of physical activity.

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

### **Personal, social and health education**

Provision in personal, social and health education (PSHE) is **good**.

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

- Opportunities in assemblies and circle time are used effectively.
- PSHE has been identified as an area for curriculum development.

#### **Commentary**

71. Assemblies for junior pupils effectively address topics such as belonging to a family, charities, safety and different types of government. In Years 1 and 2, pupils have birthday and citizenship assemblies. Pupils also benefit from sessions of circle time, when pupils share personal experiences or explore issues with each other in a supportive, trusting and friendly environment. This approach is being extended throughout the school. PSHE has recently been identified as an area for curriculum development, and a subject leader has been appointed. Currently, planning and timetable provision often allows limited time for lessons in some year groups.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
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
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>2</b>
Pupils' achievement	3
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>2</b>
Attendance	2
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>3</b>
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	2
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	4
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).*