

INSPECTION REPORT

HOB MOOR COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

York

LEA area: City of York

Unique reference number: 133609

Headteacher: Mr K Jarvis

Lead inspector: Mr F P Ravey

Dates of inspection: 1 – 3 December 2003

Inspection number: 256450

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 –11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll;	271
School address:	Green Lane Acomb York
Postcode:	YO24 4PS
Telephone number:	01904 791140
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Barry Bishop
Date of previous inspection:	None

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Hob Moor Community Primary School opened on the present school site in September 2002, as an amalgamation of the former infant and junior schools. The school has 271 pupils on roll, slightly more than the average for primary schools nationally. A significant number of pupils join or leave school at other than the usual times of transfer. Last year this amounted to nearly 19 per cent of the number on roll. The great majority of pupils are of White British ethnic background. No pupil is at the early stages of learning English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils having special educational needs is above the national average. These needs relate to specific learning difficulties; speech and communication, behaviour and physical disability. Five pupils have statements of special educational need, a figure that is above the national average. Pupils are mostly grouped into classes each containing a span of two year groups. There is one single age class (in Year2). Pupils' entitlement to free school meals is above the national average. Attainment on entry to the school is below average. The school has close educational links with a unit, on the same site, of two classes for pupils with autism, part of a local special school. Plans have been made to build a new school building on the present site within the next two years, and to extend the range of educational facilities on the site.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
11371	Mr F Ravey	Lead inspector	Science, Information and communication technology, music
19426	Mr C Farris	Lay inspector	
22359	Mrs J Havard	Team inspector	Foundation Stage, geography, history, religious education
33243	Mr G Mitchell	Team inspector	Mathematics, physical education
27777	Mr R Greenall	Team inspector	English, special educational needs, art and design, design and technology

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a satisfactory school overall. It has some significant strengths in teaching and achievement in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 to 4, but weaknesses in Years 5 and 6 detract from its overall effectiveness. Standards are below average overall by Year 6 but show improvement on last year. The leadership team is driving improvement in a strong and purposeful way, although the benefits are slower to become evident in Years 5 and 6 than elsewhere in the school. This school is clearly moving forward, although it still faces some significant challenges. Overall, it provides satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils achieve well in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 to 4, owing to good teaching and a stimulating curriculum.
- Teaching in Years 5 and 6 is weaker than elsewhere in the school and this leads to pupils in these year groups not achieving as well as they should although recent improvement is evident.
- The quality, number and use of support staff have a positive impact upon pupils' learning.
- The headteacher provides good and inspirational leadership of the staff team, resulting in steady but noticeable improvements, and an ethos that is continuing to promote this.
- Attendance is well below average and punctuality is poor.
- The governing body has not yet formally adopted new policies and procedures for race equality and child protection for the amalgamated school.
- The developing links in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2, with other schools and organisations, are having a positive impact upon children's early learning and are evidence of the school's strong commitment to inclusion.
- The school forges a good partnership with parents.
- There are not enough planned opportunities for pupils to learn about life in our ethnically diverse society

This recently amalgamated school has had no previous inspection. However, since the amalgamation just over a year ago, the school has made some significant improvements, especially in relation to the behaviour and attitudes of some of pupils, particularly in Year 6, and in developing a purposeful, shared ethos for improvement throughout the school. Together with improved teamwork and assessment, this better behaviour and improved attitudes are starting to raise standards.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001*	2002*	2003	2003
English	Not applicable	Not applicable	E*	E*
mathematics	Not applicable	Not applicable	E*	E*
science	Not applicable	Not applicable	E*	E*

*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.*

**As this is a newly amalgamated school, no national test scores are available for 2001 and 2002.*

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall. However, it varies across the school, being strongest in Years 1 and 2 and weakest in Year 6, where it is unsatisfactory overall. Achievement in the Foundation Stage is good. The national test results for Year 6 pupils in 2003 were very low. The E* grades indicate that results were amongst the bottom five per cent in the country. The results

compared with similar schools last year indicate low achievement by that group of pupils. Standards in the present Year 6 show improvement on the 2003 results, especially in mathematics and science, although they remain below average in these subjects. Standards in English are well below average in Year 6. In other year groups throughout the school, pupils achieve well. At Year 2, standards are below average in English whilst standards in mathematics are broadly average. This represents improvement on the 2003 National Curriculum test results in mathematics but presents a broadly similar picture in English. Standards in science are average at Year 2. Given pupils' below average attainment on entry to the school, reaching these standards by Year 2 represents good achievement. In other subjects seen during the inspection, pupils throughout the school achieve at least satisfactorily and, in information and communication technology, they achieve well.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are satisfactory. Strengths lie in the way in which pupils' moral awareness and social skills are developed. A weakness is that there are not enough opportunities to prepare pupils for life in an ethnically diverse society. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are satisfactory overall and are good in most age groups. In Years 5 and 6, pupils' behaviour is satisfactory overall. Many pupils in the Years 5 and 6 classes behave well but the negative attitudes of a small number of pupils sometimes result in a less effective ethos for learning than is seen in other age groups in the school.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is satisfactory overall, with strengths and weaknesses. **The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall.** It is best in Years 1 and 2, where high expectations and stimulating learning opportunities sometimes result in very good learning and achievement. Teaching is also good in the Foundation Stage, where learning opportunities are interesting and varied, and in Years 3 and 4. Some good teaching was also seen in Years 5 and 6 but in these year groups teaching is less effective in its impact upon pupils' achievement although signs of improvement are evident. The way in which the school is developing a team approach between teachers and teaching assistants has a good impact on learning in many lessons. The school works very hard to integrate into its provision pupils from a local special school who have severe special educational needs, and this enhances the provision it makes for pupils with special educational needs.

The school takes good care of its pupils and provides them with a good level of pastoral support. Good links with parents contribute well to the school's largely positive ethos and provide satisfactory support overall for pupils' learning. Educational links with other schools are good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. The recently appointed headteacher has a strong and purposeful vision of success for the school, one which is shared by all staff. Together with his senior team, he is successfully building a staff team that is beginning to make this vision a reality by effecting some key improvements. The management of the school has had a strong impact upon pupils' behaviour and ethos through the policies and procedures put successfully in place. In relation to improving standards, the impact of management varies between phases of education and subjects, but is satisfactory overall, having a strengthening influence on the quality of teaching and learning. The governance of the school is satisfactory although revised policies and procedures for the amalgamated school are not yet all in place.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents and pupils have positive views of the school. Parents are very largely satisfied with the work of the school. Pupils also express high levels of satisfaction.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Raise standards in English, mathematics and science and improve pupils' achievement in these subjects in Years 5 and 6;
- improve the quality of teaching where it is less effective, and particularly in Years 5 and 6;
- improve attendance and punctuality;
- provide pupils with a greater number of planned opportunities to learn about life in an ethnically diverse society.

and, to meet statutory requirements:

- ensure that all revised policies and procedures for the newly amalgamated school are in place and particularly those relating to race equality and child protection.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Achievement in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2 is **good**. In Years 3 and 4, achievement is mostly **good**. In Years 5 and 6, achievement is **unsatisfactory**. Standards at Year 2 are average in mathematics and science and below average in English. Standards at Year 6 are below average in mathematics and science and well below average in English.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well overall from Foundation Stage to Year 4, owing to good teaching, work that is well matched to their learning needs and a stimulating curriculum.
- Achievement in Years 5 and 6 is unsatisfactory. This is due to lack of challenge in some lessons and to some pupils' negative attitudes to work.
- Pupils achieve well in lessons in information and communication technology (ICT) owing to confident teaching, good support from teaching assistants and good quality resources.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in many lessons, owing to clear targets for learning and good support from teaching assistants.

Commentary

1. The picture of achievement in this recently amalgamated school is a complex and varied one. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 overall do not achieve as well as they should in the core subjects but achievement is much better throughout the rest of the school. Pupils in other year groups achieve well. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs matches that of the year groups in which they are taught. High attaining pupils largely achieve as well as they should except in the Year 5 and 6 classes. Achievement of pupils in lessons seen during the inspection was very largely satisfactory in the Year 5 and 6 classes and often good or better in other classes throughout the school. The satisfactory achievement in lessons in Years 5 and 6 is evident in recent work in pupils' books. It is also evident in discussions with pupils aimed at ascertaining their competence in reading. This reflects the school's success in building a learning environment that is increasingly effective – this is proving a more difficult task with some of the older pupils but satisfactory progress is being made.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
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reading	15.1	15.7 (15.8)
writing	14.4	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	15.7	16.3 (16.5)

There were 36 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	22.8	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	23.2	26.8 (26.7)
science	25.2	28.6 (28.3)

There were 57 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

- In the two tables shown above, the differences in the gaps between the school and national scores last year are significant. At Year 2, there was only a small difference between the school and national pictures, especially in reading and writing. In Year 6, the school's scores are much lower than national scores in all subjects.
- This year, the picture is broadly similar at Year 2, with standards close to nationally expected levels, if a little below them in English. With pupils starting school having below average attainment overall, this closeness to national levels indicates good progress and good achievement. At Year 6, the picture has improved, with standards moving closer to national levels. However, standards remain below the nationally expected levels in mathematics and science, and well below in English. It is in the writing aspect of English that standards lag furthest behind in Year 6 whereas, in reading, they are closer to the expected levels, although still below them.
- Children start the Foundation Stage with below average attainment overall. They make good progress and achieve well in order to reach standards close to national expectations by Year 2. This good achievement was reflected in lessons seen during the inspection. All groups of pupils work hard and to their capacity in many lessons. The basis for their good attitudes to work lies in good relationships with teachers and teaching assistants. The reason for their good achievement lies mainly in the good expectations that teachers have of what pupils are capable of and the way they plan work and conduct lessons in order to meet these expectations. The practical nature and good quality of learning opportunities provided also helps pupils achieve well.
- In Years 3 and 4, standards of work seen during the inspection were generally below average in English and mathematics and broadly average in science. However, pupils of all levels of attainment mostly achieve well in lessons, owing to teaching that effectively meets their learning needs.
- Last year's national test results indicate that pupils in Year 6 were not making satisfactory progress over time and that their achievement was poor. Improvement is evident in standards in

Year 6 this year. However, given that pupils had a starting point of below average attainment when they first entered school, standards in the core subjects that are presently below average overall indicate unsatisfactory achievement in this year group. In Years 5 and 6, the satisfactory achievement seen in most lessons and the rise in standards from last year are due largely to improvements in behaviour achieved in Year 6 and to the purposeful ethos that prevails in the school. Added to this are some strengths in teaching for these pupils, for example in the teaching of mathematics for pupils with special educational needs in Years 5 and 6, which has been aided by the school's policy of grouping pupils by attainment for mathematics.

As a result of better teamwork and assessment, pupils in Years 5 and 6 are getting a better level of challenge and support in relation to their different capabilities.

7. In other subjects, pupils' achievement is at least satisfactory. In ICT, it is good. This is due to the success of the school's investment in resources for ICT and to good teaching of the planned curriculum. The good contribution of teaching assistants in ICT lessons helps pupils to achieve well.
8. Children with special educational needs make good progress in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 to 4 because of well-prepared teaching and effective support. In Years 5 and 6, progress is more uneven because of less consistent quality of provision, although it remains satisfactory. The progress of other pupils who are falling below the standard expected for their age is improving because of better use of assessment and support, which has resulted in the good use of programmes targeted at specific pupils and a much raised awareness by staff of this issue. However, the school has not yet developed systems to identify and foster particular gifts and talents.
9. Last year, the school's targets for pupils' attainment in English and mathematics at Year 6 were unrealistically high. This year's targets are more modest but much more realistic. They provide further evidence of the school's increasingly secure grasp of what individual pupils are capable of achieving.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are **satisfactory overall**. Provision for developing moral awareness and social skills is **good**. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are **satisfactory overall**. They are good from Foundation Stage to Year 4 and satisfactory overall in Years 5 and 6 although a few pupils in Years 5 and 6 at times show unsatisfactory attitudes to work and do not behave as well as they should. Attendance is **well below** the national average and punctuality remains poor despite the school's considerable efforts to make improvements.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Most pupils show positive attitudes to school and behave well.
- A small minority of pupils in Years 5 and 6 show negative attitudes in some lessons and sometimes behave unsatisfactorily in lessons.
- The school is successful overall in developing its pupils' moral awareness and social skills.
- There are not enough opportunities provided for raising pupils' awareness of ethnic diversity.

Commentary

10. Most pupils are interested in school life. When teachers inspire their confidence and set realistic yet challenging targets for them, pupils are willing to share their views and contribute well in lessons. Good relationships in many classes are the basis for pupils' positive attitudes although a small number of pupils in Year 6 are negative about their work on occasions. Pupils enjoy taking part in the extra-curricular activities that the school offers. Pupils' views expressed in the pre-inspection questionnaire they completed indicate positive attitudes to school.

11. Most pupils throughout the school behave well but there is some challenging behaviour from a small minority in the Year 5 and 6 classes. This is mostly managed appropriately by teachers and teaching assistants but on occasions it disrupts learning. Most pupils behave responsibly throughout the school day. Behaviour is good in the dining hall, and the older pupils offer thoughtful support to younger ones as part of a family group structure in the dining arrangements. A club is run for pupils who find the playground atmosphere difficult over the lunch break. This demonstrates the school's caring ethos and contributes to good standards of behaviour mostly evident at lunchtime.

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	228	20	0
White – Irish	1	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	3	0	0

The table gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

12. The rate of exclusion last year was very high. Most of the pupils excluded were from the, then, Year 6 group. So far this year there have been two fixed-period exclusions, a significant reduction from last year. The school's detailed records show the poor standard of behaviour in Years 5 and 6 last year. The contrast with this year is considerable, even though the behaviour and attitudes of a few pupils in Year 6 are still unsatisfactory. However, the great majority of pupils in Years 5 and 6 behave at least satisfactorily and many behave well. This indicates significant improvement from last year. The improvement is due in large part to the development of a shared ethos in the school that promotes good relationships, and the development by teachers with their pupils of shared and effective codes of conduct. In this, staff work effectively as a team, led well by the headteacher. In other year groups, behaviour is good. This good behaviour is assisted by the good relationships that teachers have with their pupils and to the challenging nature of work provided for them.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year 2002

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	8.2	School data	1.8
National data	5.8	National data	0.4

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

13. Attendance during the last reporting year was well below the national average. Unauthorised absence was very high. Pupils' punctuality was also poor, with late arrival after the registers' close accounting for most of the unauthorised absence. However, the school's practice of closing registers soon after they are called leads to attendance being understated, since many pupils arriving late are categorised as 'unauthorised absence,' even though the pupils involved have arrived at school. Attendance figures would be more realistic if registers were left open a little longer. The school works very hard at promoting attendance. It has instigated a number of initiatives this year that are starting to make a positive impact on the figures, particularly the development of a pupil-parent partnership to improve attendance and punctuality, managed by a senior teacher. Overall, absence for the current year is running at 2 per cent below last year's figures, with unauthorised absence down by nearly a third. This indicates good improvement.
14. The school makes good provision for pupils' personal and social development. For example, its personal, social, health education and citizenship programme is used effectively to improve the self-image of the pupils. It encourages them to focus on themselves as members of a larger group and to have care for the needs of everyone. School rules are discussed regularly with pupils and the importance of good behaviour is stressed in lessons and during assemblies. Specific pupils are identified to help others in need of a friend, thereby helping to build a strong ethos of care. Pupils in Year 6 are rightly encouraged to assume some degree of responsibility in the school, such as taking registers to the office, opening doors and making sure that areas of the school are tidy. They rise to the challenge and perform these tasks well. They also help younger pupils at lunchtime, once again contributing well to the school's developing ethos. A school council is in the process of being set up, and much time has been allocated to discuss the purpose of this and how it will operate. Assemblies form effective acts of Christian worship, which encourage pupils to focus on spiritual and moral issues.
15. The school provides satisfactory opportunities for pupils to develop awareness of other faiths, by means of its programme of work for religious education. For example, during the inspection, some good work was seen in relation to pupils in Years 1 and 2 making diya lamps as part of their studies about Diwali. However, there are limited planned opportunities across the curriculum to raise pupils' awareness of the ethnic diversity of our society and resources do not sufficiently reflect this aspect of the curriculum. For example, the school library has very few books that celebrate the cultures of ethnic minorities and there is little evidence of pupils having experience of non-Western art in their creative work.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is satisfactory overall.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are **satisfactory overall**. In the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 to 4, teaching is **good overall**. However, in Years 5 to 6, teaching has **weaknesses** that act as a barrier to achievement.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good, enabling children to achieve well and make a good start to their education.
- Teaching is good overall in Years 1 to 4, with some very good teaching evident.
- Good and very good teaching is characterised by high expectations of what all groups of pupils should achieve and by work that is well planned to help them do so.
- Effective use is made of teaching assistants throughout the school.
- Relationships form a good foundation for learning in many lessons but more especially from Foundation Stage to Year 4.

- Teaching in Years 5 and 6 is weaker than elsewhere in the school. As a result, pupils do not achieve as well as they should.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 45 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0 (0%)	9 (19%)	23(49%)	14(30%)	1(2%)	0(0%)	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.

16. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is characterised by effective teamwork and by staff's very good understanding of how to meet the learning needs of young children. All staff have high expectations of how well children should behave and they provide a learning environment that is both welcoming and stimulating. As a result, children are keen to learn and benefit from the learning opportunities provided for them.
17. In Years 1 to 4, teachers have a similarly high level of expectation of what pupils should achieve. They plan work carefully to meet pupils' different learning needs. It is noticeable that pupils often have different tasks set for them, helping to make sure that there is the right level of challenge in their work. All staff relate well to pupils and this results in a good working environment. Pupils respond well and behave sensibly when given opportunities to work independently, whether in the classrooms or in corridors and other areas. In this regard, teaching builds effectively upon the good promotion of independent learning seen in the Foundation Stage. Staff also encourage pupils to work together to develop their learning, and provide a good range of practical opportunities for this to happen.
18. A strength of the teaching is the good teamwork between teachers and teaching assistants. The development of 'paired' teacher/teaching assistant teams has been an initiative of the school's management since amalgamation, and its success is evident throughout the school. Teaching assistants are well briefed in their work and go about it successfully, in a way that makes them a 'natural' part of the learning environment. Often this assistance is focused upon the work of pupils with special educational needs but it also contributes strongly to the achievement of other groups of pupils. An example of this was seen in a Year 2 science lesson, when a group of higher attaining pupils worked very successfully under the guidance of an assistant to develop their understanding of electrical circuits. The good quality of teaching from Foundation Stage to Year 4 is underlined by the fact that, during the inspection, over 80 per cent of lessons observed in these year groups was at least good, with around a quarter of all lessons judged very good.
19. Teaching in Years 5 and 6 is less effective than in other year groups. Although teachers' approach to using assessment information to target pupils who are not achieving as well as they should is beginning to have a positive impact upon learning, work provided is generally not matched sufficiently closely to the learning needs of pupils. As a result, it does not provide the right level of challenge for some pupils, especially high attainers. This is compounded by the negative attitudes of a few pupils and by the high level of special educational needs in some classes. As a result, occasionally, relationships between teachers and pupils are not as positive as they should be, and the learning environment is less effective than in other year groups, with some underachievement taking place. Whilst much of the teaching observed in Years 5 and 6 during the inspection was satisfactory overall, it was sometimes not strong enough to enable pupils with complex needs to learn successfully. Where teaching in Years 5 and 6 was good, there was a better match of work to pupils' levels of attainment and more effective pupil management. An example of this was when pupils with special educational needs were grouped together in mathematics as part of the school's recent arrangements to organise pupils by

attainment in this subject, and were provided with work that was well suited to their learning needs. Also, in an English lesson, pupils were provided with work that interested them greatly and challenged them appropriately, and according to their level of attainment. As a result, they achieved well.

20. Careful planning and good teamwork between teachers and teaching assistants lead to good support and learning for pupils with special educational needs, especially in Years 1 to 4. These pupils understand their targets, and teachers often sensitively pair them with partners who help them learn. Teachers include them fully in all aspects of the lessons.
21. The school is developing a satisfactory range of assessment procedures. Pupils' work is marked regularly although the type of feedback given to pupils as part of this process is inconsistent. At best, pupils are provided with challenging comments and suggestions for improvement, and the impact of this is checked by the teacher. Examples of this were found in several year groups, including Years 5 and 6, where some especially good marking was evident in science. The school is developing a satisfactory system of setting learning targets for individual pupils based upon analysis of test data. This analysis is now being used to help identify individual pupils' learning needs, with underachieving pupils being targeted in particular and teachers planning work in order to improve their achievement.

The curriculum

The school provides a **good** range of learning opportunities in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2. In Years 3 to 6, the provision is **satisfactory overall**, with strengths and weaknesses.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has a strong commitment to enabling all pupils to get the most out of their education.
- Provision for higher attaining pupils is good overall in Years 1 to 4 and unsatisfactory overall in Years 5 and 6.
- Good provision of teaching assistants is having a positive impact upon pupils' learning.
- The school is developing successful ways of creating curricular opportunities through whole-school projects
- The school makes good use of its spacious accommodation.

Commentary

22. Since amalgamation, the school has audited and reviewed policies to ensure there is consistency of provision throughout the school, with staff working together on the audit and review. This has not only helped to ensure continuity and consistency in curricular provision but has also acted as a positive influence on the development of a staff team for the amalgamated school. Staff have worked together on joint planning, changing the plans in each phase of education to ensure full coverage of the National Curriculum. This has been largely successful, although work planned in Years 5 and 6 does not yet take sufficient account of the learning needs of different groups of pupils.
23. The school generally succeeds in fulfilling its commitment to enable all pupils to get the most out of their education, although there are some areas of weakness. The strength of this commitment is evident in the inclusion of pupils with a significant degree of educational needs in some lessons in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2. This commitment is further expressed in the school's planned new accommodation, in which special and mainstream provision are to be side by side.
24. Provision for other pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory overall, with some strengths. The school carefully adapts the curriculum to cater for those pupils who have special

educational needs. This adaptation, with the good use of teaching assistants, generally works well. The school carefully reviews the progress of pupils with special educational needs. Individual education plans highlight key areas for improvement for each pupil, with clear and concise targets, although occasionally these are rather too broad and unspecific.

25. Strengths and weaknesses in provision for higher attaining pupils lie in the match of work to these pupils' learning needs. Where this is good, in Years 1 to 4 overall, pupils are encouraged to work to their capacity. In Years 5 and 6, higher attaining pupils are not enabled to achieve as well as they should. As yet, the school does not make extra provision for pupils with special talents, although it does provide satisfactorily for pupils who wish to develop their skills in playing musical instruments.
26. The curriculum is enriched by a satisfactory range of visits and visitors to school. For example, during the Tudor project, all the pupils from Year 1 to Year 6 visited a Tudor mansion, and the pupils experienced Elizabethan style music from visiting musicians. The project was planned to include as many subjects and aspects of the curriculum as possible, including ICT, art and design, and dance. It was particularly successful in enabling the whole school community to work together. A Year 6 residential visit to Northumberland takes place each year. The school is developing a distinct approach to improving pupils' skills of speaking and listening. Extra-curricular provision is sound, including sports, music and dance activities as well as a summer programme of arts in the Foundation Stage and a mathematics Easter school in 2003 for pupils in Year 6.
27. The school has invested significantly in providing a good number of teaching assistants in order to support different groups of pupils. This provision has been developed as a team approach, with teachers and teaching assistants often working together as a 'team' in a particular class. Although still in the early stages of development, this project is already showing signs of success. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to enabling teachers to match work to pupils' learning needs, and especially in relation to the school's developing approach of targeting particular pupils' for support to help them achieve as they should.
28. The building is very spacious and enables the school to make special provision for ICT and music, as well as providing separate halls for physical education. Staff make very good use of the accommodation, with all spare rooms and areas used. For example, in the Foundation Stage, staff have created separate bases for each area of learning, enabling pupils to have the space, resources and stimulation they need and, hence, aiding their good achievement.

Care, guidance and support

Overall, the school takes **good** care of its pupils.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff look after the pupils well and provide good pastoral support.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are good.
- Health and safety procedures are good overall and lead to a safe school environment.
- Pupils get very good support when they start in the school.
- There is no formal statement of child protection procedures for the amalgamated school and training for child protection is not up-to-date.

Commentary

29. The school is a warm and friendly place in which pupils are happy and secure, and enjoy their school life. Staff provide a high level of personal support, and the good relationships make it easy for pupils to talk to them about any worries they may have. Pupils are largely well supported both academically and in their personal development through the curriculum, assemblies, and through

the high expectations that teachers have of them, although these expectations are generally higher for the younger pupils than for the older.

30. The physical well being of the pupils is a high priority and health and safety procedures are good. A governors' committee is responsible for health and safety and undertakes regular safety inspections, with any issues recorded and promptly dealt with. Risk assessment is undertaken satisfactorily and emergency procedures are mostly in place although the fire alarm is not tested at the required interval.
31. Children in the nursery class enjoy a smooth and confident start to their school life because of the special support given by staff and also because of the school's links with the 'Sure Start' pre-school programme. Children get an extended introduction to the school. The support given includes home visits by teachers and social and health specialists. Pupils who start school at times other than the normal are well supported by staff. This enables them to become quickly familiar with school routines. Classmates help pupils to settle in and teachers soon identify any specific needs that the pupils may have. Year 6 pupils also receive good support as they prepare for their move to secondary school.
32. Although the school uses the local area procedures for child protection, it does not yet have its own policy for the management of them. The school follows local procedures and deals conscientiously with any issue that arises but currently there is no formal statement of policy for the amalgamated school and neither the designated person nor any other member of staff has yet undertaken the appropriate training, although this is scheduled for the Spring Term 2004.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents have positive views of the education provided by the school.
- The school provides parents with good information about the school and about pupils' standards and progress.
- The school has good links with other schools, particularly the special school that shares the site.

Commentary

33. Parents who responded to the questionnaire or who attended the pre-inspection meeting have very positive views of the school and its activities. Very few negative views were expressed. Parents see the school as well led and managed, with good teaching and promoting a positive work ethic. They say that the school helps their children to settle in, and supports them well as they grow and develop. Their children like school. Parents find the school very easy to approach and most feel the school keeps them well informed about their children's progress. Inspection findings largely endorse these views, with some reservations about quality of teaching.
34. Parents receive good information about the school and about their children's progress. The prospectus and the governors' annual report are both very informative, with the prospectus, in particular, being of high quality and very professionally produced. A regular newsletter is made more interesting by the inclusion of pupils' poetry and other work. Curriculum details are sent each term. Pupils' annual reports meet statutory requirements and provide good information for parents about their child's attainment and progress. Parents are provided with information on how to help their children's learning at home. Although the school has not sought parents' views via a questionnaire, it recently ran a curriculum evening at which homework and home/school agreements were discussed, showing its willingness to help parents become involved in

supporting their children's education. Parents are also starting to become involved in the setting of targets for their children, with pupils in Years 5 and 6 attending the autumn parents' evening in order to establish closer links between their learning and home.

35. The school has good links with other schools, particularly with the special school that shares the same site. This is essentially because of the school's close links with the special school that shares the site. Pupils from the special school currently attend some lessons at Hob Moor and some facilities, such as the school dining room, are shared. This relationship with the special school should develop further when Hob Moor and the new City of York Special School for Primary Age Children share the same planned new building. The school has a range of sporting links with other local schools, including secondary, and hosts an annual schools' netball competition.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **satisfactory**. The headteacher and senior management team are providing strong and purposeful leadership. School management is **satisfactory**. School governance is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The clarity of vision, sense of purpose and high aspirations of the headteacher are setting the right tone for school improvement.
- The headteacher has been very successful in building a team that is focused on improving this recently amalgamated school.
- This success is reflected in the strong support given by senior management and in the good early impact of teamwork
- The school has a strong commitment to inclusion, particularly in relation to special educational needs.
- Monitoring of teaching and pupils' work is not yet focused sharply enough on identifying areas for improvement.
- The school development plan is not focused sharply enough on the school's key areas for improvement.
- The governing body has not yet formally adopted new policies and procedures for race equality and child protection for the amalgamated school.

Commentary

36. The headteacher has been in post for about four terms and is successfully building a shared sense of purpose amongst the staff of the two former schools. A shared vision is being implemented, and is focused on providing pupils with the best chances in their education. A climate has been created in which staff work together effectively. At present, the impact of this is more obvious in some areas of the school than others but there is little doubt that shared good practice is beginning to spread. The significant improvements in behaviour this year provide evidence of this happening, as do, more modestly, the improvements in standards beginning to be seen in Years 5 and 6. The headteacher has high aspirations for the school, a very accurate view of its strengths and weaknesses, and is working hard with staff to secure improvements. The choice and strength of his senior managers are evidence of the school's capacity to successfully build towards the vision to which it is committed.

37. Staff have an accurate understanding of what the headteacher wishes the school to achieve and they are motivated to work hard to make it a reality. The school's ethos is developing into a strong one, based upon shared values of care and respect but founded also upon high expectations of what pupils should achieve. It is still too early in the life of this new school for these expectations to be fully evident in all the school's work. The headteacher, staff and governors recognise that more work needs to be done to enable the good and very good practice

evident in many parts of the school to predominate throughout. However, steps are being taken effectively to enhance the strengths and neutralise or counteract the weaknesses. One such step is the successful initiative to pair teaching assistants with teachers in order to build a team approach in classes. This was judged by inspectors to be developing successfully in many classes. Another is the way in which the school seeks to integrate pupils with severe special educational needs into its provision, and to provide support for families both prior to their children starting the nursery and during the Foundation Stage. This is evidence of a strong commitment to inclusion and has now been built into the planning for a new school building. Although the strength of this commitment is clear the governing body has not yet attended to the important matter of putting into place a race equality policy and procedures for the amalgamated school. However, this matter is on the governing body's planned agenda for the current school year.

38. The sheer scope and detail of the school development plan reflect the school's full and critical understanding of the challenge it faces. However, its very breadth means that it does not focus sharply enough on identifying and planning to improve the key areas of weakness in the school. Subject co-ordinators monitor pupils' work in the subjects they lead. However, the outcomes of their monitoring tend to describe rather than evaluate, and so miss the opportunity to secure improvement.
39. The governing body is very supportive of the school. Some of its key members have a good understanding of where the school is strong and where it needs to improve. However, currently the governing body does not provide a strong element of challenge for senior staff to add that extra dimension to the school's efforts for improvement. Since amalgamation, the governing body has been conscientiously revising policies from the previous schools and adopting new ones for the amalgamated school, with a present focus on curriculum policies. In this they show proper commitment to the school. However, revision of policy in relation to race equality and child protection has not had sufficient priority although both areas are part of this year's planned programme for adoption.
40. Governors have a clear and accurate view of the school's strategic opportunities and challenges. The financial information in the table below suggests that the school has a healthy surplus. However, this has been very largely, and successfully, committed to providing a larger than average number of teaching assistants. Governors recognise that, with falling numbers on roll, hard decisions about staffing will need to be made in the near future.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	701436
Total expenditure	617088
Expenditure per pupil	2277

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	None
Balance carried forward to the next	84348

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

41. The children and staff in the nursery and reception classes work very closely together as a unit within the school. The children are well provided for and make good progress overall in all areas of learning. They start in the nursery on a part-time basis during the year they turn four. Children start in the reception class at different times, with the younger ones starting full time education in the Spring term before they reach the age of five. The Foundation Stage is well led and managed. Staff work very well together. An ethos centred upon working as a team to meet children's needs has a positive impact on children's learning. Good teaching and the provision of a wide range of exciting and relevant activities ensure children achieve well in all areas of learning. Planning and day-to-day assessment are good, with teachers and support staff closely monitoring the progress children make. Staff make very good use of the spacious accommodation, providing separate learning areas for the curriculum, to which all children have access. Commitment to inclusion is a strength and involves staff working very closely with an autistic unit on the school site. The school receives much valuable support from outside agencies, one of which is based in the school.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well and are happy in school because of the good support, care and respect shown for each child.
- A good induction programme ensures all the children settle well.
- Children make good progress because the staff provide a wide range of activities to enhance their personal development, enabling children to develop confidence, independence and the ability to work co-operatively.

Commentary

42. When children start school, their personal, social and emotional skills are below average, with over a third of the children having social skills below the level expected for children this age. The new entrants display a lack of confidence in using resources independently and working co-operatively. In the nursery class, great emphasis is placed on this aspect of children's development and, as a result of this effective intervention, most make good progress. From the time they start in the nursery class, children are encouraged to become independent, and choose their own resources and activities. High priority is given to allowing the children to play together. This is well structured, with the staff monitoring the children's activities and joining in where appropriate. The more mature children in the nursery show confidence and interact with each other and adults. All children trust the staff and are happy in school, and participate with enthusiasm in activities. Children are taught successfully how to share, take turns when playing games and to persevere in their tasks.

43. Children develop a good sense of right and wrong. Staff have high expectations of behaviour and provide a very good example to the children. Children are reminded of the high standards expected in a very supportive and courteous manner. They are aware of the routines and settle to tasks with the minimum of fuss. They are encouraged to listen to each other and to show respect. For example, in circle time, reception children displayed good social skills as they took turns to describe who they were sitting next to. Even though the teachers and support staff work hard to develop skills in this area, a small number of children have yet to reach the levels of learning expected of children when they move to Year 1.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision in communication, language and literacy is good

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers and support staff plan a wide range of activities to support learning, and this ensures children achieve well.
- Every opportunity is used to develop the skills of early writing, and this has a very positive impact on children's confidence in this area of learning.

Commentary

44. Although attainment on entry is below the expected level, good teaching enables children to make good progress. When children start school, a small number have speech or language delay problems and many are not confident in communicating their thoughts. Assessing and helping children to develop their communication and language skills are a high priority, with every opportunity taken to encourage the children to talk and listen. This has a positive impact. Reception children display good listening skills, especially when the teachers give lively and interesting presentations, inspiring children to want to learn more.
45. On entry to the nursery class, reading skills are under-developed, with less than half the children achieving standards in line with expectations. In both the nursery and reception classes, the staff provide a wide range of activities to develop children's reading skills. For example, all the reception children enjoy a guided reading session each day and they all take books home to share with their parents. Children make good progress in reading during the Foundation Stage. However, although the children achieve well in developing their reading skills, a significant minority have not reached the level expected on transfer to Year 1.
46. Writing development is a strength of the Foundation Stage. Early attempts at writing are included in many activities, with children encouraged to write lists, letters, stories and facts to complement their work. For example, when visiting the 'Vet's Practice' in play activities, the children completed registration forms with confidence and made good early attempts at letter formation. The motivation to write provides a very good foundation for the next stage of children's learning.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers and support staff work effectively to provide a range of activities to develop learning, including teaching mathematics within other areas of learning.
- Children achieve well, despite starting school with limited mathematical knowledge and understanding.

Commentary

47. The initial assessments made in the nursery and reception classes show that children start with mathematical knowledge and understanding below the levels expected for their age. Few activities were seen in the nursery with mathematics as their core activity. However, from an examination of children's work and of the one lesson seen in the reception class, children respond well to the wide range of practical activities to develop mathematical skills. Teachers have high expectations that children should achieve well. As a result, they provide work that is

well matched to the learning needs of all groups of children. For example, in a lesson on shape and symmetry, children demonstrated a secure knowledge of basic two- and three-dimensional shapes as they sorted, counted and named the different shapes. This well-planned lesson was extended as children confidently used the shapes to make and draw symmetrical patterns. The high attaining children also demonstrated their ability to count to 40 with confidence. Despite good teaching and good progress, around a third of children do not attain the levels expected by the time they finish the reception year.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good because staff provide a wide range of activities and experiences to develop learning.
- Staff plan this area of learning effectively in conjunction with other areas of learning, ensuring these complement each other effectively.

Commentary

48. Teaching and learning are good because staff provide a wide range of structured activities to broaden children's experience and to develop their knowledge and understanding. Good opportunities are provided for children to explore and investigate their surroundings, and include a texture table, wet and dry sand pits, wet play and construction activities. To develop the children's understanding of time, nursery and reception class children were included in a whole school history project on the Tudors. Children were very enthusiastic when talking about the opportunities to dress up in Tudor clothes and when proudly showing their Henry VIII paintings on display. A 'story sack' displaying Barnaby Bear's travels provides a starting point for children to establish a sense of place. The activities planned for this area of learning stimulate children's curiosity and enhance their understanding. For example, after playing with large bubbles during outdoor play the children were able to describe their shape and colours, and what had happened when they had popped. The activities are closely linked to other areas of learning. For example, when making a Christmas Cake, children's communication skills were enhanced as children and adults made wishes whilst stirring the cake. Despite good progress, nearly a quarter of children do not attain the expected levels by the time they finish the reception year.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well in developing their physical skills.
- Teaching in this area is good. Staff use the spacious accommodation, hall and outside play area effectively to develop children's physical skills.

Commentary

49. When they start in the nursery class, children find it difficult to manipulate objects and move to the beat of music. However, over time, children develop their physical skills well and make good progress. This area is taught well in both the nursery and reception classes. Teachers provide a wide range of activities to develop all aspects of their physical skills. The outdoor playground is well resourced with tricycles, climbing frames and outdoor games. In good weather, staff use the playground as the main teaching area, with many of the structured activities taken outside. Children make good progress in developing manipulative skills, especially through emergent writing. They are taught letter formation, although many are still unable to form letters correctly.

Older children in the nursery and reception classes handle scissors, glue spreaders, play dough, paintbrushes and construction equipment well. Despite good progress, nearly a quarter of children do not attain the expected levels by the time they finish the reception year.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good overall**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good because staff provide a stimulating environment with a wide range of activities to develop learning. As a result, children make good progress in this area of learning.
- Children develop a good awareness of texture and shape, explore colour and respond to sounds.

Commentary

50. Within the spacious accommodation, staff have created a separate room for creative activity. This is well organised and supervised by the support staff. Children have the opportunity to take part in a wide range of experiences in using different types of artistic media, for example crayons, collage, paint and dough. Friezes and collages made by the children are on display, including an effective fish collage with mobiles. Areas in which children can play at being 'at home' are well planned and resourced to support their creative attempts at developing imaginative play. In the 'Vet's Practice', for example, children imagine they are taking their pet for treatment. Music is of high importance and used effectively. For example, CDs are played while children are working in the creative area. Children are provided with opportunities on a regular basis to sing, play percussion instruments and dance to music, and make good progress in developing their skills. For example, whilst the new children in the nursery found it difficult to dance to the beat of the music and sing 'Twinkle, twinkle little star', children in a reception class could sing with confidence and in tune. Children enjoy creative work and explore all the stimulating activities provided for them. Sensitive teaching and intervention by support staff have a very positive impact on learning in this area. Achievement in creative development is good, and children take part and respond well to the challenges provided. They make good progress in their ability to explore colour and shape, to recognise and explore sounds and to use their imagination. However, despite this, about a quarter do not attain the expected levels when they finish the reception year.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils in Years 1 to 4, including those with special educational needs, achieve well because the teaching is good, and sometimes very good.
- Improved arrangements for teaching reading and writing are raising standards in Years 3 to 6.
- More rigorous systems and uses of assessment are helping teachers to match work more exactly to individual needs and capabilities.
- Until recently, many pupils have made unsatisfactory progress in Years 5 and 6.
- The quality of teaching in Years 5 and 6 is inconsistent, and lack of pace, focus, challenge and engagement restricts learning in some lessons.
- Some reading areas, particularly the junior library, offer limited quality and variety of books in a bleak setting.

Commentary

51. Standards in Year 2 are a little below average and similar to the results of the most recent national tests for reading and writing at age seven. Pupils with different needs and capabilities are well taught and achieve well. Standards in Year 6 are well below average. Whilst these standards are too low and reflect underachievement over time, they are better than the school's most recent test results for Year 6, and this year's work shows satisfactory achievement overall.
52. All staff accept the need to raise achievement and standards and recognise that, to do this, good practice must be spread and harmonised across the school. The headteacher has given a strong lead, for example by ensuring that all teachers use assessment information to plan the curriculum and lessons. Following his example, the English co-ordinator is giving good curriculum leadership. As a result:
- Improved arrangements for teaching reading and writing have been introduced.
 - Teachers' marking gives pupils better guidance on how to improve their writing.
 - Individual literacy targets are coming into use.
 - Pupils who are underachieving are identified and given targeted support to move them on in their learning.
 - Strong efforts are being made to gain more support from parents in making English homework more effective.
 - Displays of pupils' writing set a good standard.
 - New assessment procedures give better information on pupils' needs in reading and writing, so that pupils' progress can be closely tracked and improved.
53. Whilst these developments are having some impact, they do not go far enough and are not yet as effective as they could be. For example:
- The monitoring of reading sessions is not rigorous enough in evaluating their impact on learning and identifying what could be taught better.
 - There is a relative lack of procedures to promote and assess the development of pupils' skills in speaking and listening. Few targets are set to help spoken English keep pace with the demands of the curriculum. Progress in this area is assumed rather than planned, and learning opportunities and achievement for upper junior pupils are unsatisfactory.
 - The library is a poor setting for teaching library skills, and for encouraging browsing and a growing interest in books.
 - Not all pupils know their targets or how to improve their skills.

54. The chief issue facing the school in English is the lower achievement of pupils in Years 5 and 6. Improvements are tackling important aspects of this issue and are beginning to make a difference. The root cause, however, remains the variable quality of teaching and learning. Teaching in Years 1 to 4 is mainly good, with some very good features. On the other hand, despite the occasional good lesson, teaching in Years 5 and 6 is no more than satisfactory and has some significant weaknesses.
55. Good lessons were seen in each broad age group. These lessons were well based on earlier learning and they maintained throughout a clear focus on achieving specific aims for new learning. They held pupils' interest through a varied sequence of activities, and used questions and tasks well to make pupils think about words and written language and their effects. Teachers overcame the potential difficulty posed by pupils of different ages and attainments, and provided work that challenged and supported every group at the right level. As a result, pupils achieved well.
56. The very good teaching was confined to Years 1 to 4. These lessons had some inspirational qualities that excited all pupils and used their enthusiasm with strongly creative effect, through challenging but varied and engaging methods in which talk, reading and writing vigorously supported each other. Their recorded work so far in Year 2 shows that all these pupils have developed their writing skills at a good rate of learning, although the many pupils who have special educational needs do not attain the level expected for their age. Pupils' reading in Year 2 shows the same pattern of interest and standards, and a similar picture of achievement is found in Years 3 and 4.
57. In Years 5 and 6, pupils learn at a lower rate. In response to school policy, teachers are making better use of planning, assessment and teaching assistants to match levels of challenge and support more closely to pupils' actual language needs. In most lessons, however, learning is restricted by common shortcomings in teaching:
- lack of an encouraging and engaging rapport inhibits pupils' interest and participation;
 - expectations for new learning are not explained, focused, developed and reinforced clearly enough for all pupils to grasp them securely;
 - some tasks do not stretch higher attaining pupils to learn at their best rate;
 - at times, insecure subject knowledge causes teachers to miss opportunities to involve pupils actively in exploring the uses of new skills, for instance to find different layers of meaning in a text.

In such lessons pupils do not achieve as well as they can. The past work of the oldest pupils shows how this pattern has persisted for more than a year. For example, whilst pupils' written work reflects satisfactory achievement this year, an earlier history of poor progress shows in weak spelling and punctuation and an inability to include more complex information and more varied vocabulary in their sentences and texts.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

58. The school is developing a more planned approach to making better use of opportunities in other subjects for pupils to develop their writing skills. The success of the whole-school project on the Tudors has shown the power of this approach. Every subject contributed to this project and much of the learning was carried or recorded through reading, writing and talk. This has strengthened teachers' awareness of opportunities. For example, pupils have more opportunities to work in pairs to support each other's learning by talking, reading or writing together. As yet, however, there is no agreed, overall policy to give these opportunities coherent shape; nor are they structured through planning, or consistently matched to pupils' actual language needs.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well in Years 1 to 4 because of teaching that challenges them.
- Work in these year groups is well matched to pupils' learning needs.
- Pupils respond well and learn effectively.
- Pupils in Years 5 and 6 do not achieve as well as they should, although there is evidence that this is getting better.
- In these classes, work is not always challenging enough or matched closely enough to pupils' learning needs.

Commentary

59. By the end of Year 2, standards are broadly average for the majority of pupils of this age, and some pupils attain above average standards. Teachers have high expectations of their pupils. Pupils who have been identified as having special educational needs receive good support in classes or in specific, small groups. Lessons are well structured so that pupils are able to learn in manageable stages. Explanations are clear and pupils are able to understand what they are learning. Pupils are challenged to give of their best and produce work of a good standard in line with their ability. Praise and encouragement are given and pupils feel valued. They are invited to share their ideas and to celebrate their successes with each other. Good support from teaching assistants helps pupils to remain focused on their work, especially those with special educational needs. Because of this good teaching, all groups of pupils achieve well, and make good progress over time.
60. Good teaching in Years 3 and 4 continues to promote good achievement. Teachers have appropriate strategies for helping pupils to develop their understanding. They encourage pupils to think carefully about what they have previously learnt, and to apply this learning to new situations. Pupils are provided with tasks that interest and challenge them. As a result, they work hard and learn well. Higher attaining pupils are sometimes provided with further activities that stretch their learning. A very successful example of this was in a special educational needs group when pupils were asked to use information from the lesson to help them devise mathematical problems of their own which they were to share with another member of their group. The result was keen and lively learning.
61. By the end of Year 6, in spite of some progress having been made recently, overall standards in mathematics are below average. The majority of pupils in Years 5 and 6 do not achieve as well as they should. Expectations of their capabilities are not always high enough and work is not matched sufficiently well to pupils' learning needs. A further weakness is lack of pace and challenge, with too few opportunities for pupils to participate individually in lessons. In Years 5 and 6, pupils have recently started to be grouped by attainment for mathematics. It is too early to judge the impact of this but there is evidence that this is beginning to have a positive effect, for example in relation to the achievement of lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs.
62. The co-ordinator has been in charge of this subject across the whole school for one year. The subject is managed satisfactorily. A whole-school initiative is in place to raise standards in numeracy and to improve pupils' mental calculation skills. Assessment issues are being addressed. Each teacher now aims to raise every pupil's attainment by at least the nationally expected rate in the school year. The profile of mathematics within the school has been increased, with a focus on homework that involves parents in supporting their children's learning.

Mathematics across the curriculum

63. There is evidence of mathematical skills being reinforced satisfactorily in other subjects. The cross-curricular, whole-school Tudor project affords pupils the opportunity to explore elements of shape and space, measurement and symmetry through art, craft and design activities. Work supporting this is displayed throughout the school in corridors and communal areas. In classrooms, time and date lines are used well to support pupils' investigative skills. Art and craft work illustrating Tudor projects, such as tessellated patterns and symmetrical Tudor roses, are well displayed.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory overall**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well in Years 1 and 2 due to good opportunities for practical investigation and work that is well matched to learning needs.
- Pupils in Years 3 and 4 achieve well when practical work leads to good development of scientific understanding and skills for pupils of all attainments.
- Good teaching in Years 1 – 4 encourages pupils to think rigorously and scientifically.
- Good support from teaching assistants is a strong feature throughout the school.
- Some good marking of work in Years 5 and 6 encourages pupils to reconsider ideas.
- Teaching in Years 5 and 6 lacks a consistent approach to practical investigation and does not provide sufficient challenge for some groups of pupils.
- Difficulties with pupil management in some Years 5 and 6 lessons limits progress and leads to unsatisfactory achievement.

Commentary

64. Pupils generally start school with below average attainment in their knowledge and understanding of the world. They make good progress and achieve well to reach broadly average standards by Years 2 and 3. This good achievement is due mainly to good teaching, including the stimulating learning opportunities provided for pupils to develop scientific knowledge and understanding through practical investigation. Teachers match work well to pupils' learning needs and ensure that teaching assistants provide good support for different groups of pupils. A good example of this was seen in a Year 2 lesson when a high attaining group worked out of the classroom with a teaching assistant to develop their knowledge of electrical circuits. This resulted in pupils making good progress, expressed accurately by pupils in good written English, using phrases such as *'This is a complete circuit'*. Work in pupils' books in the Years 3 and 4 classes shows similar good provision of practical work and good challenge for higher attaining pupils.
65. By Year 6, standards are below average and achievement varies from satisfactory to unsatisfactory, although overall it is unsatisfactory for high attaining and average attaining pupils in Year 6. Teaching is weaker than in other parts of the school and pupils' behaviour is sometimes more challenging, although support provided by teaching assistants continues to be effective, especially for pupils with special educational needs. However, the high proportion of pupils with significant levels of behaviour-based special educational needs in some classes adds to difficulties in managing behaviour.
66. The lack of a consistently applied approach to teaching scientific investigation means that some high and average attaining pupils do not get the chance to achieve as well as they could in some lessons in Years 5 and 6. For example, whilst science knowledge and understanding were developed well in one lesson, pupils did not get the practical opportunity to design and conduct their own investigations. Conversely, some good discussion took place in another class as pupils worked in groups and discussed how to design an investigation into insulation that would

incorporate elements of fairness. Unfortunately, the uncooperative behaviour and attitudes of a few pupils limited the progress made in some of these groups.

67. In Years 5 and 6, marking at its best provides pupils with very clear indications as to how they should improve. The teacher asks searching questions and expects, and gets, a response. However, this approach is not consistently applied in all Year 5 and 6 classes. Where the teacher does not provide a sharp enough approach to developing scientific thinking, for example, when teaching pupils to develop the skills of prediction, pupils do not achieve as much from a lesson as they should. This, allied to difficulties with managing pupils' behaviour, occasionally makes a lesson unsatisfactory.
68. Subject management is broadly satisfactory. The co-ordinator is helping teachers to develop pupils' scientific vocabulary. The good impact of this was seen in lessons in different parts of the school, for example in Years 1 and 2. Some checking of the standards of pupils' work has taken place, although the value of this is limited by feedback to staff being descriptive rather than having a sharp focus on improvement.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is of good quality overall, enabling pupils to develop their skills and to achieve well in most lessons.
- Good support from teaching assistants means that pupils get important extra help when it is needed.
- Pupils work well and productively together in lessons.
- Good quality resources and accommodation enable staff to provide a suitable and stimulating curriculum.
- Occasionally, work is not well matched to pupils' learning needs and this results in limited progress for some pupils.

Commentary

69. Pupils attain broadly average standards by Year 2 and Year 6. In most lessons seen during the inspection, pupils worked productively in pairs in the computer room, and developed their skills well. Teachers showed confidence in explaining the skills to be developed, often using interactive whiteboards effectively to help them demonstrate techniques or show them, for example, how to use a search engine on the Internet. Such skills of demonstration were particularly effective in a Years 3 and 4 lesson, when the teacher led pupils confidently to reinforce a task of entering data into a chart in support of work in science. The task was a challenging one for all groups of pupils. Occasionally, however, either high attaining pupils are not challenged enough by the work they are given or a task is a little too demanding for pupils with special educational needs, and they make too little progress.
70. Pupils are enthusiastic learners and always settle quickly to their work. Support from teaching assistants is effective, particularly so when the assistant has a good level of subject understanding and can contribute specifically to a lesson, for example by researching a worksheet for an Internet search in a Year 5 and 6 lesson. Teacher and teaching assistant showed good planning in action by demonstrating clear, shared knowledge of their respective roles. As a result of well-planned teaching and good support, pupils behaved well in all lessons observed. Quite often they worked effectively in pairs, but were happy also to work independently. In this, the work made a good contribution to personal and social development.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

71. Teachers plan well to provide pupils with useful opportunities to develop skills in other subjects through ICT. In the lessons seen, pupils in Years 1 and 2 used a paint program to develop their artistic skills in drawing attractive diva lamps, as part of their work in religious education. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 supported their scientific investigations about living things by using a chart to enter data about pets, and to draw conclusions. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 used an Internet search engine effectively for research purposes, thus helping them develop the skills of literacy.

HUMANITIES

72. It is not possible to form an overall judgement about standards in **geography** because no lessons were seen. There was also very little evidence of pupils' work on display or in their books. This is mainly due to the school giving priority this term to the history element of the humanities curriculum.

73. A limited number of displays stimulated an interest in geography including, in Years 1 and 2, the travels of Barnaby Bear. The whole school also followed with interest the journeys made by Norris and Norman, two gnomes who are taken on holiday with staff, children or friends. Visits include journeys to Australia, Greece and Hawaii. The school has built up a large album of photographs and information on the places visited. Visits made by the pupils also stimulate learning in this area, especially the annual residential visit by pupils in Year 6 to Northumberland.

74. There is evidence that geographical skills are developed in other subjects. In a Year 2 drama lesson, the teacher used an adventure to a distant place to stimulate discussion and collaboration. During the lesson the pupils demonstrated an awareness of contrasting locations as they 'travelled' to the different places, for example the North Pole and a desert.

75. The subject co-ordinator is relatively new to the post and has joint responsibility for history and geography. She has yet to monitor the standards in this area. Planning for geography in Years 3 to 6 is built around the national schemes of work. Although they provide adequate coverage the units are planned too far apart. Consequently, very little geography is taught in the autumn term.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are encouraged to develop their knowledge and understanding of Christianity and the links with other main religions
- Opportunities are taken to visit Christian places of worship or significance
- Religious education (RE) is used to develop understanding and skills in other subjects
- Visits to different places of worship need developing further

Commentary

76. In addition to observing assemblies and some teaching, inspectors spoke to pupils and analysed pupils' previous work and displays. Cross-curricular aspects were also analysed. Much of the work covered in religious education lessons centres around discussions, so there was limited written work to examine. Judgements on provision are thus made on the range of evidence indicated.

77. In the lesson seen in a Years 3 and 4 class, teaching was good and the pupils are achieving well as they gain a good understanding of the Christian faith. For example, their prior knowledge of Jesus' life and his ability to perform miracles helped them develop an awareness of why Jesus'

disciples followed him. From the written work seen, the pupils are beginning to link the major faiths in Britain. For example, Years 1 and 2 compare different places of worship. Assemblies provide opportunities to develop the pupils' religious knowledge and understanding. For example, an assembly on Advent was linked to the festivals of light for Diwali and Hanukah already taught.

78. There are good examples of cross-curricular links, with religious education used to support learning in other subjects. For example, during an ICT lesson the pupils were asked to create the patterns for a diva lamp using a paint program. They did this well. Drama was also used to good effect in the one lesson seen. The pupils working collaboratively to re-create the story of Jesus helping the fishermen. Good use is made of visits to places of religious significance, including York Minster and Lindisfarne. However, visits to places of worship for other major religions are few.
79. The curriculum is planned satisfactorily on a two-year cycle to accommodate the mixed age classes. A high priority for the school is to review the present scheme and introduce the new York Agreed Syllabus in March 2004. The introduction will include appropriate training for all staff.

HISTORY

Provision in history is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well because of the strong focus on whole-school participation in history projects.
- There are good links with other subjects.
- A good range of visits and visitors to the school makes the work both interesting and relevant.
- The monitoring of teaching and learning is not sufficiently developed.

Commentary

80. Although only one lesson was seen, it is evident from a scrutiny of work and discussions with pupils that history is a very important area of the school curriculum and the pupils achieve well in this subject. During the half term before the inspection, pupils had taken part in a whole-school project on the Tudors. It is clear that the project was well led and managed, with all pupils taking part in a wide range of activities. These included visits out and visitors to school and an opportunity to dress up as Tudor children for two days. The project included a wide range of in other subjects, including art, ICT, music, drama and dance. Literacy was used to good effect with many pupils writing accounts of life in Tudor times. The children in the reception class used their emerging writing skills to describe their pictures and the Year 6 pupils creating Tudor booklets.
81. Evidence from work on display and in workbooks indicates that pupils demonstrate a good understanding of historical facts and an awareness of life in other periods. There is clear evidence that the pupils are making good progress, since the older pupils are able to make comparisons, use a time-line to show chronological awareness and describe important events in British history. Discussions with the pupils show they have been inspired by the project on the Tudors, demonstrating an enthusiasm and willingness to share information. Pupils in Year 2 displayed a good understanding of historical facts when describing their visit to a Tudor mansion. In Years 5 and 6, the pupils used their ICT skills well to create Tudor booklets. These skills included research, graphics and word processing. They also demonstrate pupils' good understanding of the Tudor period as, for example, they give detailed accounts of problems facing the king and the sort of person he might have been. They also give detailed accounts of school in Tudor times, again demonstrating the good level of pupils' historical knowledge.
82. The project on Tudors was well led and managed by the subject co-ordinator and educational visits co-ordinator. All staff and many parents willingly gave their time to support the project. This

has had a very positive impact on cementing the school's amalgamation. Although the co-ordinator has not had an opportunity to monitor standards in this area, she is very enthusiastic to take the subject further and is already planning a whole-school project to celebrate the school's golden jubilee in 2004.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

83. **Art and design** and **design and technology** could only be sampled during the inspection. Two full and three part lessons were observed. Most of these were in design and technology and in Years 1 and 2.
84. In **art and design**, the standard of work produced by pupils in Years 2 and 6 is typical for their age, and activities cover all elements of the subject. This is evident in the way that Year 2 pupils have used pencil and colour in well-observed response to Rousseau's painting, 'Tropical Storm with Tiger'. In Year 6, pupils' large pastel illustrations of the sea monsters reported by Tudor voyagers are skilful and strikingly imaginative. The subject contributes well to pupils' spiritual and cultural development, although there is very little use of non-Western art. Links with other subjects are strong and mutually supportive. This is powerfully illustrated by the variety of art work produced in the whole-school project on Tudor England. Studies of Tudor portraits, buildings, crafts and costumes, in two and three dimensions, show that pupils of all ages have successfully used a variety of art materials and techniques to enhance their learning.
85. The standard of work seen in **design and technology** is above average in Year 2 and below average in Year 6. The quality of the wheeled vehicles produced by pupils in Year 2 is impressive. Pupils worked co-operatively in groups, in vigorous and imaginative response to challenging tasks such as 'design and build a vehicle to catch the dragon'. Their designs showed a clear sense of specific purpose, and this was reflected in the different ways in which they created a chassis, built the body and fitted axles and wheels. They explored and evaluated different ideas and materials as they went along, used talk well to reach agreed solutions, and worked hard to meet their teachers' demanding expectations. As a result, each vehicle was sturdily constructed and well finished, in camouflage for instance, and carried a range of equipment fitted to its specific purpose. In contrast, the musical instruments made by Year 6 were relatively crude in choice and use of materials, construction and finish.
86. The quality of teaching in the lessons seen was very good in Years 1 and 2, and good in Years 3 and 4. All the lessons were stimulating, fast paced, well resourced and very well managed. Teachers' good understanding of the subject brought strong focus, organisation and challenge, so that pupils were fully stretched and engaged, and learned important new knowledge and skills.
87. Insufficient work was seen in **music** to make judgements about provision. The school works to a satisfactorily planned programme that is subject to development this year. Good provision is made for pupils who wish to learn musical instruments. Whenever pupils sang in assemblies they did so tunefully. A very effective choir practice was observed taking place during one lunchtime. Pupils from Years 3 to 6 took part enthusiastically. They sang tunefully, sometimes in two parts. Their behaviour and attitudes were very good. The teacher led the session skilfully and with enthusiasm. This was clearly a much enjoyed activity and one that contributed well to the development of pupils' aesthetic and social skills.
88. Three lessons were observed in **physical education**, all in gymnastics and dance. This is not sufficient to make an overall judgement on provision. However, in the lessons seen, the quality of teaching was mostly good, and never less than satisfactory. In Years 1 to 4, teachers enable pupils to achieve well by having high expectations of what they should achieve. These expectations are evident in effective lesson plans. Pupils are encouraged to develop their skills through sequences of movements and routines. They are encouraged also to be thoughtful about their performance and to try to improve it. The quality of work in small groups contributes effectively to pupils' social development. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subject

are good, especially in dance, and this leads to confident instruction and to pupils knowing just what to do to develop and improve their skills.

89. In Years 5 and 6, pupils are sometimes rather noisy and the teacher has to spend time ensuring that they warm up properly for their lesson. Skilful demonstrations by pupils of different types of roll reflect good teaching, but this is offset somewhat by the lack of good opportunities for pupils to learn further by practising by themselves. Good support is provided for pupils with special educational needs, so that their achievement matches the satisfactory level of others in the class.
90. Work follows the school's scheme and pupils receive a suitably broad range of learning opportunities, including provision for learning to swim.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

91. The school makes good provision for pupils' personal and social education. Pupils in all classes have good regular opportunities in 'circle time' to discuss issues of importance to them. In a lesson observed, in Years 1 and 2, pupils were given the opportunity to say why they should be members of the forthcoming school council. Pupils were encouraged to listen and to take turns as well as to express reasons for their choice. In this lesson, pupils were given good opportunities to consider and talk about change and to learn about responsibility. Consideration of elections to the school council was in evidence throughout the school, with lists of 'candidates' in several classrooms.
92. The school provides pupils with a good range of opportunities to develop their personal and social skills. A family-based approach to seating arrangements at lunchtime has been developed, and the occasion is a pleasant and sociable one. It is enhanced further by older pupils serving the younger ones and generally looking after their needs. A lunchtime club is provided for pupils who are experiencing personal or social difficulties at this time of the day. The school provides a full time child support manager to help children with a particular social or emotional need. Lunchtime staff have been given training for their work. All this adds to the school's ethos and encourages pupils to develop personally and socially in a secure, orderly and caring environment.
93. The good example given by staff to pupils enhances their personal and social development. This is evident especially in the way in which teaching assistants are deployed to meet and greet pupils in the mornings and to undertake a range of similar duties through the day. This is another successful part of the school's planned use of such staff.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	4
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	Not applicable
Value for money provided by the school	4
Overall standards achieved	5
Pupils' achievement	4
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	4
Attendance	6
Attitudes	4
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	4
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	4
The quality of education provided by the school	4
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	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	4
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	4
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	4
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	3
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).