

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **SANDRINGHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Doncaster

LEA area: Doncaster

Unique reference number: 106730

Headteacher: Mrs S Turner

Lead inspector: Mr J J Peacock

Dates of inspection: 17<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> May 2004

Inspection number: 257406

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 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	340
School address:	Sandringham Road Intake Doncaster South Yorkshire
Postcode:	DN2 5LS
Telephone number:	01302 361880
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr D Miles
Date of previous inspection:	June 1998

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This bigger than average community school serves three large housing estates. The infant and junior schools have been amalgamated but are still in separate buildings on the same site. A new headteacher was appointed in September 2003. There is a 26-place nursery class with 41 children attending on a part-time basis. Numbers are virtually identical to those in the previous inspection with 340 pupils on roll, 148 boys and 151 girls in 11 classes plus the nursery. All, except three are single age classes. There are 24 children from ethnic minority backgrounds and 2.1 per cent of all pupils speak English as an additional language. However, all speak and understand English well and so no additional support is necessary. The attainment of most children on entry to the school is below that normally expected. Many children have weak language skills.

The number eligible for free school meals, 23.3 per cent, is 10 per cent down from the previous inspection but is broadly in line with the national average. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs is above the national average with 23 per cent on the register. The proportion with a statement is below average. The school provides for all but 13 of these pupils from its own resources. Additional help has been sought from specialists for those who have moderate learning difficulties and those with social, emotional and behavioural problems. The mobility of pupils is a significant factor, with 31 pupils joining and 35 leaving the school during term time last year. This amounted to 20 per cent, which is well above average.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
25344	Mr J J Peacock	Lead inspector	The Foundation Stage Science English as an additional language
8988	Dr J Cross	Lay inspector	
3240	Mr D Wilkinson	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Design and technology Geography Special educational needs
34178	Mrs E Maloney	Team inspector	Art and design Religious education
18154	Mr S Rigby	Team inspector	English History Music Physical education

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**The school is providing pupils with a sound education.** It is a school where all staff have worked hard to improve standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science after a significant drop four years ago. They have been successful, with a steady rate of improvement each year until 2003 when there was a marked improvement all round. This coincided with the appointment of the new headteacher who has been a driving force. The additional support provided by the local education authority and an associate headteacher from a nearby successful school has also been instrumental in helping to turn the school around and make the quality of teaching good. In order to improve further, it now needs to enrich the curriculum provision, mainly in the junior section. It is well capable of doing so, given the good leadership and management of the headteacher, her effective management team and supportive governing body. Overall, the school is providing good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The quality of leadership of the headteacher is effectively moving the school forward. Key staff give valuable support;
- Standards are rising and this shows a determination by staff to ensure pupils achieve their full potential;
- The quality of teaching at Year 2 and Year 6 is particularly good and largely responsible for the school's improving performance in the national tests;
- Provision in the Foundation Stage is a strength of the school;
- Support staff are deployed well and make a major impact on pupils' learning;
- The curriculum lacks balance in the junior classes because of an over-emphasis on the core subjects;
- Teachers' termly planning and their lesson planning need improving;
- The roles and responsibilities of some subject co-ordinators need to be clearer and more sharply focused on improving standards in their subjects.

The school's rate of improvement since the previous inspection has been satisfactory. Governors share the headteacher's determination to improve and have become more involved in all aspects of school life. Some elements of teachers' planning have been improved. It now has specific targets, uses assessment information better and all subjects have an up-to-date scheme to guide staff. A substantial amount of internal refurbishment to the two spacious buildings has brought the accommodation up to a good standard. Improvement has been insufficient in developing the role of some subject co-ordinators and the over-emphasis on the core subjects has led to limited opportunities for pupils in other subject areas in the junior classes.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

**Pupils throughout the school achieve well** and reach average standards in English, mathematics and science in Year 2 and in Year 6. This represents an improvement on the test results shown above. Results in the national tests in mathematics, for example, have improved by 32 per cent over

four years. There are, however, insufficient opportunities planned for pupils to use their literacy and numeracy skills or computers in other subjects. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are in line with those expected throughout. Pupils in Year 6 attain above average standards in communicating information by text and graphic images. In physical education, all pupils achieve expected standards. In religious education, standards are in line with the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. There was insufficient evidence to judge provision in other subjects. The achievement of pupils with special needs is good. Children in the Foundation Stage, which comprises the nursery and reception year, achieve well in all areas. Progress in their physical development is very good because of the level of resources and effective use of outdoor areas. They are on course to meet the goals expected in all areas except communication, language and literacy, where weak speaking skills hold many back.

**Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are good.** Attendance levels in the last full year were below average but so far this year they have improved to broadly average. Pupils' behaviour is satisfactory, as is their attitude to learning. There have been two exclusions in the last academic year.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education provided by the school is good. Teaching and learning are good.**

The quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection. In the Foundation Stage, it is consistently good, with the experienced teachers and conscientious teaching assistants working effectively as a team. Teaching and learning are also consistently good in the infant and junior classes. Most of the very good teaching was seen in Years 2 and 6. A small amount of unsatisfactory teaching was seen and this was due to the slow pace in lessons and weak organisation of learning. All teachers could make better links between the different subject areas. Learning support staff are used very effectively throughout and make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning. The assessment of pupils' learning is good in the nursery and reception and satisfactory elsewhere. The staff provide pupils with a good level of care, support and guidance.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**The leadership and management of the school are good.** Governance is satisfactory. All statutory requirements are met. The headteacher is quietly determined to make the school better. Key staff have embraced her vision and aspirations for the school and support her effectively. The management of special educational needs is good and in the Foundation Stage, it is very good. However, most subject co-ordinators need a clearer role and the responsibility to monitor provision and evaluate their subjects. The management of physical education is a model of good practice.

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

Parents and pupils have positive views about the school. The behaviour of other pupils was a concern for some pupils and a few parents. Behaviour is generally satisfactory. Parents' main concern was for more information on pupils' progress and how they can help their children. Reports do not clearly highlight areas for improvement and parents are unsure about arrangements for homework. Some information could be made more 'user friendly'.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

The most important things the school should do to improve the quality of education and raise standards further are to:

- Provide a wider and more balanced curriculum for pupils in the junior classes;
- Improve the quality of teacher' planning to ensure more opportunities are provided for pupils to use their literacy and numeracy skills and computers in other subjects;
- Establish clear roles and responsibilities for subject co-ordinators.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS**

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

#### **Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses**

Overall, pupils' level of achievement is good and standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science are in line with those expected. Four years ago, it was a different picture with low standards. This raised concerns and in the last 18 months, the local education authority has embarked on a sustained campaign to improve the situation. The school has benefited from the support of its advisers and the services of an associate headteacher from a successful school nearby to see it through a period of change, which also included the appointment of a new headteacher. The rate of improvement has accelerated since her appointment.

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

- Children achieve well in the Foundation Stage because of the good quality of provision for them in most areas;
- Pupils' achievement is particularly good in Years 2 and 6 because of the consistently good and often very good quality of teaching;
- Standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science are rising steadily. Most pupils achieve expected levels in the national tests at Year 2 and Year 6;
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress;
- Literacy and numeracy skills are not promoted effectively in other subjects.

#### **Commentary**

1. Most children enter the school with below average levels of attainment and most achieve the learning targets set for them by the end of their reception year. By Year 6 all pupils, including those with special educational needs, have made good progress in relation to their prior attainment. They attain expected standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Standards in the current Year 2 are also in line with those expected in these three subjects, with most pupils achieving well. Overall, standards by Year 6 are rising steadily in line with the national trend. This has been achieved against a background of high pupil mobility and above average numbers of pupils with special educational needs in some year groups.
2. The good provision for children in the Foundation Stage ensures that they quickly settle into school and make good progress. Most achieve the goals they are expected to reach by the end of their reception year in five of the six areas of learning. However, a significant number do not in communication, language and literacy, as many enter the school experiencing major difficulties with their speech and language and need more time to catch up. The calm, gentle and caring approach of the very experienced class teachers in the nursery and reception help to quickly establish very good relationships and this gives all the children confidence. All make particularly good progress in their physical development because of the quality of resources and good use made of the spacious outdoor areas. Children's progress is good in all other areas.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.4 (14.3)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	15.3 (13.6)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	16.6 (15.6)	16.3 (16.5)

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



3. In the 2003 national test results, pupils in Year 2 achieved standards which were above the national average in reading and writing and in line with the average in mathematics. There was no significant difference in the performance of girls and boys. Detailed tracking records show all pupils made good progress in relation to their prior attainment level. The comparison with similar schools showed their performance was well above the average for reading, writing and mathematics. This was a remarkable performance, given the recent history of the school. However, the school recognised that this was a fairly good year group and their target for this year was to try and maintain those standards. Preliminary results show that this has been more or less achieved. Teacher assessments for science in 2003 show pupils' performance was below average for those achieving expected standards and also below average for those attaining at the higher Level 3.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	25.9 (23.9)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	26.3 (24.3)	26.8 (26.7)
science	28.0 (27.4)	28.6 (28.3)

*There were 50 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

4. In the national tests for Year 6 in 2003, the school's overall performance compared to all schools nationally in English, mathematics and science was below average. Compared to similar schools, the standards achieved were also below the average for all three subjects. School records show that individual pupils achieved well in relation to their prior attainment. The targets for English and mathematics in 2004 were raised slightly to reflect the potential of pupils taking the tests. Preliminary results for this year show that school's performance in the national tests for Year 6 have been maintained in mathematics and science but improved by nine per cent in English. This is a good result because of the larger than average number of lower attaining pupils being tested and the disruption caused by a significant number of pupils arriving at or leaving the school. The consistently good quality of teaching is a key factor. The trend in the school's results over time is keeping pace with the national trend for improvement.
5. Inspection evidence shows that current standards in Year 2 and Year 6 are in line with the national average in English, mathematics and science, with most pupils making good progress. The scrutiny of pupils' completed work confirms the standards being achieved in these three subjects. Pupils produce a lot of written work in English and it is usually neatly presented. However, there are fewer planned opportunities to use writing skills in other subjects. This means pupils often do not consolidate their skills learnt during the literacy sessions. It is the same for mathematics, with little evidence of pupils' mathematical knowledge being used in other subjects of the curriculum, such as science. They make good progress in the core subjects, thanks largely to the emphasis given to raising standards in these subjects and the consistently good quality of teaching. The creation of two smaller, single age classes in Year 6 has also been a successful tactic used by the school in helping to raise standards. However, it has meant that some of the classes lower down the junior section are larger than normal. It has also resulted in less time for teachers to give to other subjects of the curriculum and curriculum balance is an issue for the school to address, mainly in the junior classes. Nearly every parent who responded to the questionnaire sent out prior to the inspection agreed that staff expect pupils to work hard. As a result, all make good progress in relation to their prior attainment.
6. Standards in ICT were in line with those expected in the previous inspection and these have been maintained. In Year 6, however, pupils achieve above average standards in communicating information by text and graphic images. Inspectors saw that computers were used much more in some classes, such as nursery, reception and Year 6, than in others. Some staff miss opportunities to use computers to support or extend pupils' learning in

some subjects. In addition, there is a shortage of equipment such as sensors, which would support pupils' learning in science.

7. In religious education, standards are in line with the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus in both Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils are knowledgeable about Christianity and other world faiths and show a good understanding of other cultures as well as their own. Physical education is a popular subject with pupils and standards are in line with those expected throughout. The subject is well led by an excellent subject co-ordinator and more resources are needed in order to keep up with recent initiatives. There was insufficient evidence for inspectors to make a reliable judgement about standards in art and design, design and technology, geography, history or music at either Year 2 or Year 6. In music, the school makes good use of the expertise of a number of specialist music teachers, who teach some pupils in the junior classes to play an instrument.
8. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by the conscientious teaching assistants and this enables them to take a full part in all lessons. In a Year 2 mathematics lesson, for example, a parent helper and teaching assistant were able to give good support to all lower attaining pupils and their success in completing calculations correctly significantly raised their confidence and self-esteem. The quality of teachers' planning ensures that they have suitably challenging work. As a result, pupils' achievement is good. Care is taken to incorporate pupils' specific targets for learning into lesson planning. These are predominantly for literacy and behaviour, with few included for numeracy. There are currently no talented or gifted pupils identified. Care is taken to ensure that higher attaining pupils are sufficiently challenged in lessons.

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

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good in the nursery and reception classes and satisfactory in the rest of the school. There were two fixed period exclusions last year. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Attendance has risen dramatically from a low point three years ago and is satisfactory now. Pupils usually get to school on time.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils are keen to learn when good teaching motivates them;
- Pupils are generally compliant in lessons but sometimes lose interest in their work;
- Eye-catching displays of younger pupils' work raise their self-esteem effectively;
- Pupils willingly volunteer to take responsibility for helping others;
- Successful initiatives to improve attendance have made a big impact.

### **Commentary**

9. Pupils like their school and particularly value the positive relationships that they establish with their teachers, support staff and friends. The school has been through a turbulent period in the last couple of years and parents say that the many staff changes have been unsettling for their children. Some parents and pupils are concerned about behaviour and bullying. Others praise improvements under the new headteacher's leadership that have brought about a calmer, more purposeful atmosphere.
10. Teachers and support staff set high expectations for pupils' conduct and they work hard at achieving these ideals. The flow of lessons is sometimes interrupted through necessity for them to check pupils' behaviour. This slows the pace of learning. The number of pupils with social, emotional and behavioural problems has risen in recent years. Pupils who, on occasions, exhibit challenging behaviour, are successfully helped by staff to cope with their difficulties through the nurture group and strategies to manage their anger.

11. The pupils are friendly and get on well together on the whole, in the playground. They are good at organising impromptu games, helped by play equipment and playground markings. Girls and boys of different ethnic heritages play happily together. The school does not tolerate bullying or racism and any incidents are dealt with swiftly and effectively.
12. Many pupils feel, justifiably, that some of their lessons could be more interesting and fun. They learn most effectively when teachers spark their enthusiasm through exciting work that challenges their thinking and is relevant. Year 6 pupils' interest has been grabbed this term by basing almost their entire learning around a gripping adventure story. When lessons are dull and tasks are mundane other pupils, not surprisingly, sometimes 'switch off'.
13. Opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for minor duties and contribute to school improvements have increased since the previous inspection. The 'Sandringham volunteers' diligently help others and an effective school council has been established. Reading and playground 'buddies' encourage firm friendships between younger and older pupils, an important factor in view of their separate buildings and playgrounds.
14. Extra-curricular activities and residential stays for older pupils further promote social interaction. The school's 'charter of rights' and 'golden rules' help pupils to distinguish right behaviour from wrong behaviour and to be mindful of other's needs. Spiritual and cultural development is fostered satisfactorily. Pupils' work in the nursery, reception and Years 1 and 2 adorns their premises. The value that staff place upon their achievements enhances self-worth and helps them to flourish. Displays throughout the school promote racial harmony effectively through high quality positive images. Visiting local clergy contribute well to collective worship, but staff sometimes miss opportunities to enhance pupils' spiritual development in lessons and assembly.
15. The school has done well to pull back attendance to a satisfactory level after it nose dived three years ago. The effort invested has been very worthwhile and has contributed to the raising of standards. This improvement has stemmed from the commitment of staff to closely checking registers, chasing up reasons for unexplained absence and giving a high profile to best attending classes. Since the last inspection, staff have begun responding to absence without explanation on the first day. This confirms the child's whereabouts and is a good safety procedure. The education welfare officer is suitably involved with a few pupils whose poor attendance or persistent lateness causes concern. The breakfast club is beneficial in getting pupils into school on time and well nourished. All parents receive a useful annual mini-report that includes clear and simple grading of their children's punctuality and attendance set in the context of class and school performance.

## Attendance

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.8	School data	0.2
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

## 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	261	2	
White – any other White background	6		
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	4		
Mixed – White and Black African	1		
Mixed – White and Asian	2		
Mixed – any other mixed background	4		
Asian or Asian British – Indian	1		
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	3		
Any other ethnic group	1		
No ethnic group recorded	2		

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

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is good. Credit must be given for the sustained action taken by the local education authority to improve the quality of education after concerns about standards were identified. An associate headteacher looked after the school during the transition period between headteachers and her expertise is still available to the school along with that of many of the county's advisers and inspectors. Much emphasis has been given to raising standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science but this is having an adverse effect on the quality of the curriculum in other subjects, particularly in the junior classes. The balance is much better in the infant classes. Good care is taken over the welfare of pupils and all are well supported in lessons. Teaching assistants do a wonderful job supporting all pupils and especially those with special educational needs. There are good links with other schools.

### Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are good overall. This enables pupils to achieve well. Assessment procedures are satisfactory overall.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children get a good start to their education in the Foundation Stage because of the consistently good and sometimes very good quality of teaching;
- Teachers make very good use of the conscientious teaching assistants to support pupils' learning throughout the school;
- Teaching is best in Year 2 and Year 6;
- Not enough emphasis is given to the teaching of the non core subjects in the junior classes;
- The assessment of pupils' attainment and progress is good in English and mathematics and very good in physical education. However, it needs improving elsewhere;
- Teachers' planning in some classes needs to be improved;
- Homework should be better organised.

## Commentary

16. The previous inspection reported that teaching was satisfactory and that there were some unsatisfactory lessons. The quality of teaching has improved significantly since then and this is helping to drive up standards. Consistently good teaching was seen in most classes, with almost all of the very good teaching being in Years 2 and 6. However, there was still some unsatisfactory teaching in the junior section, caused by a slow pace in lessons, weak control of pupils as they lost interest and badly organised learning. This is having an adverse effect on the standards that pupils achieve with this teacher. Parents at the meeting prior to the inspection were keen to emphasise the close and caring relationships between all teachers and pupils. In their opinion, this is a happy school because of this.
17. The overall quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage has improved from satisfactory in the previous inspection, to good. On some occasions, it is very good. As a result, children settle quickly and concentrate well on the interesting and challenging tasks set for them. All achieve well in all areas of their curriculum. However, because of the difficulties faced by many children with speech and language problems, a significant number do not attain expected targets in this area of learning, despite their teachers best efforts. In the nursery and reception classes, children benefit from the teaching of two very experienced and skilful teachers. They are ably supported by the conscientious teaching assistants and most achieve the targets expected in the five other areas of their curriculum by the end of their reception year. The 12 reception age children taught in the mixed age class with Year 1, pupils also achieve well. They are well taught and often benefit from being with older pupils. The accommodation is imaginatively used by staff to provide interesting areas which stimulate children's interest. All enjoy using the vet's corner just outside the classroom. The good range of resources and the outdoor areas are used most effectively for promoting learning in all six areas which make up the Foundation Stage curriculum.
18. The latest curriculum guidance has been adopted by the school and detailed schemes of work set out clearly the learning for each year group. This was an issue for the school in the previous inspection. The detailed curriculum guidance helps teachers' lesson planning and they work closely together to ensure that pupils' learning is a continuous process. However, there are some important omissions from some teachers' planning. Opportunities to use computers to support pupils' learning in all subjects are often not identified and so computers are under-used in some classes. Some teachers are better than others at making links between the various national curriculum subjects and all teachers could provide more opportunities for pupils to use and help consolidate their literacy and numeracy skills in many more lessons. The drive to improve standards in the core subjects has led to teachers concentrating on these subjects. As a result, teachers are not giving sufficient emphasis to other national curriculum subjects. The imbalance is more noticeable in the junior classes.
19. In the very good lessons, mostly in Years 2 and 6, planning was exceptionally detailed with well thought out tasks which successfully motivated and interested pupils. These and high expectations, coupled with excellent use of support staff and visiting teachers from the local high school, ensured that pupils' full attention was guaranteed. As a result, learning was very effective. Pupils working with a secondary art specialist, for example, tried really hard to get the outline of a butterfly correct before using pastels to colour it correctly and Year 2 pupils listened intently to try and recognise various sounds from a tape. Equality of opportunity is a key consideration for all staff and good quality support or guidance is always on hand for any pupil who needs it.
20. Lessons generally are well organised and teachers make their expectations about behaviour clear. As a result, most pupils are keen to learn. They willingly complete homework and this is marked carefully and valued by teachers as a way of raising standards. However, some parents are unsure about the school's arrangements for homework and would appreciate more information on how they can help and support their children. Pupils work hard and inspectors were able to make judgements about standards in subjects such as science from the amount of neatly produced work. All pupils make good

use of computers in the computer room to increase their skills. They research facts about other countries in geography and use their writing skills to record information for history topics. However, computers were not used in many of the lessons seen.

21. Teachers and teaching assistants know the pupils with special educational needs well and their work in lessons is well planned. They ensure that these pupils have equal access to subjects and all activities. Individual work is appropriate to ensure pupils know what they have to do and most is marked with supportive comments. The very good support provided by teaching assistants ensures pupils have every opportunity to learn as effectively and independently as possible. Continual assessment and regular reviews contribute well to individual education plans and targets. However, few of these contain any targets for numeracy. Teachers enjoy a good relationship with parents and other professionals, who come into school to support pupils.
22. The assessment of pupils' attainment and progress is undertaken regularly and in depth for the core subjects of English and mathematics. It is also very thorough in physical education because of the efforts of the extremely able subject co-ordinator. In science, there is no consistent approach to assessment and this has been identified as an area for improvement when the subject features in the school improvement plan next year. Assessment procedures in most other subjects are satisfactory, overall. The school is currently trying to develop a consistent approach throughout the school. Results of assessments made of progress in pupils' termly work and their performance in the national tests are carefully analysed. Assessment information is used satisfactorily to modify the planning for future work and to track progress from year-to-year. Specific learning targets in English and mathematics are planned for pupils from the results of the detailed assessments in these subjects, ensuring all pupils build progressively on their previous learning. These targets are communicated very well to individual pupils and their parents in order to involve them more and give a better understanding of what needs to be achieved.

**Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 46 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1 (2)	12 (26)	25 (54)	5 (11)	3 (7)	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.*

**The curriculum**

Overall, the school provides a satisfactory curriculum that meets statutory requirements. The school offers a satisfactory range of enrichment activities. The quality of the accommodation is good and the level of resources is good.

**Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school has an inclusive curriculum that provides equal opportunities for all its pupils;
- Standards in literacy and numeracy throughout the school have improved over the past four years;
- The learning support assistants make a positive and valuable contribution in addressing the needs of individual pupils;
- The quality of provision for special needs pupils is a strength of the school, with pupils' individual education plans well established;
- The breadth and balance of the curriculum in the junior classes needs to be further developed, to provide children with a more rounded curriculum experience;
- Teachers' planning in the foundation subjects is not as effective as in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science;
- Since the previous inspection, there remains a weakness in the development of the subject co-ordinator's role and so the quality of the curriculum in some subjects is not properly evaluated.

## Commentary

23. The school provides an inclusive curriculum that affords equal opportunities to all its pupils; this includes a good provision for pupils with special needs. Pupils' progress is carefully monitored and pupils' individual educational programmes are well established and support their learning.
24. A range of strategies is employed in the teaching of the core curriculum. These include smaller classes in Year 6 and booster groups for all pupils at the end of the key stage. The school has invested heavily in teaching assistants, who provide very good support to all pupils and make a positive and valuable contribution in addressing the individual needs of pupils.
25. Transitional arrangements between the various educational stages are good. Shared work between Year 6 and Danum Secondary school staff helps to build pupils' confidence and familiarity with staff they will be working with. For example, visiting staff worked alongside class teachers in ICT on work relating to the book 'Kensuke's Kingdom' and staff supported in physical education, with a skills' session on teaching older pupils the correct technique for putting the shot.
26. There has been a strong focus on developing literacy and numeracy throughout the school. This has proved successful, with pupils' achievement in these areas reaching the expected nationally. This has been important, given the below average level of attainment when children start in the Foundation Stage. However, this strong focus on core subjects has resulted in the narrowing of the curriculum, particularly for the school's older pupils. Teachers' planning needs to improve, in order to provide a greater richness and breadth to the curriculum. Cross-curricular links need to be built, to allow the children the opportunities to use the skills they have acquired in the core subjects. This will require a number of schemes of work and curriculum policies for non-core subjects to be re-written. This work will need to develop parallel to the development of the role of the subject co-ordinator.
27. The quality of the ICT curriculum and its management has yet to make a significant impact. The new computer suite and computers within certain classrooms are providing pupils with the opportunity to use this new technology. Teaching, display, communication and information gathering have all been improved and are reflected in work around the school.
28. The school provides a satisfactory variety of after school clubs. These clubs are run mainly by the teaching staff and are well attended. They allow pupils to improve, practise and develop their interests in areas such as art, sports, dance and homework clubs. These clubs are regularly supported by experts and enthusiasts.
29. The accommodation is good. It is on a split site and both buildings are light and spacious, enabling teachers to deliver the full curriculum. In the infant and nursery sections of the school, very effective use is made of pupils work to brighten up classrooms and communal areas. Overall, the quality of learning resources is satisfactory. Resources for some areas have recently been improved. These include a new computer suite and two new library areas, one for each building. The playgrounds and outdoor areas are well maintained and provide a secure environment for outdoor learning.

## Care, guidance and support

Staff take good care of the pupils and support and guide them satisfactorily. They actively seek pupils' views and involve them well in the life and work of the school.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Learning support assistants contribute very effectively to the help and guidance that pupils receive;
- The good start made in target setting to improve pupils' performance in English and mathematics needs to be extended to other subjects;
- Good provision for pupils with special educational needs enables them to improve their literacy skills and behaviour;
- Trusting relationships throughout the school enable pupils to share concerns and express opinions freely.

## **Commentary**

30. Parents are justifiably pleased that the caring staff place their children's best interests at heart. They like the good arrangements for induction to the nursery that include home visits from the staff to get to know the children and exchange important information. Pupils joining the school mid term are helped to adjust to their new surroundings by, for example, having buddies to show them round and befriend them. One parent commented that her child had 'settled down and integrated beautifully' due to the staff's 'compassion and sensitivity which have allowed him to flourish'.
31. Pupils really appreciate having an adult they can confide in if they have any worries. The learning support assistants play a large part in tackling pupils' needs and sensitivities. Pupils with behavioural difficulties benefit from the nurture group that enables them to meet together to discuss strategies for improving their conduct. Outside agencies, such as educational psychologists are involved appropriately. Pupils with learning difficulties are helped to achieve as well as others by well tailored support and guidance, particularly in literacy, from teachers and other staff. Pupils of all abilities would benefit from more advice about improving their work to raise standards further. Although they are increasingly being involved in target setting, this is not yet happening in enough subjects.
32. Attendance plummeted three years ago to a very poor level. Since then, staff have worked hard, with much success, to raise parents' and pupils' awareness of the importance of attending regularly. During the last reporting period that has published national statistics for comparison (2002/03), the school managed to claw attendance back to just below the national average. Further improvements have been made over the past twelve months and the latest figures show it is broadly in line with the national average.
33. Governors ably assist the staff in assuring pupils' welfare, health and safety by conducting risk assessments of the premises and of off-site visits, including residential stays. Healthy eating is actively promoted and an anti-drugs team in the community is helping pupils to make informed life choices. Staff, through training and regular meetings, are alert to issues regarding the safeguarding of children from harm.
34. The school council, established since the previous inspection, is enabling pupils in Years 1 to 6 to influence decisions about improvements. They are rightly proud of the changes they have brought about to make the school a better place. Discussion times in lessons successfully encourage pupils to share their anxieties and state their views.

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

The school has established a satisfactory partnership with parents. Good links with other schools and colleges reap many benefits for the pupils. Links with the community contribute satisfactorily to pupils' learning and personal development.



## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Nursery staff play a large part in forging the school's links with parents;
- Curriculum sheets and workshops are helping parents to find out more about what is being taught;
- Some of the information for parents could explain things better;
- Homework is patchy, which limits parental involvement;
- Strong links with neighbouring schools help to raise standards.

## Commentary

35. The new headteacher and leadership team are winning the trust of parents who welcome the many improvements that have already taken place. The school's partnership with parents gets off to a good start, when nursery staff visit families at home to begin building bonds before the children start school. Staff strengthen these links well by encouraging parents to attend workshops, sometimes organised by an outside agency that meets on the premises and also provides useful 'drop-in' facilities.
36. Parents' views about the life and work of the school are generally positive but there are some aspects of communication that they rightly perceive need improving. Some of the information for nursery and reception parents could be worded in more 'parent-friendly' terms. Year group curriculum information sheets give parents a useful outline of the topics being taught. Some are better than others at communicating how parents might help their child to learn and when homework is set. The extent to which parents can get involved in helping their children to learn at home is limited by lack of a structured approach to homework. Some parents rightly feel that homework should be less hit and miss. They would appreciate a clearer picture of what needs to be completed at home and when it should be returned. Pupils, for example, do not have homework diaries. This lessens the opportunity for two-way dialogue between home and school.
37. Parents and governors are actively encouraged to help the staff in school and on visits. They do so in reasonable numbers. The parents and friends association has been revitalised through the enthusiasm of learning support assistants following a period of inactivity. Members work tirelessly to organise well supported social and fundraising events and run a shop.
38. Information for parents about their child's progress is satisfactory overall. The annual mini-reports are a good way of indicating to parents how well their child's attitudes towards school and personal qualities are developing. There is a long gap between consultations with class teachers in the autumn and summer terms about academic progress, but parents are most welcome to contact the staff at other times. The annual full reports tend not to identify clearly enough how well pupils are doing in relation to national expectations nor the next steps for improvement. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are kept well informed about their progress towards the targets set for them.
39. Staff and pupils have benefited greatly from liaison with a school that has national acclaim for established good practice. Advice and support from this successful school have helped the school to pull through a difficult period and be on the up. Links with other primary schools, and the high school they feed into, are also productive. All Year 6 pupils in this 'pyramid' are doing similar work that will be built upon progressively after transition.
40. Visitors and educational visits in the locality broaden pupils' learning satisfactorily. More 'first-hand' experiences are needed to enrich the curriculum further and motivate pupils more.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall, leadership and management are good. The leadership of the headteacher and other key staff is good. Management is good. Governance is satisfactory. All statutory requirements are met. The barriers to learning are relatively few and there are some significant aids to learning such as the headteacher' leadership.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The involvement with an associate headteacher from a successful school within the authority and support of other local education authority staff has enabled the school to significantly improve its provision;
- The leadership and management for children with special educational needs are effective;
- The leadership of physical education is very good. The planning for progression of skills and monitoring and evaluation procedures are a model for other subject leaders to follow;
- The role of subject co-ordinators needs developing further;
- Good financial control helps the school achieve its priorities.

### Commentary

41. The new headteacher has a positive vision and is quietly determined to drive the school forward and ensure that pupils have a good quality of education. She has won the confidence of the parents, governors and staff with her calm approach and expertise in a short period of time. There is a pursuit of higher achievement in which the thoughtful leadership team plays an important part. Performance management systems are good, have been fully discussed and include all staff. Staff professional development is also good with much provision based on the discussion within the leadership team. The leadership team shares the vision of the headteacher and she, in turn, is appreciative of the support and commitment of the team as they look to reorganise the management structure in the near future to provide 'creative' and 'physical' teams.
42. Since her appointment, the headteacher has generated a climate for change and demonstrated a clear vision for improvement in both her actions and in a comprehensive school development plan. Parents are supportive and are pleased with the rate of improvement. Through good leadership and a positive attitude she has set up clear lines of responsibility and effective monitoring procedures. Teachers and the good quality support staff are aware of the school's priorities, involved in their formation and committed to their implementation. Teachers have taken on appropriate leadership responsibilities and have established action plans with success criteria in their curriculum areas. The physical education co-ordinator shows very good planning skills and a focused approach to monitoring and evaluating in this curriculum area. As a result, there is an enhanced purpose and challenge and this is having the desired effect of increasing pupils' learning and achievement.
43. The governing body, with its new Chair, is committed and supportive of the school. The headteacher gives governors good information about the strengths and weakness of the school. They are beginning to develop their understanding of the issues that need to be addressed and their essential role in shaping the vision and direction of the school. Governors have begun to develop monitoring systems and to offer support and challenge to senior managers. The governors undertake their statutory duties effectively but must now further develop their role in contributing to strategic planning, monitoring and evaluation of school improvements.
44. There is a commitment by management to self-evaluation and the systems in place can be seen to be shaping the direction of the school. Improvements have been made in significant areas since the last inspection. New staff, in particular, newly qualified teachers are

inducted well and receive mentor support from the headteacher and senior staff members. Staff development is linked to whole school targets as well as individual, personal and professional development programmes.

45. Leadership and management of the provision for pupils with special educational needs are good. There are two special educational needs co-ordinators and both offer good leadership. This area of the school's provision keeps moving forward and recent initiatives to involve parents more and to introduce structures and strategies for behaviour management of pupils have been successful. The link governor for this area understands it well. Clear strategies has been developed to cope with the significant amount of pupils who enter or leave the school during the school year. Newcomers are helped to settle in quickly by the close support of the staff and other 'buddy' pupils who look after them.
46. Procedures for checking provision in all subjects are having a positive impact on teaching, although this aspect needs to be developed further to raise the standard of teaching overall. Analysis of performance data and tracking systems are now developing and beginning to be effective. Subject co-ordinators have all been given time to check on their own curriculum area and have plans to develop and improve their subject.

### **Financial Information**

47. Effective financial controls are in place. Approaches to financial management are closely linked to the school development plan priorities and the school has good procedures to ensure that value for money is obtained when purchasing resources and services. When the standards achieved are taken into account, along with the good quality of teaching, effective leadership and management and average costs per pupil, the school provides good value for money.

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

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	755,650	Balance from previous year	34,618
Total expenditure	763,425	Balance carried forward to the next	28,842
Expenditure per pupil	2,393		

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

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

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage, which covers those in the nursery, reception class and the 12 reception children in the mixed age Year 1 class is good. This represents a significant improvement from the previous inspection, when it was judged to be satisfactory. The majority of children enter the nursery with attainment levels below those normally seen. A significant number have severe speech and language problems. By the end of reception, standards are below those normally seen for communication, language and literacy; they are in line with those expected for mathematics, personal, social and emotional development, knowledge and understanding of the world and for creative development. All children do well in their physical development with many exceeding the targets set for them in the Foundation Stage curriculum.

The nursery is open each morning and afternoon. Generally, the younger children attend the afternoon sessions. Children start in the term after their third birthday and they transfer to the reception class in September in the academic year of their fifth birthday. Children in the reception class achieve well in all six areas because teaching is consistently good and sometimes very good. The curriculum is well planned to provide a wide range of interesting and relevant activities, which are well matched to their needs. There was no evidence of any children being insufficiently challenged as there was previously. Planning takes good account of learning opportunities both indoors and outside. In the mixed age reception and Year 1 class, the 12 reception children achieve well as they often work alongside older pupils in Year 1. All adults set excellent role models for the children and manage them well. They work very well as a cohesive team, carefully monitoring all children's progress.

In the nursery, children settle quickly at the beginning of each session and the majority of children make good progress. This is due to the good and sometimes very good quality of teaching. Organisation is good, with the nursery assistant playing a key role in reducing the size of teaching groups. Activities are often challenging and successfully hold children's interest. Planning for focused activities is meticulous and these can be led equally well by the teacher or her assistant. Children are encouraged to choose their activities and this helps them to develop responsibility for their own learning. Behaviour management is good and this impacts strongly on the quality of children's learning in all six areas. On occasions, there are missed opportunities for children to engage in discussions with adults and other children. These opportunities are important, given the weak communication skills of many on entry.

The internal accommodation for the Foundation Stage is good. Staff use children's work effectively to create a bright and colourful learning environment for children. Outside, there are two safe, well equipped areas, one for the nursery and one for reception children. The school has invested well in improving the level of resources, which are good. However, the spacious outdoor area for the nursery is predominantly grass and so much of it cannot be used in wet weather or in winter. There are plans to add a roadway for children to use with their bikes and pedal toys, but an all weather soft fall area is needed to modernise this area and make it more accessible all year round.

The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage is very good. The co-ordinator has established a very effective team, which includes the Year 1 teacher who also teaches Foundation Stage children. Together, all three teachers carefully assess the quality of children's work and record their progress in detail. They look carefully at profile results and form an action plan to address weaknesses and drive up standards. For example, speaking and listening skills score very low for most children and the emphasis on developing the necessary skills is usually given a high profile. The good assessment procedures were also recognised in the previous inspection.

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

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good relationships are established with parents and children before children start school and this helps them to settle in quickly;
- Children achieve well because of the consistently good teaching and high expectations set by all staff;
- All children behave well and are keen to learn.

### **Commentary**

48. In the nursery, a smooth start is ensured for all children as staff visit them at home before they start school, getting to know them and their parents. Staff have clear and consistent strategies in place to manage children's behaviour. This ensures that there is a calm atmosphere in which all children can concentrate on what they are doing. A clear set of rules is shared with children and all know what is expected of them. There was a competition during the inspection to see whether the morning or afternoon children could tidy up the best. All children enjoy coming to the nursery to meet with friends and all have good opportunities to make choices. Activities are planned to inspire them and have clearly specified learning outcomes. Children therefore develop good concentration and are well motivated.
49. In the reception class, children have established good concentration skills. The atmosphere is relaxed and purposeful. Children show great pride in their work and eagerly 'show off' their work to adults. They are well behaved because staff explain clearly what is expected and have a consistent approach. Teachers know children well and challenge them. For example, children had to decide from a range of photographs from their trip to a farm which two to choose and which one to reject. They then had to justify their choice. Children are supported well by the conscientious teaching assistant in all their activities. Those in the Year 1 class enjoy choosing from a range of activities and are able to explain clearly why they have selected a certain activity. All show a very good level of concentration and take pride in their finished work.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teachers and support staff work hard to develop children's speaking and listening skills;
- There is a good range of strategies for teaching early literacy and communication skills.

### **Commentary**

50. Children make steady progress in their speaking and listening skills. Despite the best efforts of staff, many do not achieve the targets set for them in the Foundation Stage in this key area before the end of their reception year. Staff plan well and offer children activities that captivate them. In one session, the teacher had copied all the photographs of a farm visit from the school's digital camera. Every child had the opportunity to talk about their favourites, usually picking those with themselves or their parents. The class was clearly reminded that their comments had to be in a full sentence. Staff show genuine interest in what children have to say. This strategy also supports their early writing well. Each class has an area designated for writing. Children are encouraged to record their ideas through drawings and paintings. Some are beginning to sound out letters, form them correctly and

write words. The reception children in the Year 1 class benefit from being with older pupils and most are able to make a good attempt at writing a short sentence. Their letters are well formed and some of the words spelt correctly. Children are learning to read well and recognise many short words. Some sound out longer, unknown words and manage to read them accurately.

51. In the nursery good emphasis is given to teaching early letter sounds. All children were able to draw the shape of the letter 'h' in the air and on the carpet. A few managed to paint it or write it with a pencil. Nearly all manage to write their name on their work. Most children enjoy stories. They like to sit in the book area and browse. Parents are keen to take story books home to read with their children. Children enjoy stories such as 'Handa's Surprise'. They are beginning to predict what might happen next and talk about the pictures. When stories are read, group sizes are reduced so children can get close to the adult reading to them. All have good opportunities to express their views and opinions about the stories.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The emphasis on mathematics is good;
- Effective use is made of resources, including the area outdoors;
- Children have a good knowledge of numbers when counting, but their calculation skills are less well developed.

### **Commentary**

52. In the nursery, children are beginning to identify two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes. They sing songs and rhymes and use fingers for counting backwards and forwards. The nursery environment has good displays of numbers and children are often encouraged to count things, for example, at refreshment times to check there are sufficient pieces of fruit. This helps them to consolidate their learning. Children are generally confident in counting. However, staff have identified a weakness in calculation and regularly ask them to count one more or less and to find the difference between numbers up to five.
53. Teaching and learning are also good for reception class children. Teachers plan a range of interesting activities to promote mathematical understanding. Children learn to count and recognise numbers beyond ten. More able children in the Year 1 class are well challenged to count forward from higher numbers. Children know what 'more' means in terms of number and can explain what 'less' means. Good use is made of the area outside so that learning is fun. Children happily count items such as hoops, beanbags and quoits. Activities match children's stage of development so all make good progress. They learn to count objects and record the correct number. Activity sheets are well devised so they are clear and supportive. Children have well planned baking sessions where they develop an understanding of measurement.

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

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children have regular access to computers;
- Children have good opportunities to explore and investigate.

## Commentary

54. In the nursery, children use the computer each day. Many of them learn to use the mouse competently. Children explore and investigate as they play with wet or dry sand and water. Staff encourage children to examine things like soil, plants and seeds through magnifying glasses. There are good opportunities for scientific discussion about children's observations. As a follow-up to the story, 'Handa's Surprise', a selection of tropical fruits are named, described then cut open to show the seeds.
55. In the reception class, children collect minibeasts like woodlice and worms from the school grounds and draw and record their observations. Children design patterns using a computer program and talk about improvements they might make to their work. The area outdoors is not very well developed at present, but there are plans to create a garden area and wild area for children to use. Parents come to the school to help enrich the curriculum. For example, children find out about the Indian festival of Navrati from a teaching assistant and there is an interesting selection of musical instruments from around the world for children to use some of which parents have brought into school.

## PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **very good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers make the most of the spacious, well equipped outside areas;
- Behaviour management is good, ensuring all children take turns and learn to share toys and equipment;
- Good opportunities are provided to develop children's dexterity, co-ordination and balance;
- There is too much grass and not enough hard play area in the nursery outdoor area.

## Commentary

56. The two areas outdoors are easily accessible to nursery and reception children. However, the nursery area is mostly grass and this means that it cannot be used in wet weather. The resources and equipment are plentiful and of good quality. The Year 1 teacher links in with the reception teacher using the afternoon sessions to ensure children have a good choice of activities, some of which enable children to use what is available in the reception class or outdoors. In addition, children's physical development is promoted well in dance sessions in the main hall. Children respond well to taped music, acting as penguins or polar bears. They quickly are able to demonstrate the distinct movements of each, stretching, rolling, yawning and sliding like the polar bear, then they waddle, look and flap like penguins. All listen well to instructions and behave exceptionally well.
57. All children learn to control and co-ordinate their body when using tricycles and wheeled apparatus. Nursery and reception children are taught skills in a systematic way and make rapid progress to achieve well in this area of learning. In the hall, reception children in the Year 1 class behaved very well and listened carefully to instructions. Children develop their manipulative skills by handling dough, scissors and brushes, and learn to handle small construction equipment with dexterity. In the nursery, children carefully cut out the shape of favourite food items such as chips and arrange them on a paper plate before sticking them down. They also enjoy using large construction equipment outdoors and this helps in their physical development.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in creative development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Careful attention is given to developing children's observational skills;
  - Effective use is made of ordinary resources to create attractive displays;
  - Music and singing have high profiles.
58. The work on display shows that standards are in line with those expected. Children's finished work is celebrated and often used to make the teaching areas bright and attractive. Role play was observed in the Year 1, reception and nursery classes and children enjoy being a waiter in the Fast Food Bar or in charge of the toy animals at the vet's. Art work is well planned to link in with other areas of the curriculum such as communication, language and literacy. Children create large pictures to illustrate the story of the 'Three Little Pigs' or a 'Bear Hunt' to track holiday destinations. All mix paint carefully and they often work from direct observation, drawing and painting favourite fruits or insects from the school grounds. Much emphasis is given to creativity in the nursery. Children enjoy singing and adding actions to some of their well known songs. All get excited about using the good range of musical instruments and listen well as they demonstrate in turn the different sounds they make. They make good use of computers to design and create patterns.

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

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The teaching and learning of English is a strength within the school. This leads to good achievement of pupils throughout;
- Pupils of high ability within the school achieve well in literacy;
- There has been an improvement in writing skills throughout the school over the past four years;
- The school has successfully introduced a system of monitoring and tracking pupils' achievement;
- Improved resourcing is having a positive effect on pupils' learning;
- The school needs to develop further the role of the subject co-ordinator and to improve overall planning;
- The school needs to ensure that pupils are given the opportunity to apply, across the curriculum, the literacy skills that they have learned.

### **Commentary**

59. On entry into the reception class, pupils' attainment is below the standards that would be expected nationally for children of a similar age. Pupils achieve well in all areas of literacy owing to the quality of the teaching and learning experiences that they receive. Lessons are delivered with good pace and high levels of pupil interest are maintained. The pupils' progress is closely monitored, with children's individual needs identified. Those with the greatest need of support are identified early, with individual educational plans quickly established. Teachers and pupils are well supported by a very good team of Learning Support Assistants, who provided valuable support in the lessons observed. This overall support, linked to the opportunities provided, results in good progress. By the end of Year 2 pupils achieve well and are working to the expected levels.



60. Speaking and listening skills are developed through a range of strategies. These include 'hot-seating', when children choose to be interviewed. This technique was used to excellent effect in a Year 1 lesson, when children clamoured to be able to tell their other classmates just where they wanted 'Baby Bear' to go on his travels. Other examples were seen within 'Circle Time', when pupils were provided with the opportunity to discuss and express opinions about their school and the immediate environment. Question and answer sessions in all classes were lively, with pupils making significant contributions. This was partially due to the quality of questioning by the teachers. By Year 6, most pupils have reached a satisfactory level in speaking and listening, with the most able developing into confident communicators.
61. Reading standards are satisfactory throughout the school. Children are provided with a range of opportunities to read for a variety of purposes. In a number of lessons observed, guided text was read, with the teacher supporting a small reading group. Reference books were in evidence, particularly amongst the boys, who had brought them from the school library.
62. It was possible to hear a range of children read with varying degrees of confidence. They used a number of phonic-based, word-attack skills to address an unfamiliar word. The younger children take their books home. However, some older pupils said that they often forgot and did not read at home. Reading is monitored and informs class records of individual pupils' achievements. A number of entries within the reading diaries confirmed a range of differing levels of support that children had received from home. Some of the younger children in Year 2 said that they visited the local library with a parent. None of the younger pupils could suggest a favourite author and some said that they had few books at home. By Year 6, the most able readers can read with expression and feeling. They can describe a favourite story in detail, discussing plot and the characters, as was observed in Year 6 with the class book 'Kensuke's Kingdom'.
63. The school is on a split site and libraries have been developed in both buildings. Within the library there is no Internet link, although book resources have been upgraded and levelled. Available class time is limited, with pupils needing to be timetabled for groups to visit. This limited access results in children having underdeveloped research and referencing skills for developing independent learning.
64. Pupils achieve well in writing during their time in the school. The pupils start in the infant classes with the development of simple sentences that build into more complex and varied formats. Grammar and punctuation are taught systematically and well on a regular basis during the literacy hour. There was evidence that, by Year 6, children had experience of writing for a range of purposes. These included report writing, letters and balanced arguments, for example, whether to allow mobile 'phones into school. The most able pupils, by the end of Year 6, produced some good imaginative work on 'The Tamarack' that was both fluent and creative. However, the provision of further opportunities to use the skills they have been taught is desirable and the use of cross-curricular writing needs to be developed further. Handwriting and the improvement of presentation are practised regularly in both infant and junior classrooms. This has resulted in an overall improvement throughout the school in presentation, with a cursive hand developing quite early.
65. An excellent lesson was seen in which a simple setting stirred children's enthusiasm and their imagination for story writing. Baby Bear and his holiday destination became a focus for some stimulating vocabulary development and story planning.

The focal point of the classroom is a very large box covered in paw prints, with Baby Bear sitting inside. Children are fascinated by the concept that Baby Bear is going on holiday and that his destination will be chosen by them. The class sit in a circle and are asked to imagine where he should go. Eyes are closed and children listen to a variety of sounds that suggests different settings. The sounds of the sea, jungle and bird song all stimulate their imaginations and produce high levels of excited conversation and discussion. Children are asked to join Baby Bear in the box to share their ideas as to where the holiday should be. The children are thrilled with the ideas that are suggested.

A large story plan is provided for them, suggesting a beginning, middle and end for their ideas. In addition, they are provided with a wall full of words and pictures that relate to jungles, underwater, aeroplanes and the like. The children quickly settle into their writing with both the teacher and classroom assistant providing support for the less able pupils.

The story planning is shared in the plenary session, with children clamouring to have the time sitting with Baby Bear and telling the class what they have written. This was a well prepared lesson, delivered at excellent pace, with enthusiasm and humour reflecting the positive relationships.

66. The quality of the teaching observed has improved since the previous inspection and is good in literacy. This is partially due to a number of new staff now in place. Lessons are well organised and meet the needs of the range of pupils that exist within each classroom. Those pupils with special educational needs are well supported by appropriate work. In addition, the high standards of the classroom support assistants make a significant contribution to these children's individual needs, with staff developing positive working relationships with the children.
67. Subject co-ordination is being developed. There have been a number of observations of teachers teaching literacy and the co-ordinator has a good understanding of the assessment and tracking of pupils' progress that is taking place. However, a policy statement and a more recent scheme of work are areas for development. They will need to be addressed in the future to allow for a more systematic level of planning. In addition, the development of a leveled work scrutiny file would provide a useful resource in linking assessment to the national curriculum levels.

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

68. Pupils miss many opportunities to use their literacy skills across the curriculum. Subjects such as history, religious education and geography can all be further improved by providing pupils with a greater purpose for writing.

### **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

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

- Pupils achieve well as they move through school, because the teaching is good and sometimes very good, particularly in Year 6;
- The standard of pupils' work has improved in recent years;
- There is a consistent approach to the teaching of the subject in each of the classes with an emphasis on developing pupils' numeracy skills;
- The teachers cater well for the very wide range of ability of pupils in each class;
- Pupils have too few opportunities to develop their mathematics in other subjects, for example, science.

#### **Commentary**

69. Over the past four years, standards have risen steadily at both key stages and are now broadly in line with those found nationally for Year 2 and Year 6 pupils. After the previous

inspection in 1998, standards fell sharply and have taken some time to recover to their former level. The school has worked hard to regain the previous standards. Pupils achieve well. Particular attention is given by the school to the consolidation of mental agility in number and there are many examples of pupils working with a variety of mental approaches to pencil and paper methods of calculation. By Year 6, many pupils recognise that 750 millilitre is the equivalent of 0.75 of a litre and that the fractional equivalent is three quarters, for example.

70. The good achievement is due in the main to two factors; the good subject leadership and the consistently good teaching. In Year 6, much of the teaching is very good. It is characterised by high expectations of pupils, challenging work and a good pace in lessons which, together with good routines, engages pupils well and makes learning fun. There is a consistent approach to the teaching of the subject in all classes based on the guidance of the National Numeracy Strategy. This is successful.
71. Teachers plan their lessons well, sharing the learning objectives and targets at the beginning of the lesson, so that pupils are well involved in their learning. At the beginning of lessons, pupils are often involved in rapid-fire mental arithmetic problems, sometimes against the clock, to improve their mental agility. Other areas of work such as building up pupils' knowledge of two and three-dimensional shapes are adequately covered. In one lesson, pupils made good progress in their understanding of the properties of such shapes with reference to sides, edges, vertices and angles.
72. Support staff make a significant contribution to pupils' achievement. They are closely involved with teachers' planning, know the pupils well, and know exactly which pupils they are working with and what the objectives are. These pupils, who are often but not always, those with special educational needs, are therefore able to achieve well. However, some pupils with special educational needs would benefit from specific targets being formally set for them in this subject. The school already does this for pupils who are having difficulty in literacy.
73. The other major factor in improvement relates to initiatives set up by the subject co-ordinator. Amongst other things, teachers are observed in lessons to enable strengths and weaknesses to be identified and for appropriate advice to be given. The use of regular testing to measure pupils' progress and set targets for improvement ensures that emphasis is given to those aspects of the curriculum that need to be covered in greater depth.
74. Learning is sometimes held back due to the poor attitudes of some pupils. In some classes, the teachers have to work hard to manage pupils' behaviour which places demands on their time that they would otherwise use for more productive teaching. The vast majority of pupils present their work in a very neat and orderly way, which contributes significantly to the accuracy of their calculations.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

75. Insufficient opportunities are taken in other subjects to develop pupils' mathematical skills further. In science, for example, there are too few occasions when pupils record measurements and then gather the data to produce a graph in order to interpret trends in experimental work. The beginnings of this work are sometimes seen in Key Stage 1, for example, a traffic survey but too little is done and it is not built upon in a structured way.

## SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well to attain broadly average standards by Year 2 and by Year 6;
- Pupils have a good attitude towards the subject and enjoy doing experiments and investigations;
- The quality of teaching is good. It is particularly effective in Year 2 and Year 6;
- Assessment procedures are satisfactory, overall, but procedures need to be more consistent from class to class;
- There was little evidence of pupils using computers to support their learning in science and there are too few opportunities for them to use their mathematical skills.

### Commentary

76. Detailed tracking of individual pupils shows that all, including those with special educational needs, now achieve well in science. Standards in Year 2 and Year 6 have risen steadily over the past four years following a significant drop just after the previous inspection. They are now broadly in line with those expected for Year 2 and Year 6 pupils. The rate of improvement has accelerated in the past 12 months, which coincides with the appointment of the current headteacher. Under her good leadership, there has been a determined effort from all staff to improve standards and this has been achieved. There is much more emphasis on pupils themselves doing experiments and conducting investigations. The organisation of Year 6 pupils into two smaller, single age classes has also had a significant impact on standards and on all pupils' progress in science. There is no significant difference in the performance of girls and boys.
77. The level of improvement from the previous inspection has been satisfactory. None of the lessons was interrupted by pupils' unsatisfactory behaviour this time and the quality of teaching has improved from satisfactory to good. The clear emphasis on a practical approach in all lessons holds pupils' interest well and offers pupils a wide range of well-planned learning opportunities. In all of the lessons seen, there was a good emphasis on encouraging pupils to work collaboratively. Pupils enjoyed conducting investigations or working in small groups to answer problems posed by their teachers. Year 6 pupils tackled the problem of filtering some dirty water with bits floating in it. In their groups, pupils devised the best way to go about it using the equipment specified by their teacher. All were keen to end up with the cleanest water sample. Year 2 pupils enjoyed sorting animals into five groups. The teacher made the activity fun by giving out colourful pictures and asking the pupils to go and stand next to the category signs placed around the class. Most recognised the mammals, reptiles, fish, birds and amphibians.
78. The unsatisfactory use of computers, reported in the previous inspection, has only been partially resolved. All pupils have good access to computers in the classrooms and their skills are developed well in the computer room. However, there are few opportunities identified in teachers' planning for pupils to use computers to support their learning in science. As a result, little evidence was seen of pupils using computers to complete their work. Most of the data from measuring plant growth or comparing the force needed to move an object, for example, was handwritten. There is also a shortage of programmes and sensing equipment, which would link to computers which further limits their use. Year 5 pupils were unable to use their computer to research facts about planets because a virus affected all the computers in school. In the scrutiny of work, there was little evidence of pupils using their mathematical skills to record and present data from their investigations but their literacy skills were much in evidence as they described what they were doing in experiments and wrote about the various planets and the phases of the moon.

79. The scrutiny of work showed that all aspects of the curriculum are covered in some depth. There were records of pupils' attempts to find the best material for crisp packets, for example, and investigations involving exercise and heart rate, electrical circuits and friction. All pupils cover topics on health and growth and on growing plants. Pupils work hard and obviously take pride in their work, which was mostly neatly presented. All have a good understanding of fair testing.
80. The quality of teaching and learning is consistently good. High teacher expectations are evident in most classes from the standard of work completed. Teachers make very good use of the teaching assistants in the classroom to ensure that groups are well supported. The support available for pupils with special educational needs is good and as a result, these pupils are able to work alongside other pupils and complete the work expected of them. Teachers' planning is satisfactory overall. It ensures that lessons are interesting, enjoyable and usually challenging for pupils of all ability levels and that learning is progressive from year-to-year.
81. The standards pupils achieve in the national tests and the quality of the work they produce each term are assessed carefully by class teachers. However, there is no consistent approach to this assessment and the results are recorded in different ways from class to class. Teachers maintain detailed records of each pupil's attainment and progress as they move through the school and these show clearly the gains each pupil makes.
82. Subject management is satisfactory overall. The monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning is undertaken by the headteacher and co-ordinator and this has highlighted the need for more computer programs and computer-linked sensors. However, records of monitoring visits are not sufficiently detailed and do not highlight areas for further improvement. Science is to be made a priority in the next school development plan and the co-ordinator has her own plan for action ready, which covers most of the weaknesses identified here.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- In the area of communicating information by text and graphic images, the Year 6 pupils achieve well to attain standards that are higher than those found in most schools;
- The quality of teaching and learning is good;
- Pupils are given a good breadth of experiences to develop their ICT skills;
- Pupils have insufficient opportunities to use their skills in supporting their learning in other subject areas;
- The lack of formal records that indicate what pupils can and cannot do, means that the progress pupils make is not always as great as it might otherwise be.

### **Commentary**

83. Achievement is good and pupils thoroughly enjoy their time at the computers. Standards are in line with the national expectation at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6. Standards have risen since the previous inspection and kept pace with the higher expectations demanded nationally in this subject area.
84. Pupils in Year 6 achieve high standards, for example, in their presentations about cities such as Rio de Janeiro. They combine text, photographs and maps into their work from sources, including the Internet and their own writing. They are relaxed and confident in

handling a range of on-screen options in order to manipulate the text and images into a style, size and colour that will please the reader.

85. During the inspection period, a range of skills was being taught to pupils. In Year 2, pupils accessed information from a CD-ROM within the theme of animals. In Years 3 and 4, pupils were learning how to control an on-screen image in order to programme it to follow a square pathway. In another lesson, pupils were entering data into a simple spreadsheet. Overall, the teaching is good because the majority of teachers have sufficient expertise in this subject area and the programme of work tackles all strands of the curriculum. However, one unsatisfactory lesson was seen where the pupils made little or no progress in the lesson because they were confused by the instructions given and the teacher did not deal well enough with the poor behaviour patterns of the pupils.
86. Within some aspects of the subject, the lack of assessment and moderation of pupils' work means that pupils repeat work and do not build on skills sequentially. For example, pupils enter Year 1 having used ICT to produce block graphs in their reception year, but two years later are still experiencing a similar level of activity. The subject is well led and managed. The co-ordinator has a good knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject and knows what now needs to be done to move the subject forward.

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

87. The school's weekly plans for the general curriculum give little or no guidance as to how ICT can be used across the curriculum. Consequently, there are too many opportunities missed for pupils to use the skills they have acquired, for example, to produce graphs in science and mathematics lessons. At present, the chief link of ICT across the curriculum is where pupils have accessed information from the Internet in support of a geography topic or word processed some writing in literacy. Far more needs to be done. However, the Year 6 project, geared to the transition of these pupils to their secondary school is a good model of cross-curricular links. In this project, the pupils are well motivated in their learning where geography, ICT and literacy, amongst other subjects, are strongly linked.

### **HUMANITIES**

No lessons were observed in **geography** and too few in **history** to make judgements regarding provision.

### **Commentary**

88. In geography, an analysis of pupils' written work shows fragmented provision for the subject with an over reliance on worksheets. As a result some of the work is quite dull and uninspiring. There is not enough concentration on the skills of research or the interpretation of why things are as they are, for example, water's effect on the landscape.
89. Pupils in Year 6 are undertaking some of the most interesting work. As part of their transition to secondary school, they are reading a novel and finding information about the ports of call of the characters, as they journey around the world. The school recognises the need to revise its planning for this subject and procedures are in place to undertake a major review of the subject's provision.
90. History throughout the school is underdeveloped. There is no current policy or scheme of work in place. Pupils' levels of attainment are not assessed and their progress is not monitored. Pupils' work was scrutinised and there was some evidence of work on Florence Nightingale in Year 2, with comparisons drawn between her and a modern day nurse.
91. Teaching and learning were good in a Year 3/4 lesson that was observed. The children were provided with the opportunity to speak to and question a local miner who had

experienced the strike of 1984-85. This brought learning alive, with children wanting to know more about the mining process as well as the strike.

92. The curriculum is enriched by class visits outside school. For example, Year 4 went to Liverpool to see 'The Beatles' Exhibition'. A follow-up lesson and the classroom displays provided children with the opportunity to interpret issues such as John Lennon's death and its effect. The co-ordination of the subject is underdeveloped and suffers from a lack of cross-curricular links. The school uses the museum loan service to supply artifacts but, in general, the subject is under resourced.

### **Religious education**

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils' achievement is satisfactory throughout the school;
- Religious education is planned for and taught regularly but there is very little pupils' written work, especially from the junior classes.

### **Commentary**

93. The quality of provision has been maintained since the previous inspection. Standards are in line with the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus throughout. Collective worship follows relevant themes, such as friendship and links to other faiths. However, opportunities are lost in terms of reflective prayer and singing. The quality of teaching is generally satisfactory. Good links are maintained with the local church and the vicar regularly visits the school to take assemblies.

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

Insufficient teaching was seen in **art and design**, **design and technology** and **music** to make a firm judgement about provision in each subject.

### **Commentary**

94. In art and design, pupils completed work was scrutinised and additional evidence was obtained from a discussion with the teacher responsible for the subject's leadership and management. Some lesson observations with pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 show that standards are in line with those expected for these pupils.
95. It is evident from teachers' planning and the range of work displayed around the school that the work planned is varied. Work is focused on the development of line, colour and shading in the junior classes. This was a feature of a very good lesson in Y6 taught by the visiting high school teacher. Here pupils achieved well because they were interested in and challenged by the project in which they used butterfly samples to create large-scale pencil and oil pastel pictures. A Year 2 class worked with natural objects and made sculptures from twigs and leaves. The work of the older pupils is focused on observation and line drawings and limits their experiences in this subject.

96. In design and technology, an analysis of pupils' recorded work including photographic evidence indicates that:
- pupils have a satisfactory range of design and making experiences;
  - pupils work with a satisfactory variety of materials including paper, card, wood, textiles and food;
  - pupils evaluate their finished models and often amend their design ideas as they proceed;
  - pupils have too few opportunities to evaluate and dismantle other people's products' to see how and why things are made a certain way;
  - a richer range of experiences needs to be offered to some classes;
  - teachers' medium-term planning is inadequate to address the systematic acquisition of skills for pupils.

The work undertaken in Year 6 where pupils examined various dips for summer salads, then designed a dip of their own and made it, is an example of the better type of activities undertaken by some classes.

97. In music, there were a number of displays around the school that related to music. In particular, a display in the infants comprised a range of instruments from around the world. These included a thumb piano from South Africa, a didgeridoo from Australia, a monkey drum from Kenya and a mandolin from Greece. These provided the children with a multicultural flavour, with the children being encouraged with the help of a globe to link the instruments to their places of origin. The peripatetic music service staff provided a performance for the school on the sounds and names of these and other instruments.

98. The peripatetic music service is also used to provide tuition for pupils in woodwind, guitar, violin and cello. In addition, the school has recently purchased some recorders in preparation for starting recorder tuition. The school does have a choir and singing is recognised in the timetable, although it was absent from the daily assembly. Overall, the subject is underdeveloped and poorly resourced. The role of the subject co-ordinator is similarly underdeveloped, with no whole school agreement on the delivery of the music curriculum.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Provision in physical education is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The subject is well led by an excellent subject co-ordinator;
- Physical education throughout the school is very well planned, with a comprehensive scheme of work in place;
- A significant amount of funding has been directed towards the replacement and upgrading of resources;
- The school has created good sporting links with the local community.

### Commentary

99. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. The strength of leadership is beginning to have a significant impact on the quality of teaching and this in turn is helping to raise standards. The standards reached by pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 continue to be broadly similar to those found nationally in other schools. The school provides a growing range of physical activities; these include basketball, tag rugby, swimming, netball and football.
100. In the lessons observed, teaching and learning were good overall. In all lessons the importance of 'warming up' and 'cooling down' are always stressed as important, and



children are able to explain what is happening to their bodies. In one particular lesson in Year 6, links with the local secondary school proved beneficial. A physical education specialist teacher was able to work alongside the class teacher. This resulted in some very good skills' teaching of how to putt the shot. The children made good progress and, by the end of the lesson, could transfer their weight quickly and putt, rather than throw, the shot. Ongoing assessment occurs throughout physical education lessons, as well as at the end of a unit of work. Any pupils underachieving or performing particularly well are identified and supported further.

101. A good example of the supportive nature of the planning was seen in a Year 2 gymnastics lesson, taught by a non-specialist teacher. The lesson was well organised, with the preliminary warm-up observed. Children built on the previous week's work on high and low movement placed into a sequence. This followed the cross-curricular theme of shape and control. The children transferred their ideas onto a range of different pieces of apparatus. Instructions were clear and good practice was highlighted and shared amongst the class. Pupils clearly enjoyed the lessons and all made satisfactory progress, partly owing to the good pace of the work and the children's enthusiasm.
102. The curriculum is also supported by a number of specialist coaches. For example, Doncaster Rovers Football Club has worked with the children. This work has resulted in the children now forming a school football team. In addition, they have recently secured a new kit from Barclay's Bank.
103. The management and leadership of the subject are very good. The co-ordinator is a physical education specialist who brings a very good level of expertise and understanding as to how to promote and develop the subject throughout the school. An excellent subject file is in place that contains a policy statement and a comprehensive scheme of work. This recognises the different teaching styles and provides a useful structure to aid planning. Teachers are observed by the co-ordinator and advice is given to support improvement. In addition, a staff in-service training record is kept, to help create a staff development programme. The progress of pupils is monitored by the co-ordinator and pupils are assessed against national curriculum levels. This provides a picture of need for future action to be taken.
104. The school has a large grassed area as well as two well-maintained indoor halls. The hard surface used for basketball and netball is of good quality and well marked and lined to support a range of physical education activities. However, there remains some shortage of small equipment to support whole class activities.

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

Insufficient lessons were seen during the inspection and it is not possible to make a judgement on the school's provision.

### **Commentary**

105. A wide range of other evidence available to inspectors, such as lesson observations and policy documents shows that the school is successful in promoting pupils' personal and social skills and their awareness of citizenship. This is achieved through good links with the community and such initiatives as the school's council and playground friends. Through this, pupils learn to take on responsibility and play their part in the day-to-day organisation of the school. Clear policies exist for the promotion of pupils' awareness about drugs and for their sex education and relationships.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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