

INSPECTION REPORT

ST HELEN'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Hoyland

LEA area: Barnsley

Unique reference number: 106640

Headteacher: Mr S P Harrison

Lead inspector: Mrs J Coop

Dates of inspection: 28th - 30th June 2004

Inspection number: 257674

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	5 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	157
School address:	West Street Hoyland Barnsley South Yorkshire
Postcode:	S74 9 DL
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr J Kril
Date of previous inspection:	2 nd March 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This smaller than average Catholic primary school is situated in Hoyland, near Barnsley. There are 153 pupils on roll between the ages of four and 11. Pupils come from a wide range of backgrounds and the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is average, but this is not a true reflection of the social and economic circumstances of the school, which is below average. All of the pupils are of white ethnicity and no pupils speak English as an additional language. Thirteen per cent of the pupils have been identified as having learning difficulties, which is below average. This fluctuates considerably each year, and the proportion of pupils with special educational needs in some year groups is above average. Less than one per cent of pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Needs, which is also below average. Assessment data shows that children start in the reception class with below average skills overall, but this varies from year to year and is well below average in some years. Children currently start in the reception class in the term they reach the age of five. The admission arrangements are changing from September 2004. This year, due to natural circumstances, there has been a number of staff changes and over 50 per cent of teachers are new to the school, which is very high. Two members of staff have only just started in the school. The school received an achievement award in 2001, the Activemark Gold Sports award and FA charter standard for schools in 2004.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
31862	Mrs J Coop	Lead inspector	Foundation Stage curriculum Art and design Music Special educational needs Personal, social and health education and citizenship
9224	Mrs D Shields	Lay inspector	
32048	Dr G R Grigg	Team inspector	English Information and communication technology History Geography
22556	Mr E Morgan	Team inspector	Mathematics Science Design and technology Physical education

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a **good** school with some significant strengths. Very good leadership and management, coupled with good teaching, ensure that pupils achieve well. Very good attitudes to learning are nurtured within a very strong Catholic community and a very caring atmosphere. The school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The headteacher provides calm, yet inspirational, leadership. He is very effectively supported by the deputy headteacher, a well-informed governing body and hard working staff.
- Pupils' achievements are very good in mathematics, information and communication technology, and art and design, and standards are above average by the end of Year 6.
- Assessment procedures are very good in the reception class, and good in English, mathematics and science, but are not yet fully developed in other subjects.
- A good curriculum is enriched by a very wide range of activities. Opportunities for pupils to participate in the creative arts are outstanding.
- Very good relationships, attitudes, behaviour and personal development are nurtured within a very strong Christian community in which all pupils are highly valued. Despite the school's very best efforts, too many parents take their children away on holiday during term time.
- Teaching and learning are good, but teachers' marking does not consistently focus on how pupils could develop their work or make links to individual learning targets.
- The school cares for its pupils very well and provides excellent pastoral support and guidance.
- The school has established very good links with parents and other schools, and outstanding links with the community, which add greatly to pupils' enjoyment and the quality of education.

As a result of the hard work of the headteacher, together with the governors and the small team of staff, very good improvement has been made since the last inspection. Most issues identified in the last report have been addressed very well, although pupils' handwriting is still untidy. Pupils are making much better progress, because the quality of teaching and the curriculum have significantly improved. The school now monitors its work very effectively, so that it is very well placed for continued and further development.

Year 6 results

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	All schools			Similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	B	C	D	D
Mathematics	A	B	A	A
Science	A	C	B	B

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

Pupils of all abilities and backgrounds achieve **well** at each stage of their education. Children in the reception class make good progress, but due to the limited time many spend in the class because of the three term entry, most children will not have attained the expected goals in all six areas of learning by the time they start in Year 1. In the 2003 national tests, at the end of Year 2, standards were average in reading and above average in writing and mathematics. Inspection findings show that current standards are average in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils have made good progress from a low starting point. In the 2003 national tests at the end of Year 6, standards were below average in English, well above average in mathematics, and above average in science. Pupils' attainment in writing was disappointing and below that of similar schools. Evidence shows that due to a determined effort by the school, standards in writing have picked up this year, and are now average. Standards in mathematics are above average and average in science. This is a slight fall from the previous year in these subjects, but is due mainly to the different spread of abilities in each year group. Standards in art and design and information and communication technology are above average and standards in history are average.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, social, moral and cultural development, are **very good**. Pupils have very good attitudes to learning, behave very well and are very caring young people. This is supported by the school's creation of a stimulating outside environment. Pupils really enjoy school and they arrive in good time each morning. However, their attendance is unsatisfactory because far too many parents take their children on holiday during term time. The school does all in its power to reduce the effects of this and works very hard to improve attendance rates, but not all parents are co-operative.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is **good**. The quality of teaching and learning is **good**. New staff have been very well supported so that they have quickly developed their skills for the benefit of the pupils. Relationships are very good. Pupils have a great respect for their teachers and, as a result try hard to do their best. The teaching assistants provide effective support, and this makes a good contribution to learning in all classes. The marking of pupils' work is effective in English, so that pupils have good understanding of what they need to do to improve. Pupils' individual writing targets are beginning to make a difference to the progress they make. In other subjects, marking is not as consistent or as supportive of learning, while target-setting and the use of lesson ends are not used consistently to improve pupils' knowledge of their own learning. Assessment procedures are very good in the reception class and good in English, mathematics and science, but are not fully developed in other subjects so as to ensure that pupils' subject skills are progressively developed.

The curriculum is good with a very good range of additional activities and excellent opportunities for pupils to be involved in the creative arts. This is due to the excellent links with the community and the *Creative Arts Business Partnership* that has made a considerable impact on pupils' enjoyment of learning and the range of activities available in this small school. The care of pupils is very good and the school guides and supports them well overall. Partnership with parents and other schools are very good and their support is highly valued and very beneficial.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are **very good** overall. The leadership of the headteacher is very good with some excellent features. The leadership of key staff is also very good. The headteacher has worked tirelessly to enrich the learning opportunities of pupils and to improve the school with the support of a small, but very committed, team of experienced senior staff, who share his ideals. He welcomes pupils, whatever their problems, and is very sensitive to the difficulties they may have. Consequently, all pupils are

highly valued members of this small 'family' school. The management of the school is very good. The governing body take its role seriously and new governors have quickly developed their skills, so that governance is good. All statutory requirements are met.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents have a very high opinion of the school and have great confidence in the headteacher and staff. Pupils are equally very happy in school.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Develop assessment procedures in subjects other than English, mathematics and science to ensure that pupils' skills are consistently and progressively developed in all subjects.
- Make more effective use of marking, target-setting and lesson ends to improve pupils' knowledge of their own learning.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Achievement is **good** overall. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well. Standards are above average in mathematics and information and communication technology at the end of Year 6. Standards are average in English.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children in the reception class are making good progress and achieve well.
- Overall, pupils achieve very well in mathematics, information and communication technology, art and design and achieve well in all other subjects.
- Standards in writing are average, but improving.
- There is potential for standards in some non-core subjects to be higher, but subject skills are not always progressively developed.

Commentary

Foundation Stage

1. Assessment data shows that the attainment of children who start in the reception class is below average in all six areas of learning. In some years, children start with well below average skills, particularly in their personal and social development, their communication skills and knowledge and understanding of the world. At the time of the inspection, half of the children had only been in the class for a few weeks and less than a third had been in the class since September. A wide range of interesting activities are provided that support learning well. However, whilst all children make good progress and achieve well, evidence shows that the overall attainment of children when they start in Year 1 directly equates to the amount of time spent in the class. By the time they start in Year 1, most children will not have attained the expected goals for children of this age in all six areas of learning.

Key Stage 1

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	16.0 (16.7)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	15.6 (15.8)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	17.2 (17.5)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 20 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

2. In the 2003 national tests, results were average in reading and above average in writing and mathematics. Standards were much better in mathematics than schools with similar socio-economic circumstances, and better than similar schools in writing. Although overall standards fell slightly, this is a small school where year-on-year comparisons are not reliable. Nevertheless, over the past five years, standards have been rising faster than the national trend and, taking the past three years together, the overall performance of pupils has been above the national average. This is in part due

to the rigorous monitoring of pupils' progress, which has enabled the school to target support where it is most needed.

3. Inspection evidence shows that standards are average in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Standards are not as high this year, because there are more pupils in the present Year 2 with special educational needs. Evidence shows that pupils have made good progress from a low starting point and are achieving well. Pupils with special educational needs have benefited from good quality targeted support and are also achieving well, but have not quite reached expected standards in most subjects, and this influences overall standards attained.

Key Stage 2

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.1 (27.0)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	29.3 (28.1)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	29.5 (28.7)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 27 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

4. Pupils have continued to make good progress overall and generally build on their achievements well in Years 3 to 6. In the 2003 national tests at the end of Year 6, results were well above average in mathematics, and above average in science. Compared to their prior attainment, pupils made very good progress in mathematics and good progress in science. Over the past five years, standards in these subjects have kept up with the national trend and, taking the past three years together, the overall performance of pupils has been well above the national average in mathematics and above the national average in science. Evidence shows that current standards in mathematics are above average and pupils have made very good progress. Standards in science are average and pupils have made good progress. Overall standards are not higher because of the large number of pupils with special educational needs in this year group. However, this is not the whole story, because the school, in its drive to raise standards in writing, took its eye off standards in science and did not provide the usual booster classes. In addition, pupils' independent investigational skills are underdeveloped and this impacts on standards attained in this subject.
5. Results in the 2003 national tests in English were disappointing. Standards were below the national average and below that of schools that attained similar standards in the Year 2 national tests. The school recognised that standards in English had been falling steadily and was disappointed that, despite providing additional support, they missed their target by a large margin. The headteacher took advice and the school reappraised its teaching approach, determined to improve pupils' levels of achievement. Evidence shows that these efforts have borne fruit and the school has turned the corner. Evidence shows that standards are higher this year, and are average. This represents good progress from a low starting point and the below average standards this cohort attained in the national tests when they were in Year 2.
6. Standards in information and communication technology are above average and improving rapidly, due to increasing staff confidence and improving resources. The school is very keen to develop 'all round' pupils and ensures that all pupils have a wide range of opportunities to excel in more creative subjects. Consequently, standards in

art and design are above average, due to the very good support from a specialist teaching assistant and the wonderful opportunities that pupils have had to work with professionals in the field of the creative arts.

7. Standards in all other subjects that were inspected in detail are average, but they too are being influenced by the outside agencies that support the school. Although these partnerships have not yet impacted on overall standards, evidence shows that where they have supported learning, for example, through enhancing pupils' research skills in history and geography, pupils of all abilities have made much better progress. However, there is the potential for standards to be higher in some non-core subjects. Although topics are generally covered well, the school has not yet fully developed assessment procedures to enable teachers to plan systematically for the progressive development of subject skills. This shortcoming puts a limit on the overall standards pupils achieve.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are **very good**. Provision for pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development is **very good**. Pupils' attendance is **unsatisfactory**, but their punctuality is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school's very welcoming and caring atmosphere provides the foundation for very good behaviour and relationships throughout the school.
- The school very successfully uses the creative arts curriculum as a vehicle for personal development.
- Too many families take holiday during term time.

Commentary

8. Very strong Christian values and a philosophy based on fellowship and care are the foundations of school life. All pupils, whatever their background or faith, are welcomed, supported and encouraged to do their very best. As a result, all pupils cultivate a deep respect for all members of staff, the wider community, and for each other. They behave very well and develop very good attitudes and very caring and forgiving relationships, because the school very successfully provides a secure family environment. Bullying, and unkind behaviour of any sort, is not tolerated, and the school is highly successful in encouraging pupils to take responsibility for their own actions. As a result, there have been no exclusions for over ten years. Pupils respond to learning with relish and enthusiasm, stating that this is a 'joyful school'. This has a very positive influence on the standards that pupils achieve and the good progress they make.
9. Pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development is nurtured very well. Assemblies are uplifting, and occasions that develop a real sense of belonging. Many opportunities are provided for the pupils to reflect quietly and their inner peace is evident when they close their eyes in prayer. Singing is joyful and it is evident that the pupils sing with a genuine feeling for the words. Throughout the curriculum, spiritual, social, moral and cultural development is very well developed and has improved since the last inspection, due to the hard work of the headteacher who has seized every opportunity to enrich pupils' life experiences. In particular, the *creative arts partnership* is a highly successful vehicle that has significantly enhanced pupils' personal development and provided a wealth of opportunities for pupils to meet and work with numerous members of the community. As a result, pupils have developed a mature

appreciation of their own cultural traditions and those of others. They are very aware of moral dilemmas and social issues when planning changes to the local environment, for example, and are very confident when working with, and when meeting, adults and other young people.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year 2002/2003 (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	6.4	School data:	0.2
National data:	5.4	National data:	0.4

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

- Systems to monitor attendance are very good. The schools records indicate that this academic year nearly half of the pupils have had at least one day off school because of holiday. Despite the school's very best efforts to discourage family holiday and to improve attendance, rates are below those found in most schools. All of the issues raised at the time of the previous inspection in relation to the recording of absence and punctuality have been fully addressed.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is **good** with some very good features. Teaching and the curriculum are **good**, with very good opportunities for enrichment. The care of pupils is **very good**. There are **very good** links with parents and **excellent** links with the community.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is **good**. Assessment procedures are **satisfactory** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Relationships between teachers and pupils are very good and this makes a significant contribution to the effort that pupils make in lessons.
- Staff in the reception class make learning interesting and meaningful.
- Planning is thorough, but learning objectives are not always clear enough to assist pupils to evaluate their own learning.
- Classroom assistants provide effective support in all classes and make a significant contribution to pupils' learning.
- Teachers use questions and discussions successfully to support learning, but their marking does not consistently focus on showing pupils how to improve.
- Assessment procedures are good in English, mathematics and science, but these are not fully developed to support learning in other subjects.
- The school monitors and supports pupils with special educational needs well, but individual learning targets are not sufficiently specific.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 28 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	3	22	3	0	0	0

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

11. The quality of teaching and learning is good and has improved since the last inspection. New staff have settled quickly into school routines and are rapidly developing their skills. This is due to the very good training opportunities, advice and support that they receive, and the way that they have been made to feel valued members of the team by the headteacher.
12. Throughout the school, relationships are very good. Pupils of all ages really enjoy school and greatly respect their teachers. Consequently, all pupils try hard to complete the tasks set for them and to please their teachers. Teachers use praise and encouragement effectively to motivate pupils and always encourage them to do their best. Pupils state that lessons are “fun, never boring and teachers are kind”. As a result, pupils are willing learners and eager to try new things. This ensures that in the great majority of lessons, pupils make good progress, achieve well and are quickly improving their skills.
13. Children in the reception class equally delight in trying out new experiences. This is because staff have planned activities well, using available resources imaginatively to stimulate learning. During planned and independent learning, staff interact purposefully with the children. They are constantly encouraging and extending children’s understanding, so that learning is meaningful and children make good progress as a result. Staff are warm and sensitive in their approach and, as a result, new children have settled quickly into the routines and are rapidly becoming more confident and secure.
14. Teachers’ subject knowledge is good. Consequently, basic literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills are taught well and pupils are increasingly confident to use them in lessons. Lessons are well planned and activities are well thought out, well resourced and interesting. This, coupled with effective support from teaching assistants, ensures that lessons are well paced and pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, are enabled to make good progress.
15. Activities that pupils are expected to complete are clearly explained so little time is lost. However, the overall purpose is not always clear enough for the pupils to understand what they are expected to learn. In addition, whilst lesson ends are often used to celebrate pupils’ completed work, they are not always used to encourage pupils to think about what they have learned and what they might need to improve next time. As a result, pupils are not yet skilled in reviewing their own progress.
16. Teachers provide good verbal support in lessons. Most teachers are adept in using questions to probe the pupils’ thinking and to check their knowledge and understanding. This is having a positive impact on the progress that pupils make in lessons and their achievement is improving as a result. Some work is marked in a way that is helpful and supportive of learning. Symbols such as LT (let’s talk) are clearly understood by pupils who value the opportunity to discuss their difficulties with the teacher. This leads to an improvement in pupils’ work or level of presentation. This is

not consistent in all year groups or subjects. In some cases, marking is cursory and opportunities to reinforce pupils' knowledge of their learning or progress towards their individual targets are not fully or effectively exploited. In addition, not all teachers have high enough expectations of the quality of pupils' written work. As a result, pupils get mixed messages, and on occasions untidy work leads to basic errors being made.

17. The quality of assessment is satisfactory overall. Assessment procedures are good in English, mathematics and science and very good in the reception class. Assessment procedures and their use have improved significantly since the last inspection in these subjects and have been influential in the rising standards. Pupils' progress is very carefully tracked, and the data is used well by teachers in their planning to ensure that tasks are well matched to pupils' abilities and to target additional support. Teachers have a clear and satisfactory overview of pupils' knowledge and understanding in other subjects of the National Curriculum, but have yet to put in place consistent assessment procedures to track pupils' skills development in relation to National Curriculum levels of attainment. Consequently, planning in other subjects currently focuses on topic knowledge rather than the development of skills.
18. The school has recently introduced individual pupil targets for aspects of English. This is a good feature that has been influential in the rise in writing standards. One older pupil stated the writing targets 'remind me what to put in a story. I would like them in other subjects'. However, not all pupils are as sufficiently aware of their targets as this. Individual pupil targets for learning are not yet fully embedded in practice. As a result, pupils are not always clear what they need to do to improve and are not involved, fully enough, in evaluating their own learning.
19. Pupils with special educational needs are assessed carefully and satisfactory individual educational plans written. These are reviewed regularly, but they do not identify sufficiently small steps in learning to help pupils and teachers to judge progress and celebrate success.

The curriculum

The curriculum is **good** with some very good aspects. The enrichment of the curriculum is **very good** overall. Accommodation and resources are **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is well balanced and provides very good equality of access and opportunities for all pupils.
- Curriculum development is innovative, particularly in the outstanding provision for pupils' participation in the arts.
- Pupils have very good opportunities to participate in sport and other activities that add much to their personal development.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs and gifted and talented pupils is good.
- Space is tight and one class is temporarily in the hall, but there has been minimal disruption to learning.

Commentary

20. The curriculum has improved since the last inspection and the quality and range of learning opportunities are good overall and fully meet statutory requirements. Subjects and areas of learning are inter-linked well and provide pupils with an interesting

curriculum without losing the discrete nature of individual subjects. Pupils in Year 2 are now learning French, which is adding an interesting dimension to their learning, and is to continue in other years. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage has improved considerably and is now good. It is stimulating and lively, and skills gained in one area of learning help them to develop in others.

21. Excellent use is made of expertise from outside the school to enrich the creative arts curriculum. The headteacher has been alert to new opportunities and has seized upon these to significantly enhance all pupils' learning opportunities. As a result of this innovative practice, through the *Creative Partnership*, pupils in all year groups have created mixed media films on a wide range of topics. In the process they have learnt the skills of filming, model making, scriptwriting, background design, composition of musical scores, acting, interviewing and editing. Pupils speak enthusiastically about their work, which has not only significantly harnessed their creative skills but also enabled them to consider social and moral dilemmas. This has benefited their personal development.
22. The curriculum is also enriched very effectively by a very wide range of visits, visitors to the school and extracurricular activities. The very good quality and range available owe much to the dedication and hard work of all staff in this small school and support from the community. Very good arrangements are in place for pupils' personal development in sport, through the support of a sports company. The school's provision has been recognised by its "Active Mark" Gold award. In all activities planned, both during and outside of the school day, the school very effectively ensures that all pupils have the same opportunity to be involved.
23. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and well managed by the headteacher. Their needs are identified early and a good quality of support provided. Specialist staff are used well to target additional support where it is most needed, so that the pupils can benefit from all that the school offers. The skills of gifted and talented pupils are nurtured and encouraged well. The school is constantly searching for opportunities to stretch these pupils, so that some talented dancers and musicians have achieved considerable success on leaving the school. However, in its efforts to improve writing standards, the school did not provide booster classes in science this year and, as a result, standards are not quite as high.
24. The ratio of support staff is very good and they are used effectively to support pupils' learning. The school is small, but staff make good use of every available space. However, for a term, due to the governments '*class size initiative*', one class is being taught in the hall. This has been unavoidable and well managed, but has prevented the hall being used for physical education. Fortunately, the school has a large field so games lessons can continue. Other arrangements are being made next year to avoid this situation recurring.

Care, guidance and support

The school's arrangements for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety are **very good**. Pupils receive **very good** support, advice and guidance. There are **very good** opportunities for pupils to be involved in and influence the school's work.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school's systems and procedures ensure that boys and girls of all ages are safe and extremely well cared for.

- Adults who work in the school know the pupils very well and pastoral support and guidance is excellent.
- Academic guidance is not sufficiently targeted so that pupils can clearly know what they must do to improve their learning.
- Pupils' opinions are regularly sought and their views are valued.

Commentary

25. The health, safety and welfare of pupils are very good and a high priority of the school. The school is an extremely happy community in which pupils say they enjoy their lessons and feel safe and well cared for. They talk enthusiastically about all the school has to offer and are very confident that there is an adult they can talk to if they are unhappy. Pupils talk knowledgeably about the school council. They know who the representatives are and how they can make suggestions for discussion through their class councils. Pupils feel their views are listened to and, where possible, acted upon. They are proud that their suggestions have led to improvements, for instance the provision of water bottles and coolers.
26. Teachers monitor pupils' personal development well, although no written records are kept. Teachers regularly discuss the pupils and this ensures that new staff are fully updated and quickly 'up to speed'. The headteacher, in particular, knows individuals and their families very well. When teachers see, or are told, that a pupil is having difficulties, they take action quickly to put matters right. Pupils confirm this. A pupil in Year 4 stated "teachers ask you if you are okay and you can always talk to them after lessons." Pupils who are experiencing difficulties in their lives have ready access to support from *Rainbows*, an agency that provides individual or group counselling, or *The Hallam Caring Service*. This, together with the care and compassion evident throughout the school, ensures there is an exceptionally good level of guidance available on a day-to-day basis. Pupils are discreetly encouraged to behave well, to respect, respond to and value the views of others. This results in very good behaviour and a very high level of harmony throughout the school.
27. Academic support and guidance is good overall. Teachers notice when pupils are having particular difficulties with their work and help them almost immediately. Pupils state confidently that they can ask their teachers for guidance during lessons. A pupil in Year 5 commented "but you are expected to try first!" Pupils know they have literacy targets, but not all could explain what they were. Assessment information is not used sufficiently well to set and share academic targets with pupils to help them understand how they can improve their learning. Pupils with special educational needs are not involved in the review of their individual educational plans. These are missed opportunities to involve pupils in a partnership with teachers, so as to improve and gain an ownership of their learning.
28. Staff follow the agreed policies and clear practices relating to health, safety and child protection very well. These procedures permeate all aspects of school life and are very clearly understood by all concerned who work or help in school. There are very sensitive arrangements for supporting children when they start in the reception class. The very good relationships between home and school contribute strongly to helping children to quickly feel at home and adjust to the routines of school life.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links and liaison with the community are **excellent**. The school has a **very good** partnership with parents, schools and colleges.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school successfully involves parents in school life and their children's education.
- The headteacher and all staff are very approachable and listen to suggestions and concerns.
- Information for parents is good, but more information could be provided about individual pupils' learning.
- The community is used exceptionally well to enrich the curriculum and enhance pupils' personal development.
- Links with other schools and educational providers make a very valuable contribution to school life.

Commentary

29. There is a very clear philosophy that the education of all pupils is a two-way partnership, between the school and their families. The contribution that parents make, both to the school and their children's education, is very much valued. Discussions with parents, both before and during the inspection, indicate that they hold the school in very high regard. They find the staff approachable and consider that the school helps their children to become mature and responsible young people. Good quality information about most aspects of education means that parents are able to fully support homework, and this has a positive impact on the achievement of their children. However, more written information could be provided about what pupils will learn, and end-of-year progress reports require more detail of pupils' individual strengths, weaknesses and targets for improvement.
30. Parents play a significant part in supporting the school, especially through many fund-raising activities. Their views are regularly sought and taken into account when the governors are agreeing priorities for school improvement.
31. The wider community provides a rich source of visits and visitors. Pupils talk with enthusiasm about the visits they have made to *Hesley Wood* and *Robin Hood's Bay*. They take part in local events, for instance at the church, which plays a key role in school life. These opportunities make a significant contribution to pupils' personal and spiritual experiences, and improve standards of achievement. There are excellent links with a wide range of business enterprises, because of the school's involvement in the *Creative Arts Partnership*. This has resulted in mini projects that have involved the local community and parish members, for instance interviewing members of the parish at the presbytery as part of a media project. These opportunities have had a beneficial impact on pupils' enjoyment and interest in learning in subjects such as geography, history and the arts.
32. Links with other schools and educational providers are very good. Because of very good liaison with the secondary schools, pupils' transfer to their next stage of education is very well planned. Physical education and extracurricular sports activities are also enhanced because of the very good links with the consortia that run this provision.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are **very good** overall. The governance of the school is **good**. The leadership of the headteacher and key staff is **very good** with some excellent features. The school is managed **very well**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher shows excellent curriculum leadership and is an outstanding role model.
- The headteacher and his deputy have a very clear vision for the school, high aspirations and a strong determination to bring further improvement.
- The headteacher, staff and governors value highly pupils' all-round development.
- The school development plan is realistic, but is not quite focussed enough to support improvements.
- There are very good procedures to support new staff and promote professional development.
- Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and manage the school's budget efficiently and effectively.

Commentary

33. The headteacher sets the tone for the calm, modest and caring manner that filters through the school. The staff and governors of the school share the headteacher's values in supporting pupils' all-round development. This is reflected in the effective support for pupils with special educational needs, additional challenges provided for the more able and the very wide range of additional activities organised. One of the reasons why leadership and management have improved since the previous inspection, is that the headteacher does not stand still. After 14 years in post, he continues to inject freshness into the life of the school. One of the excellent features of his leadership is the way in which he has inspired, developed and motivated staff to reach even higher goals, resulting in very good improvement since the last inspection. Innovative curriculum initiatives, such as the *creative arts partnership*, add something special to pupils' education and are having a positive impact on standards. The headteacher is continually striving for more, so that from September, pupils in the school will benefit from an active partnership with other European schools. These efforts have ensured that the school has a very positive ethos where morale is high, with a shared sense of commitment among staff and governors to do the very best for the pupils.
34. Inevitably in such a small school, and with two newly-qualified teachers recently appointed, the few experienced members of staff carry a heavy load. Currently, the headteacher and his deputy have too many subject and aspect responsibilities, but this situation will be revised once the school's new teachers finish their induction periods. Monitoring by subject leaders has been introduced, but has been restricted by recent staffing changes. However, the deputy headteacher and the few other experienced subject leaders have developed their roles well, so that they now have more influence on whole-school development. The performance of the school is evaluated rigorously. A wide range of assessment data on pupils' progress and performance in the core subjects is collected, analysed very carefully and acted upon. The senior management team are conscious of the need to keep a close eye on standards and make any necessary adjustments to teaching. For instance, following a dip in standards, the school has focused upon improving writing, by introducing new teaching strategies, and this is proving successful. While the headteacher and key staff demonstrate a very good grasp of areas for improvement, the school development plan requires some refinement so that the criteria against which progress is measured are clear.
35. Overall, the leadership and management of special educational needs are good. The headteacher and governing body are very committed to welcoming and supporting pupils of all backgrounds and abilities. While recognising the importance of high

academic standards, the headteacher and governors place an equally strong emphasis on pupils' personal development. They ensure that all pupils, regardless of attainment or background, are fully supported so that they can be included in all that the school offers.

36. Recent staff changes have been very well managed and newly-qualified teachers have received very good support through an appointed mentor, further professional training and release time. There is a strong programme of staff development, which is central to the school's vision. Teachers and their assistants benefit from training courses, which tie in closely to their own professional needs and those of the school. The relatively high numbers of teacher assistants are deployed very effectively. For example, the talents of particular assistants are used to support the teaching of art and information and communication technology.
37. The governance of the school is good. Although many governors have only recently been appointed, they have demonstrated a high level of commitment to the school's work and direction. The governing body fulfils its statutory responsibilities well. Governors visit the school regularly to assist with monitoring tasks and contribute fully to the life of the school. As a result, they have a good appreciation of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They value the support and guidance that the headteacher and local education authority have provided, so they are becoming an increasingly influential body that is ready and able to hold the school to account as its 'critical friend'.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	474188	Balance from previous year	(6 554)
Total expenditure	456 521	Balance carried forward to the next	11 113
Expenditure per pupil	2 889		

38. The school's finances are monitored and managed well. The day-to-day financial systems and administrative procedures are managed efficiently. The governing body compares the school's results with local and national data, with the support of the local education authority, and consults parents and pupils. The school works within a tight budget, but uses its money wisely; for example, the school decided to change its technical support service for the maintenance of its computers, obtaining a better service, for less money. This resulted in less stress for staff, who could get on with teaching. As a result, the principles of best value are applied well and the school provides good value for money.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision in the Foundation Stage is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The reception children achieve well in all six areas of learning.
- Staff work very well together and have become an effective team in a short time.
- Very good assessment procedures are in place, but the system is new and staff have not had sufficient time to reap all the benefits.
- Resources are limited, but are supplemented by borrowed resources, which are used effectively to stimulate interest and learning.
- Staff are skilled at enriching children's understanding and use of language.
- There is a very good emphasis on developing learning through first-hand experiences.
- Good use is made of the outside environment to support learning, but there is potential to develop this further.

Commentary

39. Provision was judged unsatisfactory at the last inspection. Since then, staffing difficulties resulting from the long-term absence of the experienced reception teacher have hampered improvements and, until very recently, unsatisfactory improvement had been made. This has now been successfully resolved and effective recent improvements have made a vast difference in a short space of time. At the time of the inspection, the teacher and most of the children had only recently started in the class. Previously, the older children had been taught with Year 1 pupils. The class has just relocated into a new classroom.
40. When children start school, their attainment is wide and very varied, but below average overall. Evidence shows that most of the oldest children, who have benefited from three terms in the school, are likely to attain the expected goals for children of this age in all six areas of learning. However, whilst all children have made good progress and achieve well, evidence shows that overall, children will not attain the expected goals in all of the six areas of learning by the time they start in Year 1. Because the teacher and the majority of children are new, there are currently no children formally identified as having special educational needs in the class. However, staff are alert and monitoring children's progress very closely to ensure that any needs are identified early.
41. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. Staff work together very well and use every opportunity to develop learning through practical first-hand experiences. It is to their credit that in a short time they have developed very good relationships with the children and established good classroom routines. As a result, the children are happy, settled, eager to learn, and obviously thrilled by the wide range of learning experiences that are available. This is due to the dedication of the teacher who has worked very hard to develop a good curriculum which is more suitable for children of this age and ability. She has been very effectively supported by skilled teaching assistants.

42. This team lead and manage the provision well and, in a few weeks, they have made good improvements to the quality of the provision. The very detailed computer-based assessment system is providing staff with a very clear picture of where children are in relation to the 'stepping stones to learning'. Staff are just getting to grips with the potential of the system that should provide them with a very powerful tool with which to track progress and inform planning. Resources are currently limited and the new outside area is at the early stages of its development. However, the staff have made the best use of their own resources and made effective use of a borrowing system, so that children now benefit from a wide range of exciting experiences that are enticing them to learn. Staff recognise there is potential to make further improvements to the inside and outside learning environment and have to further develop their planning in response to the changing admission criteria next term, but well thought out plans are in hand.
43. In the areas of **communication, language and literacy** and **mathematical development**, the quality of teaching and learning is consistently good, so that children are achieving well. Many opportunities for the promotion of mathematical skills and language development are incorporated successfully into daily routines. Staff are adept at using every opportunity to encourage children to count, discuss the size and shape of objects they are making and to practise their developing early reading and writing skills. No moment is lost to promote learning, and a strength of the teaching is the way that staff effectively promote learning through participating with children in their play activities. Formal and focussed learning activities are well planned and varied each day, so that children are excited to meet new challenges in a variety of meaningful ways. From shopping activities in the *garden centre* to making models of different sizes to match the sequence in the *Hungry Caterpillar* story, to writing a *bean diary*, children are encouraged and supported well, and this has a positive impact on the progress they make and their attitudes to learning.
44. In the areas of **knowledge and understanding of the world**, and **creative development**, children make good progress and achieve well during their time in the class. A wide range of meaningful experiences are planned, which ensures that children are interested in everything that is available and delight in learning. Computers are used effectively in the class to support all areas of learning so that most children are already confident to work on them independently. They revel in learning about the world around them by observing, handling and discussing a variety of objects. Children listen in rapt attention to the teacher talking about seeds, and concentrate very hard when they plant their own seeds. Because they have listened carefully, they know that they have to water them so they will grow. They paint flower pictures and because they are encouraged to look closely and mix their own colours, their pictures are confident and colours are bold, but appropriate. Experiences are effectively linked so that children's learning is continuous and this has a positive influence on the good progress they are making.
45. In their **physical and personal, social and emotional development**, children are developing their confidence well. Relationships are very good, and high expectations, coupled with supportive and clear routines that encourage children to take responsibility for the equipment, ensure that children are happy and increasingly independent. Staff promote personal development well, by openly encouraging children, and the warm praise and support children receive boosts their confidence to try hard until they eventually succeed. This encouragement enables children to experiment when using small equipment and to gain more control as a result, although many still require a great deal of support. The outside environment owes much to the work of the school handyman and is a very useful space which children delight in exploring. Many are more confident when moving around this space and make good

attempts to balance and move a ball around the cones. Traditional playground games, which are well supported by staff, effectively encourage children to work together as a team and they enjoy learning together. This has a positive influence on both their social and physical development, and as a result the group have blossomed in the short time they have been together.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Consistently good teaching and good management of pupils' behaviour throughout the school enable pupils to achieve well.
- Writing standards have improved, but pupils' written work remains untidy.
- Speaking and listening skills are promoted well in lessons.
- Good assessment procedures are linked to satisfactory target-setting which is shared with pupils.
- Good subject co-ordination promotes the development of literacy.
- Teachers are making good use of other subjects to develop pupils' writing skills.

Commentary

46. In the 2003 national tests at the end of Year 2, standards in reading were in line with national expectations, and above expectations in writing. At the end of Year 6, standards in the 2003 national tests were below average. Current standards in English are similar to those noted at the time of the previous inspection. Standards in speaking, listening, reading and writing are in line with national expectations by the end of Years 2 and 6, and pupils are achieving well. The school has begun to reverse the downward trend in standards at the end of Year 6 by introducing a robust programme to develop writing and by targeting pupils who needed extra support. More pupils are attaining expected standards as a result, and inspection evidence shows that standards at the end of Year 6 are higher than those in the 2003 national tests. Booster classes, effective support in class and parents who come into school as 'reading partners' are helping less able pupils achieve well. There were no significant differences in the performance of boys and girls in lessons seen during the inspection.
47. There is now some good practice which is starting to make inroads into improving writing skills, the current school focus. The range of writing which pupils undertake is good, which makes learning interesting and relevant for pupils. As a result, by the time pupils reach Year 6, they have made good progress and most have a sound command of how language varies in conversations, formal letters and reports. There is still room for improvement in the presentation of work, a weakness at the time of the previous inspection. Although there has been some progress, for instance in the use of information and communication technology to enhance presentation, sometimes handwriting is poorly formed and the end product often lacks polish. In part, this is because teachers' expectations are not high enough.
48. Speaking and listening skills are promoted well, in a range of contexts, and this has a positive influence on writing standards. By Year 6, pupils speak with the degree of confidence and clarity expected for their age. Basic reading skills are also taught

effectively, so that more able pupils in Year 2 could scan text when finding information on Australian animals, from a website. Pupils make good progress throughout their time in the school so that by the end of Year 6, older pupils are able to identify the main characters, themes and plots of stories, as well as extract details from reference books. Because they have been effectively challenged, more able pupils are beginning to infer meaning while they read.

49. The quality of teaching and learning is consistently good. Teachers manage behaviour well so that pupils work sensibly on tasks set. Planning takes good account of the full range of different learning needs in each class, and teachers use assessment information well to plan the next steps for learning. However, on occasions, the purpose of the lesson is not clear, and lesson ends are not used sufficiently well to ensure pupils understand what they have learned. Teachers' marking is thorough and helps pupils move forward. Most, but not all, pupils know their targets to improve their reading or writing and try hard to meet these. Discussion with pupils in Years 5 and 6 revealed, for instance, that they were striving to meet their own individual goals of using more connectives and to read with greater expression. This is another reason why standards have started to rise. Overall provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Teachers and their assistants sensitively take into account the learning needs of pupils when planning and delivering lessons. For instance, a small group of less able pupils in Year 2 responded well to the challenge of retelling their story, via a puppet show, to the rest of the class.
50. The leadership and management of English are good. The co-ordinator is well-informed, hard-working and enthusiastic. She has worked hard to monitor standards and support the recent push to improve writing.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

51. The school provides good opportunities for pupils to extend their use of language and literacy across other subjects. In history and geography, for example, Year 2 pupils describe Victorian toys while Year 6 pupils formulate a questionnaire for their interviews with local residents. Opportunities for pupils to debate, act in role and research facts for projects are also used effectively to enhance pupils' spoken and reading skills.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is very good overall, with very good methods being used to challenge and support all groups of pupils.
- Assessment of pupils' ability and progress is used well in teachers' planning.
- Most teachers' marking of pupils' work highlights how improvements can be made, but this is not consistent.
- Individual target-setting is not done consistently and, as a consequence, pupils are not sufficiently clear as to what they need to do to improve.
- The subject is very well led and managed and clearly focused on ensuring the high achievement of all pupils.

Commentary

52. The 2003 national tests for Year 2 indicate that pupils' attainment was above the national average and well above average when compared with schools with similar economic circumstances. The Year 6 test results showed attainment to be well above the national average and well above average when compared to schools that attained similar standards in the Year 2 national tests. Inspection findings indicate that standards by the end of Year 2 are in line with national averages. This represents good progress in Years 1 and 2 and pupils of all abilities achieve well in relation to their capabilities. Inspection findings indicate standards by the end of Year 6 are above the national average. This represents very good progress and all pupils, including those with special educational needs, are achieving very well. The slightly lower standards in comparison to the previous year are due to the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in the Year 6 class. Standards have improved significantly since the last inspection. This is because pupils are challenged and enthused by the subject. In addition, because of an increased emphasis on problem-solving, pupils are able to use and apply their good knowledge of known facts to solve meaningful problems.
53. The quality of teaching and learning is good in Years 1 and 2. It is very good overall in Years 3 to 6, where teachers are more experienced and use their very good subject knowledge to question and challenge pupils in a way that brings the subject alive. All teachers have very good class management skills and have very good relationships with their class. This results in very good attitudes to work and ensures a productive atmosphere in classrooms where pupils try hard. All teachers use assessment data well to ensure that tasks are well matched to pupils' ability and prior attainment and this, together with the very good support pupils get from classroom assistants, has a positive influence on the standards attained and the progress pupils of all abilities make. In the best lessons, the purpose of the lesson is clearly identified, discussed with pupils at the start and revisited in the lesson ends in order to check on learning and understanding, but this is not consistent. Currently, individual targets are not set consistently to enable pupils to become more aware of their own learning and how it could be improved. These are missed opportunities to involve pupils more productively in their own learning.
54. All teachers mark pupils' work regularly and, where teaching is very good, marking is supportive and evaluative and suggests how improvements can be made. However, the marking of pupils' work is not consistent and does not always indicate how pupils can progress. In some instances, teachers do not demand a sufficiently high standard of presentation and in these instances pupils' work consequently shows rudimentary errors caused by misreading numbers and symbols.
55. Leadership and management are very good. The co-ordinator has a clear vision as to the development of mathematics in the school and has been very effective in raising standards since the last inspection as a result of monitoring and detailed analysis of test results. Good assessment procedures are in place and are used to underpin teachers' planning. Individual target-setting for pupils has been attempted, but could be refined so that pupils become more involved in their own learning.

Mathematics across the curriculum

56. There are good opportunities for pupils to use and develop their mathematical skills as part of their work in other subjects. All teachers plan such activities carefully, and as a consequence, pupils develop a good appreciation of the practical uses of mathematical skills, for example through data-handling and calculations in science.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All pupils achieve well and have good knowledge and understanding of science because of the good teaching.
- Pupils' investigative skills are insufficiently developed.
- Good assessment procedures are in place, but marking does not consistently give clear guidance as to how pupils might improve.
- The co-ordinator's leadership and management are good and have given colleagues effective support and guidance where necessary.

Commentary

57. Since the previous inspection, standards and the progress pupils make, have improved well. On the basis of the 2003 teacher assessments for Year 2, pupils' attainment was judged to be very high and above those for schools with similar economic circumstances. The Year 6 test results showed attainment to be above the national average and also above average when compared to schools that attained similar standards in Year 2. Inspection findings indicate that standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are in line with national averages. All pupils achieve well and are making good progress, but standards are lower than in the previous year. This is due in part to the lower natural ability of pupils in these classes that include a significant number of pupils with special educational needs. In addition, pupils in the current Year 6 have not had the benefit of booster classes in science this year, because the school focused particularly on improving pupils' literacy skills. This has also influenced overall standards attained.
58. The quality of teaching and learning is good. All teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of science that enables them to use questioning well and to develop their questioning based on pupils' responses to extend learning further. Lessons are well planned and proceed at a good pace and this effectively maintains pupils' interest and motivation. Relationships are very good and pupils work well and collaboratively. The teaching incorporates a very good range of experimental work and pupils handle equipment and materials carefully, but these investigations are too heavily directed by the teacher. Insufficient emphasis is given to develop pupils' independent investigative skills, particularly the most able pupils, who have few opportunities to devise their own investigative strategies and to carry out well planned science investigations based on the concept of a "fair test". This does not sufficiently develop pupils' scientific thinking skills. Teaching assistants make an important contribution to pupils' learning by working effectively with pupils of different abilities. Pupils' work is marked regularly and at best the marking indicates how improvements can be made. However, this good practice is not consistent and teachers do not consistently encourage pupils to set out the work neatly to avoid careless mistakes, or explain clearly what they need to do to improve.
59. Leadership and management are good. The curriculum has been improved since the last inspection, and teachers are well supported by the co-ordinator through monitoring lessons and teachers' planning. Pupils' work is monitored routinely but this needs to be extended to ensure a sufficient emphasis on developing pupils' investigative skills. Good assessment procedures are in place, but currently pupils are not set challenging targets so they can be more involved in monitoring and developing their own learning.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Provision has improved since the last inspection and is continuing to improve.
- The effective use of staff and resources has contributed to pupils' attaining above average standards by the end of Year 6.
- The subject is very well led and managed.
- Good use is made of information and communication technology to support learning in other areas of the curriculum.
- Pupils' evaluation skills are limited and the assessment of pupils' learning is underdeveloped.

Commentary

60. The provision in information and communication technology has improved well since the last inspection. A number of developments, spearheaded by the co-ordinator, are having a positive impact on pupils' learning. These include:

- The setting up of two classroom mini-suites and the weekly use of computer facilities at a neighbouring school, which means that pupils are getting more frequent access to computers;
- The installation of an interactive whiteboard which has enhanced the delivery of lessons;
- The deployment of a teacher assistant to develop the school's website and to act as an on-site 'trouble-shooter', thus promoting and supporting pupils' work;
- Increased staff training so that teachers are more confident and capable in the use of computers.

As a result of these changes, pupils of all capabilities are achieving very well overall. The general mood is one of moving forward.

61. Pupils currently in Year 2 started school in Year 1 with limited awareness of information and communication technology. The evidence available from reviewing examples of work stored on the computer and discussions with pupils, suggests that pupils have made good progress and are working at the expected level by the end of Year 2. This represents good achievement. This good rate of progress is sustained through Years 3 to 6. By the time they leave school at the end of Year 6, pupils attain above average standards and are achieving very well in relation to their attainment when they started in Year 1. In particular, the progress of pupils in Years 5 and 6 is very good, under the skilful teaching and direction of the subject co-ordinator.

62. Many pupils in Years 3 and 4 have good mouse control skills and secure know-how when using computers. They demonstrate confidence and speed in starting, locating and working through particular programs. In the upper part of the school, pupils extend their ability to handle and communicate information through the use of databases, spreadsheets and e-mail. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 also produce good quality multimedia presentations. In so doing they demonstrate a growing awareness of audience and good technical skills in manipulating text, graphics and sound to produce a pleasing effect.

63. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers have developed their own skills well and use these to enhance lesson delivery. For instance, some prepare PowerPoint presentations to illustrate teaching points. Teaching assistants are used very effectively to help less able pupils and those with special educational needs. Lessons are well planned, but on occasions there are too many learning objectives which are confusing to pupils, and lesson ends are not used effectively enough to check on what the pupils have achieved and what they need to work on to improve their computer skills. This is the weakest aspect of their learning. This is because teachers do not give pupils enough opportunities to discuss what they might need to change their own work and then follow-up these suggestions.
64. The very good leadership and management of information and communication technology have underpinned the good provision. Among many developments, the co-ordinator has assembled a comprehensive portfolio of pupils' work, which demonstrates good curriculum coverage. It also serves to illustrate general progression in tasks as pupils move through the school. Whilst fully acknowledging the positive aspects of the recent changes, the co-ordinator has a clear understanding of what needs to be done to consolidate these gains and to enable pupils to achieve higher standards. A good development plan has been drawn up and the co-ordinator is continually looking at ways to improve provision. For instance, there are plans to improve assessment in the subject. At present, progression in pupils' individual skills is not recorded sufficiently to allow teachers to build on previous learning.
65. The after-school computer club provides a good opportunity for interested pupils to develop their skills even further and enriches provision.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

66. Teachers make good and increasing use of information and communication technology to promote pupils' learning in other subjects. For instance, in Years 4 and 5, pupils discuss website material relating to the ancient Egyptians, while younger pupils use software to create pictures in the style of the artist Jackson Pollock.

HUMANITIES

67. Due to timetable arrangements, no lessons were observed in **geography** and it was not possible to reach an overall judgement on provision in this subject. However, an analysis of pupils' work, together with discussions with pupils and staff, and a review of school displays, indicate that standards in geography are in line with national expectations by the end of Years 2 and 6.
68. Each class experiences a visit during the year which helps develop pupils' geographical understanding. For instance, pupils in Years 4 and 5 are able to describe differences in land use following a visit to Robin Hood's Bay. Pupils demonstrate a satisfactory general knowledge of places, both local and distant. They also acquire an adequate knowledge and understanding of geographical processes and patterns through their study of topics such as rivers. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 use simple routes, maps and photographs from the locality. However, by the end of Year 6, pupils' mapping skills are barely adequate and this is rightly noted in the school development plan as an area for improvement. Pupils' knowledge of grid references is unsatisfactory, although there are plans to set up orienteering trails around the school grounds. However, pupils are achieving well in terms of observing, collecting and recording information in the field. In Years 5 and 6, for example, pupils made good learning gains after investigating the proposed redevelopment of Hoyland through the

school's links with the *Creative Partnership*. By interviewing a cross-section of local residents and members of the council's planning committee, they gained insight into different viewpoints concerning the proposed building of a skate park. The data is collected and analysed using a computer program. From this, pupils are beginning to understand what is meant by a balanced argument and the importance of reaching informed decisions. This project has significantly increased pupils' geographical knowledge and skills, as well as contributing much to their education in citizenship.

History

Provision in history is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers make good use of first-hand sources to develop pupils' enquiry skills.
- While pupils recall particular details from the past, they do not often understand their wider significance.
- Teachers have a general overview of pupils' progress, but procedures to monitor and assess the development of pupils' historical skills and understanding are not sufficiently developed.
- Pupils' understanding of chronology is insecure.

Commentary

69. Standards in history are broadly average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, as they were at the time of the previous inspection. The achievement of all pupils, including those with special educational needs, is good in relation to their capabilities when they started in Year 1.
70. Pupils acquire a sound understanding of local history by consulting a range of source material. They are also beginning to understand how the past can be represented in different ways. For example, as part of the *Creative Arts Partnership*, pupils in Years 5 and 6 have produced a high-quality short film which has involved them interviewing elderly residents and re-enacting their school days in 'sepia' format. The weakest area of pupils' learning relates to their sense of chronology. Insufficient attention is given to the systematic and progressive teaching of chronology. As a result, pupils are uncertain over the sequence of when things happened, their relative significance and how one period relates to another.
71. Pupils acquire and retain good factual knowledge of individuals and events studied. Pupils in Year 2 delight in relating particular details, for instance when houses were blown up to stop the spreading of the Fire of London, or when women in the past covered their legs when visiting the seaside because 'it would have been rude not to'. Whole-school planning follows a nationally recommended scheme, although this sometimes means that required periods in the National Curriculum are not studied in sufficient depth. For example, while pupils in Years 5 and 6 can talk confidently about the life of John Lennon, they are less certain over the wider social and technological changes which have occurred in twentieth-century Britain.
72. The quality of teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, but there are some good features. Teachers make good use of primary sources and information, other resources and communication technology to stimulate interest in the past and develop literacy and history skills. For instance, pupils in Years 3 and 4 use characters from local census returns, such as the Fitzwilliam family in Wentworth, as a basis for story-

writing. Pupils also regularly consult websites for different topics, such as when studying the ancient Egyptians or the Victorians. Marking of pupils' work is inconsistent and does not sufficiently involve pupils in a dialogue so that they clearly understand what they need to do to improve.

73. The subject is led and managed satisfactorily and satisfactory improvement has been made since the last inspection. The co-ordinator has a secure grasp of historical sources and suitable subject knowledge, which was reported to be lacking at the time of the previous inspection. Recent initiatives and involvement in the *Creative Arts Partnership* have enhanced provision in history and added significantly to pupils' enjoyment of the past. For instance, pupils in Years 3 and 4 were very enthusiastic about working alongside specialists in making puppets based on Victorian characters, deriving their details from nineteenth century photographs. Teachers do not have a system by which they can assess and monitor pupils' subject knowledge. Consequently, although they have a broad overview of pupils' knowledge of each topic, they are not able to monitor and systematically develop pupils' subject skills. This contributes to pupils' insecure chronological understanding.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

74. In **music**, only one lesson was observed. It is therefore not possible to make judgments on teaching, standards or overall provision. However, the quality of singing in the school is above average. It is tuneful and expressive. Music plays an important part in the life of the school and it is evident that the school nurtures the skills of talented pupils, some of whom have won music scholarships as a result. All pupils have opportunities to learn to play a wide range of instruments in addition to the normal curriculum and pupils in Key Stage 2 learn to play the ocarina. Very effective support from the *Creative Arts Partnership* has enabled pupils to compose music for the videos they have made, and the resulting compositions are of a high standard. The subject does not currently have a co-ordinator and the headteacher is caretaking the role. He recognises that the school does not have a formal scheme of work with which to support non-specialist teachers to plan and assess pupils' skills.
75. Due to the timing of the inspection, none of the school's work in **physical education** could be seen. Consequently, no overall judgement on the quality of provision could be made. The school is well resourced and has a good range of equipment, both for indoor and outdoor activities. The multipurpose hall is somewhat small for activities involving the older pupils, but has a good surface for gymnastics and dance. Currently, it is being used as a classroom, but the school benefits from a field adjacent to the school that is well drained and has a good grassed surface allowing games and other activities to take place over most of the year. The majority of pupils participate in the after-school activities which involve pupils from all year groups, and evidence indicates that all pupils learn to swim at least 25 metres. The school employs an outside consortium to teach physical education and to supervise the extracurricular games and other activities. This innovative approach, initiated by the headteacher, has enabled staff to have non-contact time in order to fulfil their management roles. The work of the outside consortium is regularly monitored to ensure best quality, and the school is developing a means of assessing pupils' achievement and progress. This has yet to be put in place. The school's provision has been recognised by Sport England and has received an "Active Mark" award in recognition of its commitment to promoting the benefits of physical activity and school sport.

Art and design

Provision in art and design is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils work imaginatively in a wide range of styles and they achieve very well overall.
- The *Creative Arts Partnership* has made an outstanding contribution to pupils' creative, artistic and personal development.
- The use of specialist teaching is effective, but pupils' sketchbooks are not fully developed as a tool to aid learning.

Commentary

76. By the end of Year 2, standards are in line with national expectations and pupils' achieve well in relation to their capabilities when they started in the school. By the end of Year 6, pupils are attaining above average standards and they achieve very well overall. This is very good improvement from the last inspection and is due to the hard work of the headteacher and talented teaching assistant who have harnessed every opportunity to enhance and develop pupils' artistic skills. In all their work, pupils' own creativity is effectively developed. From the time that they start in the school, pupils mix their own colours so that they become increasingly skilful at depicting shade and tone in their work, and, as a result, they produce water colours of a high standard. Pupils with special educational needs also achieve very well, and because their efforts are valued, they develop confidence so that the subject makes a significant contribution to their enjoyment of school and their self-esteem.
77. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. All classes are taught by a talented teaching assistant who plans all lessons very carefully, to ensure that pupils have a good grasp of the basic skills before they move on to developing their own original pieces. Resources are used very well, so that pupils have opportunities to work with a very wide range of visual, tactile and sensory materials. All pupils state that they enjoy art and this is evident in the way that pupils concentrate in lessons and strive to do well. However, although pupils use sketchbooks to practise their designs, these are not fully used as a tool to aid learning. Pupils do not use them fully enough to present their first ideas, or to refine and evaluate their finished work. This is a missed opportunity to enhance learning further.
78. Art is an important element of school life and is used very successfully to enhance pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development. Whole-class projects, for example murals and banners, promote this particularly well and pupils are rightly proud that their work is on display in Japan and within the local community. The partnership with local media companies has also had a highly significant impact on pupils' creative and personal development. Through opportunities to design and create backdrops for film scenes, for example, they learn about perspective, although some older pupils still struggle with this skill. It is evident that these opportunities have inspired pupils to be creative, to experience joy in learning and to recognise the importance of art in different cultures.
79. The subject is very well led and managed by the teaching assistant with the support of the headteacher. Together they form a highly effective team who has ensured that the quality of the provision has improved very well since the last inspection. Current assessment procedures are satisfactory, but pupils' skills are not tracked in relation to National Curriculum levels, so as to provide an even more focussed aid to teaching and learning.

Design and technology

Provision in design and technology is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching emphasises the importance of the design process.
- Pupils have access to a good range of tools and materials, resulting in good skills development.
- Teaching does not give sufficient attention to evaluating and improving the finished article.

Commentary

80. Standards in design and technology are average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This is the same as the last inspection. Pupils make good progress during their time in the school and their achievements are good in relation to their capabilities. Pupils state that they enjoy the subject and this is evident in the way that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, concentrate for long periods of time and strive to make finished products of a good standard. Their recent involvement in designing and making models for animation and three-dimensional scenery backdrops, alongside professionals in the field, has inspired them tremendously. Resulting figures and 'scene properties' were of a good standard and clearly related to their design intentions. However, although pupils are led to understand the importance of evaluating the finished product, this aspect does not get sufficient attention in the teaching, and pupils' ability to evaluate and improve their designs is limited and is a reason why standards are not higher.
81. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers' good knowledge and understanding of the design process results in good learning opportunities for pupils, whose designs include both descriptions and annotated diagrams. The methodical approach of teachers and support assistants ensures that pupils work safely with due regard to safety and hygiene. Support staff make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning, particularly in their skills development. Pupils show very good attitudes and behave well. Pupils co-operate well together, sharing resources and taking turns when using tools and equipment. This results in an orderly classroom and enhances the working environment and the opportunities for pupils' learning. Scrutiny of pupils' work also indicates that the teaching has usefully drawn on pupils' knowledge in other subjects, such as science, when using electric motors for movement, and this had successfully developed cross- curricular links.
82. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. A satisfactory scheme of work is in place that ensures that all pupils have a broad curriculum and the school is well resourced. Class teachers are well aware of individual pupils' progress and report on their achievement at the end of the year and on the topic area covered. However, there are no formal assessment procedures in place to assess and monitor pupils' skills development and, consequently, adequate planning for such development, particularly in the mixed aged classes, is more difficult.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

83. The subject was not a main focus of the inspection, because religious education and the teachings of the church form an important aspect of the school's provision. As a result, it was not possible to make a judgement about provision. However, it is clear

from the evidence available that the school places very strong emphasis on creating an environment where pupils can develop their confidence. This is particularly evident in the playground areas, which provide a safe, stimulating environment for all pupils. All pupils are valued for their individuality and have many opportunities to take responsibility. The school council and other forums provide very good opportunities for pupils to participate in the democratic life of the school. The 'Here I Am' programme and regular planned discussions, coupled with a wide range of outside support, provide very effective vehicles for pupils to learn about how best to deal with making difficult decisions, how to keep safe and how to consider the consequences of their actions. Very good use is made of outside agencies to support sex and relationships and drug awareness education so pupils have a very effective platform for their next stage of their education and are enabled to make well informed choices. Very great emphasis is taken to develop pupils who are confident and self-assured, and because relationships are very good throughout the school, pupils are not afraid to voice their opinion or ask for advice and support. They become responsible young citizens as a result, and flourish.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	2
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	5
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	1
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
The leadership and management of the school	2
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	2
The effectiveness of management	2

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