

# INSPECTION REPORT

**WEST BURTON CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY  
SCHOOL**

West Burton, Leyburn

LEA area: North Yorkshire

Unique reference number: 121482

Headteacher: Mr M Blyton

Lead inspector: Mrs J Morley

Dates of inspection: 26<sup>th</sup> - 27<sup>th</sup> January 2004

Inspection number: 258345

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	41
School address:	West Burton Leyburn North Yorkshire
Postcode:	DL8 4JY
Telephone number:	(01969) 663 230
Fax number:	(01969) 663 846
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs A Sayer
Date of previous inspection:	18 <sup>th</sup> May 1998

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- There are 41 pupils on roll, all of whom are White, British.
- A few live in the village of West Burton, but most arrive by bus.
- The proportion of pupils with special education needs (12.5 per cent) is below the national average.
- Four pupils joined the school last year and one left – other than at the usual times. This is an above average proportion.
- Recruitment is a problem for the school; more so for ancillary than for teaching staff.
- The school received an Achievement Award in 2001 and the North Yorkshire Inclusion Quality Mark for special educational needs in 2002 and 2003. It is involved in the Small Schools Fund.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
25470	J Morley	Lead inspector	English Science Art and design Design and technology Citizenship Special educational needs
19443	N Walker	Lay inspector	
23273	R Freeland	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Geography History Music Physical education The Foundation Stage

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**This is a very good school:** happy, challenging, inclusive and satisfied only with the best. It provides good value for money. The headteacher has a crystal clear vision for its development, spearheaded by the rigorous pursuit of high standards. As a result of good (and often very good) teaching, pupils progress well from the Reception class to Year 6, and leave the school with attainment that is well above that expected. In addition, they are confident, responsible young people. This is a school in which the learning needs of each individual are considered, planned for and met. It is made possible because of slick organisation and because teachers manage the wide age and ability ranges in their class with great skill. Where a pupil needs support on a personal or social level, this too is provided.

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

- This is a genuinely inclusive school, catering for the needs of each pupil.
- It is exceptionally well led by the headteacher and there is a tangible team spirit amongst all staff and governors.
- Lessons always challenge and, as a result, pupils attain high standards in many curriculum areas. Classroom support staff play an important part in this success.
- Provision for pupils' personal development is woven skilfully into the curriculum, which as a whole is broad, rich and well organised.
- Parents think highly of the school.
- This school knows itself well; it has a very accurate perception of how well it is doing and what it needs to do next.

The school has made very good progress since the last inspection and the majority of this has been secured during the tenure of the current headteacher. He has skilfully led change on the key issues from the last inspection and dealt comprehensively with them all: the curriculum for children under five; the attainment of the most able in Years 1 and 2; and the production of a policy for child protection. He has deservedly earned the full support of his colleagues. Improvements to teaching and learning for the pupils in the younger of the two classes have been significant. Standards have improved in English, mathematics, science and in a number of other subjects as well, notably information and communication technology (ICT) and music. There is no aspect of provision that was better at the time of the last inspection than it is now.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*Key: A\* - very high; 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.** Caution should be exercised when interpreting the data in this table, as numbers are very small.*

Children enter the Reception class with attainment that, in these tiny cohorts, varies significantly from year to year. Most often it ranges between average and above average. However, what is important is that, regardless of the starting point, **pupils' achievement is good overall.** By the end of their Reception Year children generally attain above expected standards in relation to the goals they are expected to reach and this is built on in Years 1 and 2. It is built on further in Years 3 to 6.

Hence, pupils leave the school with attainment that is well above expectations in English, mathematics, science, ICT and aspects of music. In all other subjects where inspectors had sufficient evidence to judge attainment - geography, history and physical education - they found attainment to be above expectations.

**Pupils' personal qualities, including their pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are very good overall:** better than at the time of the last inspection. The school has worked hard and very successfully to help pupils with their personal development. The result is young people who are articulate, well mannered and personable. Pupils behave very well and have equally good attitudes to work. Attendance and punctuality are very good.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education is very good.** Teaching – the joint work of teachers and support staff – is of good or better quality in virtually all lessons. The work set for pupils takes full account of their learning needs. It is the quality of this that contributes most to the school's success at being inclusive because it gives every pupil an equal opportunity to learn and make progress. All lessons offer challenge and the best also offer fun and opportunities for independent learning. Overall, **the quality of teaching is good and the quality of learning is the same. A significant proportion is very good.** The curriculum is very good, broad and with a rich array of additional activities on offer. The school provides a very good level of care for pupils, helping them to develop as mature and responsible young citizens and, in particular, to be actively engaged in projects in their local environment. Pupils have a clear understanding of how well they are doing academically and of what they need to do to improve. They are expected to – and do - comment thoughtfully on the quality of their own work.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Leadership and management are very good.** Leadership by the headteacher is excellent and he is well supported by his staff. There is a tangible team spirit in the school. Governance is good. Governors take a keen interest in the school's development and are kept fully and candidly informed by the headteacher who knows – and shares with them – exactly where improvement is needed and what can be done to secure it. They fulfil all of their statutory duties.

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

Parents think very highly of the school and of the values it promotes. They value the open communication with staff and the information they receive about how well their child is doing. Pupils are happy in school and enjoy very good relationships with their peers and with all adults. They like the fact that their views are sought and considered on a range of issues.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

There are no key issues for the school to address other than those it has already recognised in its school improvement plan.

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

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

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

Pupils attain standards that, overall, are well above expectations. The trend in attainment is above that nationally for pupils in Years 2 and 6. Achievement is very good, particularly in Years 3 to 6.

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

- Pupils attain well across a broad range of subjects.
- Standards have improved significantly since the last inspection.

#### **Commentary**

1. Not surprisingly, given the tiny cohorts in this school, attainment on entry can vary significantly from year to year. One particularly able child or one who finds learning difficult can have a significant impact on an overall judgement - and makes trying to give one a rather futile exercise. Nevertheless, to generalise as much as possible, children's attainment when they join the Reception class is most often close to or above the national expectation. The more useful information is that, regardless of the starting point, all pupils make progress that is at least good and generally very good.
2. Four and five pupils respectively in Years 2 and 6 took the most recent national tests. Results for Year 2 show well above average standards in all three areas tested (reading, writing and mathematics). These place the school in the top 15 per cent of all schools nationally. Results for Year 6 show English attainment to be well above average and attainment in mathematics and science to be very high. Cumulatively, these results place the school in the top five per cent of all schools nationally.
3. Inspectors find that standards are currently well above average in reading, mathematics and science in Years 2 and 6 and above average in writing. Standards in ICT are above expectations in Year 2 and well above expectations in Year 6. Additionally, all pupils attain above expected standards in geography, history, music and physical education.
4. The key to pupils' very good achievement lies in the school's attention to detail. The factors that contribute are the way that the curriculum is organised, the complex teaching arrangements in lessons and the effort put into ensuring that each pupil's needs are individually met. All these features are dealt with in more detail in the relevant sections of this report.
5. Improvement since the last inspection has been impressive. In the 1998 report children's attainment when they entered the school was judged to meet expectations. It remained that way – in every subject - until the end of Year 2. In Years 3 to 6 it improved somewhat; by the time pupils left the school they attained above expected standards in all subjects except mathematics, ICT, physical education and religious education. In these four areas, standards met expectations. Now, because all pupils make at least good progress, standards are much higher than they were: typically well above average, although, for the reasons indicated above, likely to vary from one cohort to the next. The constant factor is pupils' consistently very good achievement.

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

Pupils' attendance and punctuality are very good, as are their attitudes, behaviour and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour have a positive effect on learning and achievement.
- They show themselves to be responsible young people.

## Commentary

6. Because of the emphasis placed on personal development, almost all Reception children will exceed the expectation of them in relation to their personal, social and emotional development by the end of the school year.
7. Pupils enjoy coming to school and maintain interest and concentration in lessons, listening carefully to their teachers. They respond well to lively teaching and enjoy humour with their teachers but know when to stop. They are sensible when crossing to use the village hall. Relationships between the pupils and between pupils and staff are very good and support learning. The pupils work amicably in pairs and help each other.
8. All pupils have responsibilities in their classrooms and in other areas of the school. The expectations placed on them increase as they get older and are instrumental in pupils' very good personal development.
9. Pupils clearly know right from wrong and are polite and helpful. They have a very good awareness of local and national heritage through links with the National Park, the Wensleydale Railway Project and others. They learn about multicultural issues through the broad and innovative curriculum, particularly through art, music and dance. Visits also contribute; it is evident from pupils' written work, for example, how big an impact a recent visit to a mosque has had. Pupils are reflective and thoughtful and there is a real 'sense of family' evident in this school. This, together with the delightful setting of the school, contributes to their very good spiritual development. Well attended clubs help pupils to get on well together as do the strong links with neighbouring small schools, the younger pupils work with their peers from Bainbridge School for a day each term and, as a result, some friendships have been forged.
10. Attendance is very good; rates at the school exceed the national average. There have been no exclusions during the past year.

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.2	School data	0.0
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.*

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a very good quality of education. Teaching and learning are good and often very good. The care and support pupils receive is very good, as are the school's links with parents.

### Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and often very good. Assessment is very good and is used intelligently to raise standards.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good overall and frequently very good for pupils in Years 3 to 6.

- The contribution of support staff is very good.
- Very good assessment is instrumental in pupils' commendable achievement.

## Commentary

### **Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 16 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
1	6	8	1	0	0	0

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

- As is clear from the table above, there is no unsatisfactory teaching in the school. Overall, teaching is of good or better quality and the proportion that is very good or better has more than trebled since the last inspection. At that time (1998) the school was charged with providing more challenging work for the most able pupils in Years 1 and 2 and with providing more role-play opportunities for Reception age children. Both have been achieved; all these pupils are challenged and organisation is slick. In fact there has been an overall improvement in the quality of teaching in this class; in this respect the support and guidance from the headteacher has had a real impact. There are no significant weaknesses; in the one lesson judged satisfactory it was purely difficulty with equipment that made teaching and learning less effective than was typical of all other lessons taught by this teacher.
- The quality of teaching and learning for pupils with special educational needs matches that provided for all other pupils in the school. The progress of all pupils is carefully tracked and those needing additional support are appropriately identified. For those who find learning difficult, programmes of work such as Early and Further Literacy Support are in place; these support small groups of pupils and have had a significant impact on their achievement. In addition, the school is particularly skilled at providing precision support; some pupils have individual programmes, to help with spelling or social skills, for example. It is equally vigilant in its support for gifted and talented pupils. Recently, for example, it provided admirable extension activities for a particularly able pupil, also making sure that her personal development received attention.
- Despite small class sizes – 17 in Reception to Year 2 and 24 in Year 3 to Year 6 – the range of age and capability in each class means that it is far from easy to cater for the needs of all pupils. However, doing just that is one of the real strengths of this school, particularly in the key subjects of literacy and numeracy. Two key factors combine to make this possible. Firstly, lesson time is exceptionally well used because organisation is so slick. Not a moment is wasted. Secondly, the work of classroom support staff is of a high calibre. They use their time well, seamlessly dovetailing their contribution with that of the teacher and doubling the support available to pupils. Their contribution provides very good value for money. Unsurprisingly, in the class for the younger pupils in particular, learning is less rapid when the teacher has no additional adult support. It is particularly difficult to provide the Reception children with the attention they need when those in Years 1 and 2 also lack the skills to work independently of their teacher for long – or vice-versa. That is not to say that the amount of support is inadequate, but simply to point out the additional benefits that could be accrued were more hours affordable.
- The systems in place for assessment and the use that is made of them are both very good. Particularly impressive is the precision and the pertinence in the targets set for individual pupils. For example, writing targets pick up on specific, yet generic weaknesses in pupils' work and give them real and achievable pointers for improvement. Then, at key points in the year, pupils are required to comment on their progress towards their targets and also to evaluate a completed block of work – a geography project for example. The evaluation sheets used for this process have been carefully developed and provide pupils with prompts designed to illicit thoughtful comments. They grow in complexity with the age and capability of the child. The

teacher comments, too and while their contributions are pertinent they are also invariably humorous – indicative of the quality of relationships in the school. Finally, there are several lines for parents to comment. Many parents' contributions are detailed and show the interest that they take in how well their child is doing. For example, '...she is able to use some of her work on rivers when we are out in the countryside'.

15. The school is still working to improve the quality of its assessments – interpreting the new national marking criteria for writing, for example, to assist with greater accuracy when assessing pupils' written work. There are no aspects to deal with that the school has not already recognised.

### **The curriculum**

The whole curriculum, including the activities outside the school is very good. The National Curriculum and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education are fully covered. Accommodation is satisfactory and resources are good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Planning is very good and ensures that all pupils have access to the whole curriculum.
- The delivery of the curriculum is very well organised.
- There is very good provision for extra-curricular activities.
- The use of ICT across the curriculum is innovative.

### **Commentary**

16. There has been a significant improvement in the school's curriculum since the last inspection. The documentation and policies for each subject were described as satisfactory in 1998 and they are now good with some very good elements. The use of ICT is innovative and contributes to the successes within the whole curriculum. In particular, the opportunities for Reception children were in need of improvement; this improvement has been notable and current provision is good. Marking is now very good; it is constructive and is supported by a target setting process, which helps to challenge each individual. This improvement owes a lot to the very good leadership and management in the school.
17. The curriculum is enhanced by the innovative use of ICT. The suite is in constant use, particularly by the Year 3 to 6 pupils and is also used well by staff to enhance their teaching. Younger pupils also have ready access to computers. Their use enhances the curriculum and brings the wide world into the classroom. The school's success has been recognised by the local authority and it has shared its expertise with other schools.
18. There is access to an impressive range of activities outside lesson time. Much of the music is taught at midday. The school uses the village green and the village hall to extend physical education activities. Sunderland Football Club leads the football club and their contribution is impressive. The vicar attends the school regularly to lead assemblies and to talk to and share experiences with the pupils. Country dancing in the village hall is seen to have an impact on lessons. The sewing club was a pleasure to watch. A group of boys and girls benefit from the skills of a villager; their patchwork and cross-stitch work was of a very high quality. All these activities contribute to pupils' personal growth and development.
19. Pupils with special educational needs – and those who have particular gifts or talents - are very well catered for. The school is quick to pick up pupils who fall into either category and, particularly impressive, is the way in which it takes the time and trouble to tailor the help and support it offers. It is this attention to detail and the effort that goes into all the school's planning that makes it so very inclusive.

20. The school is aware of the need to develop the pupils' citizenship and personal, social and health education. Visits have included a Mosque; helping to give pupils an understanding of the views of others. The school is a healthy environment and water is available freely for pupils. In addition, it is in the process of joining the Healthy Schools Initiative. There is a successful programme to support health education, including drugs and sex education. The work recently completed on the proposed Wensleydale Railway helped pupils to understand issues in their locality. Year 5 and 6 pupils have a weekly conversational French lesson; a 'flying start' for them when they transfer to secondary school. All pupils have opportunities to accept responsibility.
21. Accommodation is satisfactory. The school has no field but this is not seen as a handicap because the village green and the village hall substitute. Facilities for Reception children are good: these include a delightful outdoor play area. The school is well resourced, with the library at present the target for improvement. Facilities for ICT are very good with a wide range of equipment and generous computer / pupil ratio. Teaching staff are well qualified. Support staff are skilled and are crucial to the delivery of the whole curriculum.

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

Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety are very good. Provision of support, advice and guidance based on monitoring is very good. Involvement of pupils through seeking, valuing and acting on their views is outstanding.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils' academic and personal development is very well supported by staff.
- Their views are valued and their ideas used.

### **Commentary**

22. The headteacher has a very good understanding of child protection issues; written guidance and recording systems are both strong. All staff, including lunchtime supervisors, are aware of procedures. Pupils are well cared for at breaks and lunchtimes. Meaningful risk assessments are carried out - these are much more than paper exercises - and intelligent steps are taken to reduce risk to a minimum.
23. The school listens to pupils, encouraging them to express views and contribute ideas. Pupils are eager to participate because they know from experience that their views will be listened to. They have been involved in playground design, are represented on the Healthy Schools Working Party and maintain the school's collective worship record. They elect their house and sports captains each year and all are involved in drawing up their classroom rules. When, at the end of a topic, they complete a detailed evaluation sheet, they are asked to comment on how well they feel that they have been taught. They are expected to comment thoughtfully on how well they have done and to consider their views alongside those of their teacher and parents.
24. The care and support for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Teachers and teaching assistants know the pupils they work with well. The school's commitment to inclusion is well reflected in the way that pupils with special educational needs are given opportunities to take part in all school activities.

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

The school maintains very good links with parents, the church, the local community and with other schools.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The strong partnership with parents contributes to pupils' learning at school and at home.
- The school goes out of its way to broaden pupils' horizons by involving itself in community projects and with other schools.

## **Commentary**

25. The school benefits from a very good partnership with parents. Parents' questionnaires confirm that the school is approachable. They are pleased with the information the school provides and their questionnaire responses raised no significant issues. The two consultation evenings are extremely well attended. In addition the school provides curriculum information to parents and regularly invites them to comment on their child's work. Parents of pupils with special educational needs and those with a child who is gifted or talented, are kept informed of their progress. They collaborate with teachers in reviewing and identifying the next steps for their children.
26. Very good links with the local community support and enhance pupils' learning. A member of the local clergy takes collective worship at the school on a weekly basis and follows this up with a 15-minute session with the younger class on a topic linked to their religious education lesson. The school eagerly embraces the opportunity to become involved in local projects like Green Citizens, the Wensleydale Railway Project and the Local Education Authority Traffic Team. Pupils are encouraged to join village clubs such as badminton, football and drama and the school is represented on the village hall committee.
27. Pupils benefit from very close links with two neighbouring primary schools and from comprehensive arrangements for their transfer to secondary school. Year 6 pupils first visit their 'new' school in the autumn term; they have a three-day visit in the summer term and, if they wish, they can attend a summer school week. While at West Burton pupils spend time at other primary schools, enabling them to see some familiar faces when secondary school beckons. For example, links with Askrigg and Bainbridge schools include a joint sports day, shared visits and visitors and joint one-off initiatives. Reception children and their parents have the opportunity to spend time in the classroom prior to full-time attendance and this ensures a happy start to school life.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The leadership of the headteacher is excellent.
- The overall work of governors is good. That of key members is very good.
- Subject leadership is good.
- Day-to-day administration is very efficient.

### **Commentary**

28. Given the achievements of the past two years, it is difficult to see what else the headteacher could have done in terms of leading and managing this school. He brought to the post a clear understanding of the features that could make a vibrant and forward thinking school. He recognised that change was needed and had the interpersonal skills to present his vision and practical ideas in a way that was embraced by the teaching and non-teaching staff. In particular, there was the need for all teaching staff to monitor the work of colleagues in a supportively critical fashion. This has been achieved. There is a tangible team spirit in the school, but there is an equally tangible rigour. Second best will not do.

29. This swift progress led by the headteacher is particularly commendable because it has been achieved alongside a heavy teaching commitment. The subject responsibilities of all staff are large but they are managed well. The most recently appointed teacher has, understandably, yet to settle into the areas of the curriculum that he will lead. Nevertheless, he has made a conscientious and committed start. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very well managed; pupils needing support are identified appropriately and programmes put in place for them meet their needs at an impressively individual level.
30. Governors are committed to the school, working hard in their various ways and according to their own interests, skills and available time. They articulate what the school does well and key members are clear about the areas it is working on, which is particularly commendable as a significant proportion of them are new to the governing body or to the post they hold within it. The comprehensive flow of information from the headteacher to governors has done much to ensure they are all well informed. Governors support the headteacher fully and rightly point out that they were instrumental in the development of their vision of the school when they appointed him. To say they act successfully as critical friends would be to exaggerate their current contribution. However, the school self-evaluation skills of the headteacher are so realistic that reminders about the areas of provision that most need tweaking are unnecessary.
31. Clearly, efficient and reliable day-to-day administration is particularly crucial in a school of this size. The secretary provides this very well and is an invaluable member of the school team. In addition to office duties, she provides high quality classroom support and teaches conversational French to the older pupils.

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

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	147,150
Total expenditure	153,237
Expenditure per pupil	4,378

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	19,802
Balance carried forward to the next	13,715

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

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

The overall provision is **good**.

32. Provision has improved significantly since the previous inspection. The leadership and management of these children are now good. Well-balanced learning opportunities are provided, based on detailed assessments of their needs. The four children are taught within a class of Years 1 to 2 pupils and the organisation of their learning by the teacher - with the support of a very good assistant - is a strength. Children work with older pupils, or with their peers, whichever is the more appropriate. In all areas of learning children achieve well and attain standards above those expected by the time they are of Year 1 age.

### **Personal, social and emotional development**

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

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

- Children's attitudes and behaviour are very good.
- Relationships with adults and with each other are good.
- Teaching and learning are good.

#### **Commentary**

33. The children have settled very well into school life and are totally at ease in the classroom. They have learned how to behave and to be part of a social group. They readily help the teacher to give out materials and tidy up at the end of a lesson. They are eager to explore new learning and are able to concentrate on their work. They have a well-developed sense of what is right and wrong. Their attitudes - at all times – are positive.
34. Teaching is good. The teacher and her assistant know the pupils well and respond appropriately to their individual needs. Children are constantly encouraged to join in activities. Particularly good use is made of the teaching assistant, who works well with the teacher in establishing high standards of behaviour and social skills. Each child is helped to make good progress.

### **Communication, language and literacy**

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

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

- Children have above average skills in speaking and listening.
- Opportunities to develop language through role-play are good.
- The pupils enjoy writing and talking about their work.

#### **Commentary**

35. All children pay close attention to their teacher, listening with interest and concentration to stories, poems and instructions. Speaking skills are well developed - children were able to describe how a patient should be cared for and knew of the uses of play medical instruments to measure the body's vital signs.

36. Children showed a keen interest in books and writing. All could recognise some letter sounds and make good attempts to write their own name. Most are beginning to read. They are encouraged to form letters and early writing skills are developing well.
37. Teaching is good and many opportunities are provided for the children to develop their speaking and writing skills, both in front of the class at the start of each day and in the role-play areas.

### **Mathematical development**

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children have good basic knowledge of number. For some it is very good.
- They use good mathematical vocabulary.

### **Commentary**

38. Teaching is good. Most children successfully count to ten with some counting further. They start their numeracy work as part of the main class and they gain from this. One child joined in with older classmates and could add and subtract small numbers like two and three from any number up to 100.
39. In using sand, water and simulated snow, pupils showed that they understood words such as 'big', 'small', 'full' and 'empty'. They identified two-dimensional shapes and all could use small figures to do simple addition and subtraction. They were developing their control when forming numbers - a small number reversed digits. In all their work they had good resources, such as number lines, number squares and table top activities to enhance their mathematical understanding.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The children have good computer skills.
- They show interest in the topics they learn about.
- The quality and organisation of the teaching and learning are good.

### **Commentary**

40. Children follow the main topics of the class and listen to the stories and illustrations before undertaking activities at their own level. For example, after an introduction and video about Mary Seacole, Reception children moved into the role-play hospital and experienced what it may have been like for Mary. They have a rat and understand the links between rats and infection. They were able to draw a rat on the computer, to label it and to send the image to a printer in another room. The children's excitement was very evident.
41. The role-play area constantly changes and its use by the teacher is creative; when the class was looking at Tutankhamun, it became an Egyptian building with a tomb.
42. Teaching is good, as inviting opportunities for children are constantly being created. As a result, achievement is good.

## **Physical development**

Provision in physical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children have good opportunities to develop physical skills in the outside play area: there is a range of large play equipment.
- Children are able to join in with dancing and they enjoy the experience.

### **Commentary**

43. Children's dexterity in handling large and small items is good. They can manipulate jigsaw pieces, handle a pencil well and thread objects on string when counting. They use construction toys with confidence and are able to describe exactly what they are trying to construct and why.
44. There are suitable opportunities to use balls, ropes, hoops and all the climbing apparatus in the outside play area. A wide and varied array of activities is available at all times, both inside and outside the classroom.
45. Teaching is good. Both the teacher and the teaching assistant join in with the children and encourage them to exercise their bodies. They are encouraged to play safely and co-operatively.

## **Creative development**

Provision in creative development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children's ability to create pictures and collages is good.
- They are developing a good sense of rhythm when dancing.
- They have a high level of confidence when painting and creating.

### **Commentary**

46. Children confidently use a wide variety of paints and crayons and produce pictures from both direct observation and from their imagination. They can use the computer to draw, label and print pictures. They have shown confidence when producing three-dimensional models and have created collages using materials, wool and paper.
47. Children are confident when singing songs and rhymes. They joined in the singing during the whole school assemblies and enjoyed this experience.
48. Teaching is good. Through careful planning, the teacher and her assistant ensure that all the children have opportunities to take part in all activities.

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

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **very good**.

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

- Pupils achieve well, often very well because of the teaching methods used.
- The impact of the work of classroom support staff is very good.
- Pupils attain standards that are well above expectations.
- Literacy skills are developed very successfully through the full curriculum.
- Leadership of the subject is very good.

#### **Commentary**

49. The school is faced with the difficulty of teaching literacy skills to groups of pupils whose ages and capabilities vary hugely. Its success is down to the methods it uses to deal with this difficulty. In Years 3 to 6 for example, the teacher runs two, teacher-led sessions within the hour long lesson: one for the younger / less capable pupils and the other for the older / more capable ones. While this broadly means a Year 3/4 and 5/6 split, the fact that all of the pupils are in one class has the advantage, where and when it is needed, of flexibility in grouping. The group that is not with the teacher is supervised / taught by the teaching assistant, who is very well briefed and capable. Overall, the pupils get a really good deal. The work is brilliantly matched to their ability; all are challenged and yet can experience success. Added to this, the school provides small group support where it is needed, using Further Literacy Support materials, for example. It has shown itself capable of providing work targeted at an individual if it would be beneficial to do so. The pattern is similar for the younger pupils in the school and works well.
50. Pupils of all capabilities listen attentively in lessons. Most are particularly articulate for their age and have a broad vocabulary, including the technical language they learn in the various subjects of the curriculum. They read fluently and with very good understanding. All these skills support pupils' work across the full curriculum.
51. Writing standards are good overall but they do lag behind reading standards throughout the school. The school is far from complacent, however and is seeking to raise attainment in writing, particularly in Years 1 and 2; the school improvement plan sets out these intentions clearly. Writing skills are taught well and the curriculum is used well as a vehicle for the development of these skills. The type of writing experiences on offer to pupils is something that the school may wish to explore more fully with a view to adjustment if necessary.

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

52. The school is very skilled in using other areas of its curriculum for pupils to practise and consolidate the skills they learn in their literacy lessons. The large volume of work that pupils produce is as commendable as its quality. Their reading skills seldom let them down or hinder their progress in other subjects.

### **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

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

- Standards are consistently high and are, at present, very good.
- All pupils achieve very well.
- Pupils are enthusiastic about the subject.
- Each pupil's performance is assessed regularly and every pupil has targets to work towards.
- The subject is very well managed.

### **Commentary**

53. At the time of the last inspection provision in mathematics was described as good; it is now very good. Criticisms were made of the quality of marking; this is now very good. Teachers motivate pupils with supportive and constructive comments, which they can act upon.
54. Current standards for Year 6 pupils are very good and this reflects the achievement throughout the school. Pupils enter the school with average and just above average ability. As a result of good teaching, they achieve well during Years 1 and 2. This progress accelerates during Years 3 to 6 when very good teaching and slick organisation by the teachers raise standards even higher. Standards for the present Year 6 in 2004 are likely to be very good but not quite as high as in 2003.
55. The quality of teaching is good and better at all times, underpinned with high quality planning. This planning enables small groups of pupils and in some cases individual children, to move at their own level and to work with older, more able pupils. Assessment and recording procedures are very good and enable individual targets to be set for pupils. In all lessons, objectives related to targets are set and sharp teaching achieves these objectives. Teachers understand the steps that have to be overcome to maintain progress and use very good mathematical vocabulary.
56. In Years 1 and 2 some outstanding work was seen. For example, Year 2 pupils with very good mental agility were able to count forwards and backwards in 100s and 1,000s and relate this to centimetres and grams. In the Years 3 to 6 class the grouping of pupils into five ability groups enabled two teachers to work seamlessly together to develop and challenge all pupils. During one lesson, for example, while two groups were tackling the basics of estimating and measuring angles, the other three groups were being taught more complex angle constructions and rules. This teaching was of very good quality, using innovative interactive programs projected by the digital projector onto the whiteboard. The groups changed places so that all pupils had the chance to experience this high quality support in the ICT suite. One high attaining child had his own very challenging assignment and was thrilled with his success in drawing a complex shape accurately.
57. Management of the subject is very good and very well organised. The curriculum covers all the key areas. There is a thorough and detailed analysis of results so that pupils' needs are targeted, the school's strengths are known and priorities for development can be highlighted. Mathematics is well supported by technology so that effective teaching is quickly delivered.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

58. Mathematics is also used in other subjects: for example, the graphical representation of data in topics such as the survey of opinions on the Wensleydale Railway plans, the development of numeracy skills when creating spreadsheets in ICT lessons and the encouragement of logical thinking when programming robots. Pupils enjoy their mathematics and bask in their successes.

## SCIENCE

Provision in science is **very good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils attain well above average standards and achieve very well.
- There is a strong emphasis on investigative work.
- Some teaching is excellent.

### Commentary

59. One Years 3 to 6 lesson was observed and pupils' work from Years 1 to 6 was scrutinised. Pupils' standards and achievements are very good by the end of Years 2 and 6. They make very good progress in response to consistently high quality (and sometimes excellent) teaching. Standards have risen significantly since the previous inspection when they were judged average in Year 2 and above average in Year 6.
60. Coverage of the science curriculum is very thorough and there is a strong and relevant emphasis on investigation. There is always appropriate challenge so that pupils capable of attaining higher levels have the opportunity to do so. Within the curriculum are high quality and relevant elements dealing with drug abuse and sex education. Here, in particular, is a strong link with the school's curriculum for pupils' personal, including moral, development.
61. The lesson observed was excellent. There were several contributory factors. Careful planning was crucial and executed faultlessly. The teacher's subject knowledge and the clarity with which he explained complex concepts relating to forces in general (for Years 5 and 6) and magnetism (for Years 3 and 4) were impressive. As was common to lessons observed in all subjects, the use of the teacher's time was a key strength. He talked to the whole class and to groups, carefully targeting the content to his audience and always ensuring that those working independently of him had challenging and engaging activities to complete within a known timescale. Relationships between teacher and pupils were relaxed and humorous but there was never any lack of rigour or relaxation of expectations. Pupils learned through doing. There were good links with other subjects; Years 3 and 4 pupils needed to be able to measure accurately in millimetres and to record results in an appropriate way. The use of ICT software with Years 5 and 6 was engaging and provided challenge at exactly the right level. Work in pupils' books suggests that lessons of this quality are not the exception.

## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is **very good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching of ICT is very good.
- Very good teaching and assessment procedures ensure pupils' very good progress.
- Very good use is made of ICT in other subjects.
- The subject is very well managed.

### Commentary

62. When the school was last inspected the provision for ICT was satisfactory, there was limited use of ICT in other subjects and teachers' skills were described as just satisfactory. Since then, great improvements have been made in all these areas. ICT is now a strength of the

school and makes a major contribution towards the very good teaching and learning across the whole school curriculum.

63. Pupils enjoy working with computers and naturally turn to them to support their learning. Reception pupils used the computer to draw a rat as part of their studies of the life of Florence Nightingale. All Year 2 pupils were able to word-process their own work, modify the style, save their work and print it. They could organise this work by changing fonts and adding pictures. Those in Years 3 and 4 could program a robot to follow the track of an octagon using repeat commands. The eight robots then simulated a dance, each one leaving a fixed point and travelling along the octagonal path before returning to the start point. The pupils' sense of achievement was great. Years 5 and 6 could manage spreadsheets of varying complexity. They were excited when, after entering formulae into cells, they were able to input differing data and quickly establish complex calculations. For example, they calculated how long each of them had been alive in days, hours, minutes and seconds and made a grid to solve multiplications. All the pupils were challenged at their own level to explore this aspect of the use of ICT.
64. The computer suite is large enough to be able to accommodate all Years 3 to 6 pupils, working in pairs. More often, however, it is used by Years 5 and 6 pupils, or by those from Years 3 and 4. The school deliberately planned the purchase of sufficient computers so that, when working in this way, there would be a one-to-one pupil computer ratio. ICT is an effective teaching tool and the school is very good at exploring innovative uses. For example, it is used to enhance collective worship (see paragraph 67). The Reception and Years 1 and 2 pupils share four computers; each is linked to the web and to a high quality colour printer.
65. The leadership and management of ICT are very good. The co-ordinator can say exactly what progress each child has made and demonstrate the very high standards at the school. All members of the staff have attended appropriate training and their skills are very good. Resources are comprehensive and very well cared for. The school has a good web site and a policy on the safe use of the server to protect the pupils. The school's work in ICT has been shared with colleagues in other schools.
66. As an effective way of improving the level of pupils' ICT skills the school has, over the past two years, been part of an innovative pilot scheme with a neighbouring local education authority, using an assessment tool called PICTAP. From low initial attainment in 2001, pupils now attain standards that are much higher than those expected nationally.

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

67. Very good use is made of ICT by both teachers and pupils to support work in other subjects. In Year 2, the very good keyboard skills enabled pupils to quickly enter work and print it. These pupils could describe the use of ICT within their lives and were at ease linking drawings and writing on a specially designed program. The digital projector was in the ICT suite, which was also the venue for assemblies. A simulated birthday cake with a flickering candle was projected onto a whiteboard; this features regularly to celebrate birthdays. Electronic music was used during assembly to play Aboriginal music when celebrating Australia day, Indian drum music was played to support the Years 3 to 6 work and music composed by the pupils was displayed on the whiteboard as a teaching aid. Pupils' projects are annotated with digital photographs, printed tables, downloaded information and computerised plans and drawings. It was common to see this interactive work - probably at its most effective when used to display and edit text as part of literacy lessons for Years 3 to 6 pupils.

## HUMANITIES

### History and Geography

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

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The subjects integrate well into the rest of the curriculum.
- The quality of the pupils' work is good.
- Years 3 to 6 pupils are very good at assessing their own work.
- The leadership and management of the subject are good.

#### Commentary

68. At the time of the last inspection provision in history and geography was described as satisfactory. It is now good with major improvements in the standards of pupils' work and the management of the subjects. A key part of this improvement has been the use of ICT.
69. To enable these subjects to be taught effectively, the school has created a curriculum that involves two-year and four-year cycles of topics for Years 1 to 2 and Years 3 to 6 respectively. These topics give an opportunity to develop both subject areas. To avoid repetition for the pupils, themes are approached differently each time and, at times, other topics are substituted. The school responds to particular opportunities when they arise; studying the effects of the Wensleydale proposed rail track, for example, was a change to the original plan.
70. Standards in work seen were good, with some very good elements. The best Year 6 pupils' projects showed enthusiasm and motivation for individual research to a very high standard. All projects were well managed and all contained elements of other subjects. ICT was very evident with tables and graphs created from the investigations on both rivers and the railway. Research downloaded from the Internet added an extra dimension and plans and maps drawn on the computer were added. Very good computer generated plans of the playground and their classrooms were on display around the school. The collages made during an Elizabethan project were impressive and pupils were very proud of them.
71. In the only lesson seen, Years 1 and 2 pupils were looking at objects that remind us of famous people. They were able to relate a lamp, a bandage and a rat to the work of Florence Nightingale and recall details of her work. Older pupils were able to compare aspects of her life with Mary Seacole. During this good lesson, Year 2 pupils could show on a map where both came from and describe the journeys they would have had to take. Some pupils related this to their recent holidays.
72. The subject is effectively managed with both subjects given appropriate time and importance. Assessment of their projects by the pupils themselves was reflective and also showed a commitment to improvement and high quality by the school.

#### Religious education

73. Evidence gathered for **religious education** is too limited to make an overall judgement on provision. A lesson for pupils in Years 1 and 2 was observed and pupils' recorded work was scrutinised. In addition, a member of the local clergy spent 15 minutes with Years 1 and 2 pupils, telling them a story from the Bible linked to their work on Judaism. Pupils listened attentively and many were able to respond to questions such as, 'How do you think the Jews felt?' The lesson taken by the class teacher was well supported by artefacts and cleverly linked to pupils' own experience. There is insufficient evidence to judge the standards achieved by the end of Year 6 although pupils' work indicates that they at least meet the expected standards.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

No **art and design** lessons were observed. One **design and technology** lesson was seen in Years 1 and 2. Hence, it is not possible to make an overall judgement on provision in either subject. From the lesson seen, however and from work on display and in pupils' books and folders it is evident that attainment is at least in line with expectations and possibly better. Particularly impressive in Years 1 and 2 was the use of the work of famous artists as the basis for much of the art and design work in the classroom and the opportunities in design and technology to make choices, to work independently and to show initiative.

### Music

Provision in music is **good with some very good aspects**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' singing is good across the whole school.
- Specialist teaching of recorders and woodwind is good.
- There are varied opportunities for the pupils to perform.
- Music has a high profile within the school and the teaching of notation through the playing of the recorder is good.
- The teaching of music is very well organised.

#### Commentary

74. At the time of the last inspection, provision in music was satisfactory. Pupils' enthusiasm was praised but the planning of music across the school and the teaching of musical composition, particularly notation, was criticised. The school has improved both these aspects; music provision is good with some very good aspects.
75. No lesson was seen in Years 1 and 2 but these pupils sang well and enthusiastically during assemblies. They listened to the music intently, enjoying the classical music and being fascinated by the didgeridoo rendition. Their work was the foundation for the success seen in the Years 3 to 6, where pupils had developed their skills and enjoyment of music.
76. Instrumental tuition is key to the good standards of composition and notation within the school. One group of pupils played and practised in a sextet with descant, treble and tenor recorders combined to produce a very enjoyable performance. Their standard was high and they impressed the whole school with their final rendition. The external woodwind tuition is also very good. Pupils make speedy progress and the most advanced pupils are working well with the upper register. Some other external instrumental tuition was not so good; one able pupil in particular showed little progress or motivation.
77. In the lesson for Years 3 to 6 pupils, their skills were evident. They were able to compose a piece of music based on an Indian Kaherva rhythm. This was done in small groups with more skilled pupils working with less skilled. Pupils could read the musical notation, bring four lines of music together, practise the composition and perform a good piece of work. This lesson was one of a series aimed at producing a polished performance that may be played on the local radio. The use of ICT to assist this lesson was innovative and contributed well to its success.
78. The co-ordinator manages the subject well. The opportunities offered to all pupils are good and this contributes to the overall high standard.

## Physical education

Provision in physical education is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The opportunities for all pupils are good.
- The subject is well managed.
- The school is well equipped for gymnastics.
- The development of the old garden into a play area is very good.
- The school is part of the Healthy Schools Initiative.

### Commentary

79. During the last inspection the subject was judged to be satisfactory, despite having limited facilities. Since then, the large play area has been developed, the new village hall has been brought into use and gymnastic equipment has been purchased. The extra facilities and resources have, with good teaching, raised the quality of provision.
80. After a warm up Years 1 and 2 pupils learned to move to the music of The Snowman to create a friendship dance, moving in different directions, counting eight steps clockwise and anti-clockwise and miming handshakes and hugs. This helped pupils to explore their bodies through the medium of dance. During the Year 3 to Year 6 gymnastics lesson the value of the new village hall and the new gymnastic equipment was evident. Pupils achieved good standards as they were able to practise movements that involved curling and shapes with a curve and to put a series together to create a display. Standards were good and the pupils were enthusiastic as they tried all the time to improve their performance and the quality of their movement.
81. The teaching of swimming is very effective. During the summer term all pupils attend Richmond baths for a 45-minute lesson. As a result of this well-programmed experience, every child over the last four years has received a certificate showing that they have completed a swim of 25 metres. The school has the support of Sunderland Football Club who come to the school once a week to run an after school football club for the pupils. Their enthusiasm for this is enormous and they have good football skills. The country-dance club is a further addition to the broader curriculum; during one lesson, pupils who had attended this club were able to help others with their dancing.
82. Even though the school lacks a field, the subject provides a good curriculum for the pupils and is well managed. The plans to join the Healthy Schools Initiative will further enhance the development of this area for the wellbeing of the pupils. All pupils have access to all activities and this is a strength.

## PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

83. The curriculum reflects the school's determination to develop personal and social skills and to teach pupils about keeping healthy and being responsible young citizens. Planned work is skilfully interwoven into day-to-day lessons. For example, the issue of dogs fouling the village green (which doubles as the school playground for pupils in Years 3 to 6) arose in a literacy lesson. Pupils reminded their teacher that there used to be a warning notice in the village, detailing associated fines. The headteacher referred the issue to the Year 6 Environmental Officer to deal with.
84. Every Year 6 pupil has a responsibility that is 'real'. There are Junior Road Safety Officers whose job it is to flag up issues of safety and to liaise with the Local Education Authority Road Traffic Team. There are house captains and sports captains. There is a two-pupil

representation on the Healthy School's Working Party. A governor is leading this initiative and the two pupils gave up a half-day in their holiday to attend a staff training day about it.

85. There is ample opportunity for all pupils to show independence and initiative. Part of this arises naturally as pupils often have to work independently of their teacher for reasons already made clear in this report. Nevertheless, the result is impressive. In addition, pupils have very good opportunities for independent research that increase as they move through the school.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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