

INSPECTION REPORT

**RICHARD TAYLOR CHURCH OF ENGLAND
VOLUNTARY AIDED PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Bilton, Harrogate

LEA area: North Yorkshire

Unique reference number: 121634

Headteacher: Mrs B Belsham

Lead inspector: Mr M Newell

Dates of inspection: 15th – 18th September 2003

Inspection number: 261118

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	271
School address:	Bilton Lane Harrogate North Yorkshire
Postcode:	HG1 3DT
Telephone number:	01423 563078
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr K S Burton
Date of previous inspection:	November 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school is a larger than average primary school situated just outside the town centre of Harrogate in North Yorkshire. The school gained a Schools Achievement Award in 2000 and an Investors in People award in 2002. The school is popular and over-subscribed, with 271 pupils on roll. There is no significant level of pupil mobility with only 19 pupils either joining or leaving the school at other than the recognised times. Almost all the pupils are of white ethnic origin and there are no pupils with English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs stands at 16 per cent. This is below the national average, with the percentage of pupils with a statement of special educational need being broadly in line with the national average. The nature of special educational needs includes learning difficulties, behavioural, speech and physical difficulties. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is below the national average at 2 per cent. Children's attainment when they start school covers the full ability range and is at an average level overall.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
10638	Mr M Newell	Lead inspector	Special educational needs English as an additional language English Personal, Social and Health Education and Citizenship
9224	Mr M Vineall	Lay inspector	
1939	Mr M Benson	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology Design and technology Music Physical education
10911	Mrs C Deloughry	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Mathematics Art and design Geography History

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a very good school. The school has a very well merited image and reputation with the parents and the community it serves. The school is very well led and managed. Teaching is consistently good and often very good. The school provides a rich and vibrant range of exciting learning opportunities. Pupils behave very well and the manner in which the school values the pupils' views is excellent. As a result of all these factors, pupils achieve well. The school provides very good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils achieve well throughout the school and standards are above average in English, mathematics, and science. Pupils attain and achieve well in many other subjects, particularly in art and design and music, where standards are high and pupils achieve very well.
- The school is very well led and managed and the leadership of the headteacher is excellent.
- Teaching and learning are consistently good and often very good.
- The school provides very good opportunities to enrich pupils' learning and the curriculum provision in the Foundation Stage is very good.
- The provision made for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and their overall personal development is very good.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to school and behave very well. Relationships across the school are very good.
- Standards of care are very good and the way in which the school values and acts upon the views of pupils is excellent.
- The school has established a strong partnership with parents and the community which impacts most positively on how well pupils learn and achieve.
- The school recognises that standards in speaking and listening need to be improved further.
- Assessment procedures in some subjects are not rigorous enough to have the biggest impact on how well pupils achieve as noted in the school improvement plan.

How the effectiveness of the school has changed since the last inspection.

The school has improved well since the last inspection in 1998. The school tackled the key issues relating to standards and achievement in information and communication technology and design and technology very rigorously. The marking of pupils' work is also much improved. Many of the previously identified strengths have been maintained and in some instances built upon. Importantly, standards overall have improved. The school is well placed to continue to improve.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	A	A	A	C
mathematics	A*	A	A*	A
science	A*	B	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.

The above table shows that over time the school has often performed very well compared to all schools and to similar schools, often reaching standards in the top 5 per cent of schools nationally.

Achievement for pupils of all abilities is good throughout the school. Children in the Foundation Stage and pupils in Years 1 - 6 achieve well in many subjects of the curriculum. Standards are often above average and in music standards are well above average.

Children in the Foundation Stage achieve well in all areas of learning because of the good and often very good teaching and, by the time that they start in Year 1, many children have attained the early learning goals in all areas of learning and achieve particularly well in their mathematical development and their personal, social and emotional development.

By the end of Year 2 standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science are above average. Much of this is due to the good and at times very good quality of teaching and learning. Pupils of all abilities achieve well. An area for further improvement is pupils' speaking and listening skills. A further strength is that pupils achieve well and attain above average standards in many foundation subjects with achievement and attainment particularly strong in music.

Pupils continue to make good progress in their learning in Years 3 - 6, and by the end of Year 6 standards are above average in English, mathematics and science with further improvement needed in improving pupils' speaking and listening skills. Standards are not as high as in previous years but this is due to the natural ability differences in different groups of pupils. The important factor is that all pupils continue to achieve well. Standards and achievement are good in many other subjects, particularly in music. Throughout the school standards in information and communication technology are at an average level, improving at a good rate and pupils are currently achieving well. In all year groups the higher attaining pupils and pupils with special educational needs achieve well across the curriculum.

Pupils' personal qualities and their personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are nurtured very effectively overall. Pupils' attitudes are good and their behaviour is very good. Attendance and punctuality are very good. All these factors impact most positively on how well pupils learn and achieve.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a very good quality of education for all pupils. The quality of teaching and learning are good, and at times very good, which ensures that pupils, whatever their ability, achieve well. The school has rightly identified the need to improve assessment procedures in some subjects to have a bigger impact on how well pupils learn and achieve.

The school provides a good curriculum that is significantly enhanced by the opportunities that are capitalised upon for enriching pupils' learning and achievement, such as the very good range of extra-curricular activities, the wide range of visits and visitors and the good provision that is made for pupils' citizenship and personal, social and health education.

Pupils' care, welfare, and general well being is afforded a very high status by the school and the manner in which the school involves the pupils through seeking, valuing and acting on their views is excellent. This adds much to the sense of community and very good ethos of the school which is further embellished and enriched by the school's very good links with

parents and the wider community which add another valuable dimension to how well pupils learn and achieve.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are very good with excellent leadership provided by the headteacher. The headteacher has played a pivotal role in the continued development of the school. Her clarity of vision, sense of purpose and level of aspirations are excellent. The governing body has a clear understanding of the strengths and areas for development of the school and together with the head and staff, the governors share a fierce commitment to sustaining high standards and levels of achievement.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are very happy with and appreciative of the quality of education that the school provides. Parents are particularly happy with how well their children learn and achieve, the quality of teaching, the expectations that the school sets, standards of behaviour, the range of learning opportunities and how well the school is led and managed. A small number of parents felt that their child had been bullied or harassed but no incidents were observed during the inspection.

Discussions with pupils both before and during the inspection demonstrated how very happy pupils are with all that the school has to offer. Pupils commented specifically on how their views are listened to and respected both in class and through the school council and how learning comes to life through the wide range of activities that are provided for them both in and out of lessons. Pupils also indicated that bullying is a very rare occurrence but when it has occurred in the past it has been dealt with immediately and with a sense of fairness and justice.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- continue to raise standards in speaking and listening;
- put in place more rigorous procedures for assessing and tracking pupils' achievements in science and foundation subjects.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Achievement is good throughout the school. Children in the Foundation Stage get a good start to their educational lives and achieve well. In Years 1 - 6 pupils continue to achieve well with boys doing as well as girls. Standards in all the core subjects and many of the foundation subjects are above average.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils in Years 1 - 6 and children in the Foundation Stage achieve well. Pupils of differing abilities and gender achieve equally well.
- The consistently good and at times better teaching, together with the very good procedures for analysing test and assessment data, impacts significantly on pupils' achievement.
- Led excellently by the headteacher, all who work at the school have a fierce commitment to attaining and sustaining high standards.
- Standards are above average in English, mathematics and science and in many other subjects, and particularly in music where standards are well above average.
- Standards in speaking and listening need to be improved further.

Commentary

1. Children get a good start to their educational lives in the Foundation Stage. Children's attainment on entry to school covers the full ability range and is at an average level overall. By the time that they are ready to start in Year 1 most will have attained the early learning goals in all areas, with many exceeding these in mathematics and personal, social and emotional development. Children of all abilities achieve well.

Key Stage 1

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2002

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	17.9 (15.8)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	16.0 (15.6)	14.4 (14.3)
Mathematics	18.2 (16.6)	16.5 (16.2)

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

Key Stage 2

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2002

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	29.2(29.5)	27.0(27.0)
mathematics	30.4(29.5)	26.7(26.6)
science	31.5(29.5)	28.3(28.3)

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

2. National Curriculum test results over time for pupils in Year 2 show that pupils make good progress and achieve well given their starting point when they start school. Standards are currently above average in all three core subjects by the end of Year 2. By the time that pupils leave school, National Curriculum test results show that standards are often well above average or very high, in the top 5 per cent of schools nationally, in English, mathematics and science. The school has gained Achievement Awards from the government in recognition of its success. A strong feature of attainment is the high percentage of pupils who attain standards above those expected of 11-year-olds, which impacts significantly on the average points score that the school achieves when compared to national results, as illustrated in the table able.
3. Inspection findings show that standards are currently above average in all three core subjects by the end of Year 2 and all pupils are achieving well. Standards in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6 are currently above average. This does not indicate a fall in standards but reflects the differences in natural ability between different groups of pupils and standards are set to rise again in subsequent years. Evidence clearly shows that pupils in Years 3 - 6 achieve well in all the core subjects, although there is room for improvement in pupils' speaking and listening skills which, although satisfactory, could be better. Inspection evidence shows that there is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls and higher attaining pupils and pupils with special educational needs achieve equally well. Pupils throughout the school achieve well and attain above average standards in art and design, history, geography and physical education. Standards in music are well above average and pupils achieve very well. The good overall and at times very good teaching that is a consistent feature of the school contributes significantly to pupils' achievement across many subjects of the curriculum.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils thoroughly enjoy coming to school and this is reflected in the rate of **attendance which is well above the national average**. Punctuality is equally good. Behaviour in school is, generally, **very good**. Many pupils have **very mature and positive attitudes** to all the school has to offer, although a small minority have less positive attitudes. **Provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good**. All these factors make a significant contribution to how well pupils learn and achieve.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good behaviour.
- High quality relationships between all adults and pupils and between pupils themselves.
- Very good spiritual, moral, social and cultural provision.
- Pupils thoroughly enjoy school, are confident, very well mannered and mature.
- A small number of pupils have less positive attitudes.
- Attendance levels are high.

Commentary

4. Attendance levels at the school are well above the national average. This is due to the combined effort of all concerned. Children want to come to school, parents care about them attending school regularly, whilst the school monitor very effectively their presence and follow up any absences. These combined efforts also lead to good punctuality.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	3.7	School data :	0.0
National data:	5.4	National data:	0.5

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

5. The behaviour in school is very good. The school's behaviour policy is well thought out, well understood by the children and supported by many imaginative schemes, including one rewarding acts of kindness or thoughtfulness. The pupils speak enthusiastically about these schemes and the fairness of their application. Behaviour around school is very good, including times when the pupils are unsupervised. Pupils act with high levels of maturity. There is a genuine sense of care for one another throughout the school and pupils have a high level of respect for the views and feelings of others. No bullying or other forms of harassment were observed during the inspection. Pupils' maturity and confidence are nurtured by the wide range of responsibilities that pupils are expected to carry out around the school. In addition, many opportunities are provided for pupils to undertake independent study and research and to take initiative and responsibility for their own learning. Pupils relish the trust and responsibility that is placed in them and seldom disappoint. Pupils speak to visitors with great politeness and pleasantness and in a delightfully thoughtful and 'adult' manner – yet never precocious. When discussions were held with representatives of the school council, pupils related with great enthusiasm the achievements of this body, but also spontaneously talked about what they had got right and wrong and what they had learned from this.

6. Pupils have very positive attitudes in lessons and enjoy all that the school has to offer. They show high levels of enthusiasm and motivation and are keen to achieve well. They are only too willing to offer their views and opinions whilst showing a readiness and acceptance to take on board the views of others. Pupils' positive attitude to school is also reflected in the high number of pupils that take part enthusiastically in activities after school. There are a few pupils whose attitudes are less enthusiastic and who do not always listen attentively in lessons or who are more passive participants in discussions. The school is tackling this through implementing strategies to improve pupils' speaking and listening skills.

7. The very good relationships existing in the school lead to a tremendous community and family feeling throughout the school. The relationships between all staff and pupils are the springboard for very good personal development – and this includes all staff, for the staff themselves show a very unified, cohesive approach. Children see playground supervisors and dinner ladies, as well as teachers, as adults whom they can approach if they have any worries or concerns. The many initiatives to keep the older pupils closely involved with the younger ones result in an excellent inclusive feel and true sense of community and belonging. In such an inclusive environment, it is not surprising to find all forms of harassment, including bullying or racist or sexist behaviour, not only unacceptable but very rarely encountered and this is reflected in the fact that there have been no exclusions from the school in the last 12 months or indeed in recent years.

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	242	0	0
White – any other White background	7	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	7	0	0

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

8. Another important stimulus to pupils' successful personal development is the very good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development evident across a very wide span of the school's activities which is offered in many imaginative ways. Assemblies are well planned to nurture this development. Visits out of school, visitors to school, a good choice of resources reflecting cultural diversity, and the way daily life in the school is regulated and conducted all reinforce such learning. Above all, adult role models assist the process. A great emphasis is placed on children's personal development in the Foundation Stage and this process continues right through school. By the time that pupils leave school they are confident, mature, responsible students who recognise that they too have an important role to play in how well they learn and achieve. Pupils' attitudes, values, behaviour and personal development are now stronger than they were at the last inspection.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is **very good**. Teaching and learning are **good and often very good**. The curriculum meets pupils' individual needs well and the opportunities that the school provides for enriching pupils' learning are **very good**. Care, guidance, support, partnership with parents, other schools and the community are **very good** and impact significantly on how well pupils achieve. The manner in which the pupils' views are listened to and acted upon is **excellent**. All these factors help to create a very good ethos for learning where pupils of all abilities achieve well.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are good and often very good across many subjects of the curriculum and in the Foundation Stage. This ensures that pupils of differing abilities achieve well and that above average standards are attained in many subjects. Although assessment is a significant strength in English and mathematics it is not rigorous enough in other subjects.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching in the Foundation Stage strikes a very good balance between learning through practical activities and through direct instruction.
- Teachers' subject knowledge is good in many subjects and is used well to enthuse the pupils.
- Teaching assistants across the school make a significant and powerful contribution to how well pupils achieve.

- Good opportunities are provided for pupils to learn through investigative activities in mathematics and science. Reading and writing skills are taught well and good attention is paid to the development of skills as well as knowledge in other subjects.
- Good attention is paid to the fact that different pupils learn in different ways and teaching methods reflect this.
- Work is well matched to the differing needs of the pupils and tasks that are set are often demanding and challenging.
- Opportunities are capitalised upon to enhance pupils' literacy and numeracy skills in other areas of the curriculum.
- Procedures for assessing and tracking pupils' progress in some subjects are not effective enough.
- More consistent activities that are specifically aimed at improving pupils' speaking and listening skills could be provided.

Commentary

9. The good quality of teaching makes a very important contribution to the standards attained and to how well pupils of all abilities achieve. Over time, pupils have reached standards in the core subjects that are well above average and often very high, in the top 5 per cent of schools nationally. Much of this is due to the quality of teaching, the high expectations that are set and the quality of leadership and management by the headteacher. Standards are not quite at this high level at present but this is because of the natural ability differences between the different groups of pupils. The important factor is the teaching that consistently enables the pupils, whatever their ability, to achieve well.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 47 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1(2%)	9(19%)	25(53%)	12(26%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages where 30 or more lessons are seen.

10. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is always good and at times very good. All staff in the Foundation Stage understand how young children learn and plan activities that enable children to learn through a wide range of practical, investigative and child initiated activities alongside the direct teaching of early reading, writing, mathematical and other skills. Every activity is seen as a learning opportunity with staff eager to enhance children's communication skills at every opportunity. All these factors result in children learning and achieving well and thoroughly enjoying themselves.
11. One of the reasons why standards are often high in English is because reading and writing skills are taught in a direct and systematic manner. From an early age, pupils are taught how to use different strategies to tackle unfamiliar words. These skills are then developed as pupils get older resulting in many pupils developing good higher order reading skills and being expressive and fluent readers by the time that they leave school. The emphasis that the school has placed on improving standards in writing is paying dividends and this is because of the way in which pupils are taught a good range of skills to enable them to write for a variety of audiences and purposes. Teaching also looks closely at the writing stimuli with particular attention paid to writing stimuli that capture and hook the attention and motivational levels of boys. Writing standards have also improved because of the way in which many teachers expect pupils to use their writing skills to good effect in other areas of the curriculum such as

writing up experiments, writing instructions in design and technology or a descriptive piece of writing about castles in history. Teachers also stress the importance of pupils using their numeracy skills in other subjects, such as the accurate measuring in science, the drawing of graphs or in establishing co-ordinates in geography.

12. The good and often very good standards that are attained in mathematics and science owe much to the fact that teaching taps into pupils' sense of enquiry and provides many opportunities for pupils to learn through investigative and problem solving activities. This gives pupils a greater understanding of mathematical and scientific concepts and teaching is at its best when pupils' skills and knowledge are tested out in meaningful and relevant mathematical activities. In science the good quality of teaching expects the pupils to put their acquired knowledge to good use by testing out hypotheses and explaining why things happen as they do.
13. The school is currently evaluating different teaching methods in recognition of the fact that different pupils learn in different ways. This is proving particularly successful in Years 1 - 2 where teachers encourage pupils to develop specific thinking skills to tackle different situations, tasks or activities and to develop a greater responsibility for their own learning. Throughout the school, teachers plan work well and it is well matched to the different abilities of the pupils. This means that tasks that are set are often challenging and demanding and ensure that pupils achieve well. Occasionally, where this is not the case, pupils lose a little interest and do not pay as much attention as they should or become a little passive in their learning. Teachers have also recognised the need to re-emphasise to some pupils the social conventions that apply to good speaking and listening standards, as this element of English is not as strong as reading and writing. In addition, there is a need for consistent opportunities for pupils to take part in more complex discussions and debates and drama and role-play activities. There are, however, many other occasions in lessons where the subject knowledge of the teachers lights up the room and the enthusiasm with which they teach engrosses the pupils from the start of the lesson to the end. Such examples were seen in many subjects, such as music, history, geography and art and design. In such an environment pupils cannot help but achieve well.
14. A major strength in teaching is the contribution made by teaching assistants. Throughout the school the teaching assistants are skilled and highly effective practitioners. They work very well with teachers but equally use their initiative to great effect. They take an active part in all elements of lessons, enabling the less able pupils to take an inclusive role in the lesson through the modifying of questions, through cajoling and through the constant building up of confidence and self-esteem. Teaching assistants question the pupils sensitively but concisely and the pupils are left in no doubt as to what is expected of them both in terms of the quality of their work and in the effort they are to put in. The contribution that teaching assistants make to how well pupils achieve is significant. Throughout the school the quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs and higher attaining and gifted pupils is equally good and results in pupils making good strides in their learning.
15. Very effective procedures are in place for assessing and tracking pupils' progress in English and mathematics and these impact most positively on how well pupils achieve. Although there is no need for such detailed procedures to be in place for all other subjects, the situation at present in the school relies too heavily on informal strategies which do not give a clear enough indicator of where individual pupils are in their learning and achievement. This means that there is not enough information available to help plan the next steps in learning for individual or small groups of pupils who may be at very different points on the learning continuum in different subjects.

The curriculum

The curriculum provided is good and is a strength of the school. It provides a fully inclusive formal curriculum and **very good opportunities for enriching pupils' learning opportunities** through extra-curricular activities and a vibrant range of visits and visitors. **There is a very good match of teacher expertise and support staff**, which makes a significant contribution to the way pupils learn.

Main strengths and weaknesses.

- The range of learning opportunities for pupils in Years 1 - 6 and curriculum provision in the Foundation Stage are very good.
- Provision for special educational needs is good.
- The range of extra-curricular activities is very good.
- Preparation for next stage in education, and admission of children to Reception Class is very good.
- The range of expertise of teachers to meet the demands of the curriculum is very good.
- The support staff are high quality, very well trained and enthusiastic.

Commentary.

16. The curriculum and opportunities for enriching pupils' learning have improved since the time of the last inspection. The curriculum is well planned and takes account of the differing abilities of pupils and the fact that pupils learn in different ways. Consequently, pupils of all ages achieve well. Provision for the Foundation Stage is very good and prepares the children very well for the National Curriculum. The good breadth of curriculum provision for pupils in Years 1 - 6 is enhanced well by the very good extra-curricular activities offered by the school. There are plenty of opportunities for pupils to participate in music and the arts and to take part in inter-school sporting competitions. Many pupils learn to play a musical instrument and participate in musical events and concerts. Educational day and residential visits are arranged to support the teaching of the topics studied, and the experiences gained are very well utilised by the teachers to reinforce the learning on return to school in class lessons and as a basis for attractive displays. An innovation, which is particularly beneficial to the teaching and learning, has been the introduction of special days and weeks to support the study of particular topics. Pupils benefit from a wide range of visits to places of historical, geographical or artistic interest. Numerous visitors, including theatre companies, musicians, arts and crafts people, and members of the local community come into the school and share their experiences and skills with the pupils. Not only do all these enrichment activities have a positive effect on pupils' achievement, but they also make a very good contribution to their social and cultural development. There is also good provision for personal, social and health education, which is having a very positive effect on the good behaviour and attitudes of the pupils.
17. The curriculum is totally inclusive and all pupils have access to every aspect. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Pupils' work is carefully planned to match their needs and they receive very good support in class from the very skilful teaching assistants, and as a result they work confidently and achieve well. Curriculum provision is just as well planned for the higher attaining and identified gifted and talented pupils, which means that they are able to fulfil their potential.
18. The school has developed good links with other local schools and the secondary schools to which pupils transfer at the age of 11. By the time that pupils leave the school they are very well prepared academically, personally and socially for the next

stage of education. There is a good range of qualifications among the teaching staff and the very good use of their expertise makes a significant contribution to the rich and full curriculum and learning opportunities that the school provides. The teaching assistants are of particular high quality and are deployed very well throughout the school to the benefit of the pupils. Resources are good. They are in good condition, well stored and easily accessible. The accommodation is safe and attractive and the development of the outdoor area for the reception children, the wild life area, the computer suite and the library facilities are all improvements since the time of the last inspection which are impacting most positively on how well pupils learn and achieve.

Care, guidance and support

The very good relationships seen in this school between all parties are a strength that drives the caring, safe ethos created. Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is very well planned and carried out to create a backcloth of support that reinforces the confidence felt by pupils. **The way in which the children themselves are involved and integrated into the work and development of the school is excellent. Good support, advice and guidance are provided for pupils.**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is excellent involvement of pupils in the work of the school and in valuing the views of the pupils.
- There are very good relationships throughout the school.
- The school has a very good ethos.
- There are very good induction arrangements.
- The school provides a very safe and secure environment with high levels of attention paid to Health & Safety, Child Protection and other care issues
- The school gives encouragement to nurturing individual development

Commentary

19. The school makes very good efforts to ensure a safe, secure and caring environment within its boundaries. This is greatly assisted by the very good relationships within the school and the already noted interdependence of all parties within the school community. Issues such as child protection, health and safety, welfare, are all very effectively and efficiently handled with all necessary monitoring and recording taking place meticulously. Parents are very confident in the fact that this is a school which places a high priority on the welfare and well-being of pupils. Many of the strengths identified at the last inspection have been maintained and in many instances built upon.
20. Excellent induction arrangements are made for children starting in the Foundation Stage. An excellent, informative booklet has been produced for parents and visits are organised prior to entry. As a result the children are keen to start school and settle in very quickly and confidently. Very good arrangements are in place to make the transition to secondary school as easy as possible. The school even applies these principles to the movement from year to year within Richard Taylor, with insights given to both pupils and parents on what to expect when they return from summer holidays. The very good personal guidance, drawing upon the very good relationships that staff have with pupils, and the close community feel of the school all assist in creating the effective personal development of all pupils and contribute much to the quality of pupils' learning.

21. An outstanding feature of care in this school is the way pupils are involved, consulted and their views acted upon in so many aspects of school planning. The school council, now well established, is a true example of 'pupil democracy' and a wonderful vehicle for developing pupils' responsibility and maturity. It is one of many imaginative, internal bonds that hold this close community together so well. Talking to the pupils reveals an unusually strong identification with the school's policies, actions and values and an underlying sense of commitment to this community of the school. The manner in which pupils' views are sought, valued, respected and acted upon does much to underpin the very good relationships that are a significant feature of the school and reflect the high levels of respect that all staff and pupils have for one another.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community.

The partnership between school and parents is very good and impacts most positively on many aspects of the school's activities. The school also nurtures, very successfully, many very positive links with the local community and other organisations to the benefit of both. **Very good links are in place with other schools, nurseries and colleges.** All of these links impact very positively on pupils' learning.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are very appreciative and are proud of what the school provides.
- The partnership with the parents is very good and has a positive impact on children's learning and everyday life and work of the school.
- There is very good communication with parents.
- There are very good links with other schools, institutions and the local community.

Commentary

22. Links with parents are very good indeed and have improved since the time of the last inspection. The views expressed in the parents' questionnaire were very favourable. The parents' meeting was an extremely positive event with some very impressive statements of support and praise covering teaching, progress, the care of pupils, behaviour, inclusion, information provided and many other issues. All parents attested to the warm support and welcoming pastoral care. The 'one community' theme was often mentioned, embracing staff, parents and children. Very few comments of any criticism were heard from any parents. Bullying was mentioned by some parents through the questionnaires and this was very carefully followed up during the inspection. All evidence obtained – especially that gained from talking to pupils themselves - points to this having been a problem in the past. All pupils spoken to now state that it is not an issue.
23. Communication from the school to the parents is generally of a high standard. Newsletters are sent out regularly and information is provided in good time and is thorough. The staff are very approachable and are always available to meet with parents should they have any concerns about their child's academic or personal development. Parents are kept very well informed about school life and how to help children with learning at home. The school is presently looking at the reports regarding pupils' academic and personal achievements that are sent home at the end of the year. Although they are good, the school is eager to improve them so that they match what the parents want in terms of detail and insight whilst at the same time evaluating the time taken by staff to write the reports. The good quality school prospectus provides a good insight for prospective parents into all that the school has to offer. Communications to parents have also included several good initiatives to help parents

understand how the school is teaching its pupils and how the parents can help. In particular, the school provides a very good booklet issued before entry into reception and another first class leaflet on the teaching of numeracy. Parents also spoke highly of a course entitled 'Keeping up with the Kids!' – a ten week course on how to help with and support children's learning. The school works very hard to inform parents and deepen their understanding of how children learn and achieve.

24. Not surprisingly with this very positive partnership, there is substantial impact of these relationships upon the school and pupils' learning. Many parents help in class, assisting on visits, making 'Story Boxes' and helping in many other ways. Parents also help indirectly through raising money and running social events. The quality of links with the local community is equally good. Church links are good and also exist across other denominations and faiths. Local organisations and community and public services are used well to enrich pupils' learning. The school is involved in events such as the Harrogate Music Festival and local galas. It also participates on local radio, and supports many local charities. Such links also extend further afield, including Sri Lanka. Links to other educational establishments are also very good. There are strong links with local secondary schools with frequent visiting and good induction procedures. A local teacher-training establishment uses the school for placements and many such partnerships are encouraged. All these links enhance the curriculum, stimulate learning and impact most positively on how well pupils achieve both personally as well as academically.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school is very good overall. The leadership of the headteacher is excellent and the governance of the school very good. The school has a dedicated staff with a strong sense of purpose and a very positive commitment to continuous improvement. This is the main reason why this school is very effective.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The leadership given by the head teacher is excellent. She has a very clear, realistic vision of what makes a very good school, and has successfully communicated this to the governing body, staff, pupils and the community. Very well thought out strategic planning is making this vision a reality.
- The governing body has a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and makes a very good contribution to shaping the vision and direction of the school.
- The senior team and other staff with responsibilities make a good contribution to how well pupils achieve. Subject co-ordinators are knowledgeable and committed to improving standards and provision in the areas for which they carry responsibility, although there is still scope for further development in the role of some subject co-ordinators.
- The head teacher and governing body have created a very effective team spirit in the school with a very strong sense of purpose and commitment to continuous improvement and maintaining high standards.
- Criteria for the evaluation of significant expenditure are not yet sufficiently rigorously linked to improvements in the pupils' performance in areas such as information and communication technology.

Commentary

25. The headteacher provides excellent leadership of the school. She has a very clear vision for the school and how its development will take place and is strongly committed to making sure that the full breadth of the curriculum is taught to the pupils. Her leadership has been the critical factor in the way in which the school successfully approaches its work. A very strong sense of teamwork has been established that now underpins the work and life of the school. For example, the determination of all staff to raise standards in improving the provision of information and communication technology and design and technology since the last inspection is impressive. One of the main reasons why the school has improved since the last inspection is that under the astute and determined leadership of the headteacher, all staff are fully aware of what needs to be done to improve pupils' achievements, strategies have been put in place to ensure that this happens and all staff share a fierce commitment towards working towards and achieving the goals and targets that are set.
26. A good performance management system has been put in place that is sensitively linked to the school improvement plan. This makes sure that good use is made of the funds and time available to improve the skills, knowledge and understanding of the staff in the areas that are a priority for the school. The school makes very good use of the performance data from national tests and from monitoring lessons in English and mathematics and to a lesser extent science. Teaching is being monitored well both formally and informally, although there is room for more of this monitoring to be undertaken by co-ordinators following appropriate training. Co-ordinators monitor planning and sample pupils' work regularly, to assess the pupils' attainment and the progress that they are making. This work is well advanced in English and mathematics and plans are in place to ensure that this very good practice is used in other subjects. The management of special educational needs, provision for the higher attaining pupils, and the provision for children in the Foundation Stage are very good in ensuring that the needs of all pupils are met and in ensuring that the school fulfils its aim to be a fully inclusive school.
27. The governors have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and make a very good contribution to the management of the school. They ensure that the school fulfils its statutory duties and requirements in full. Through discussion in committee, visits and their own research they have become very well informed and well placed to make key decisions. The governing body is confident to challenge the senior management team. This results in a healthy culture where the pupils' needs are the prime consideration.
28. The school improvement plan is good. The objectives and priorities are accurate, as are the strategies identified intended to be used for their achievement. These have been derived by a combination of monitoring, perceptive analysis and very good evaluation. The plan is costed and, through the school's effective arrangements and procedures for performance management, training is built into the programme to make sure that all staff are kept up to date.
29. Very efficient use is made of the funds that are allocated to the school. Financial administration and management are very good. An audit was carried out three years ago. The procedural issues raised were dealt with very quickly. The very good quality information made available by the school administrators enables good control of day-to-day expenditure and of longer term spending. Good use is being made of grants that are earmarked for specific purposes such as special educational needs. The governing body uses the school improvement plan well to guide their spending. It enables them to chart their progress effectively towards the goals that they have set.

Some success criteria need further refinement to explicitly detail what improvements in the pupils' performance can be expected following the purchase of major items such as reading materials or information and communication technology equipment. There are several instances of the governing body using the principles of 'best value' to ensure, through their monitoring procedures, that the resources that the school has at its disposal are used efficiently. As a result of this, and taking many other factors into account, the school continues to provide very good value for money.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	568 548	Balance from previous year	55 310
Total expenditure	584 465	Balance carried forward to the next	39 393
Expenditure per pupil	2157		

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The quality and provision for education in the Foundation Stage is very good. When the children come into school their attainment covers the full ability range and is at an average level overall. The good and at times very good teaching, the very good leadership and the role played by the high quality teaching assistants all help to ensure that children of all abilities achieve well.

Personal, social and emotional development

Provision is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good teaching and awareness of needs of young children.
- Excellent relationships.
- Very good classroom organisation.
- Pupils are well prepared socially and emotionally for the next stage of their education.

Commentary

30. Provision is very good and most children will achieve the Early Learning Goals, with a significant majority going beyond this. This is mainly due to the very good teaching and to the strong emphasis placed on this aspect by all the adult team.
31. Classrooms are orderly and the children are well managed so they feel secure and happy in the calm but suitably challenging atmosphere the teachers have created. They soon discover that school is good fun and they become eager to learn.
32. Many children have above average skills on entry and the teachers build well on this. They have a high expectancy of behaviour and provide plenty of good opportunities for the children to make decisions and take the initiative. As a result, children are self-assured and soon become very proficient in choosing toys, activities and materials independently.

Communication, language and literacy

Provision is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching.
- A good range of teaching styles and methods used.
- Good range of activities and resources.
- Good early emphasis given to developing children's phonic skills.

Commentary

33. When children start school they listen well but a significant number are less competent in speaking and communicating their ideas and needs. The good teaching, however, and the methods adopted, enable most children to achieve the Early Learning Goals

before the end of the year. The teachers make excellent use of the many opportunities that arise throughout the day to extend the children's vocabulary and speaking skills.

34. The early and enjoyable introduction to phonic sounds through "Jolly Phonics" is providing a very good basis for the development of their reading skills. Children's writing skills are developed well through the good quality of teaching. At an early stage they make marks on paper to convey meaning through their purposeful play activities and most quickly learn to write their own name and copy letters. By the end of the year a majority are able to form simple sentences

Mathematical development

Provision in mathematical development is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good knowledge of teachers and support staff.
- Good provision of purposeful play activities which are imaginative and enjoyable.
- Good use of opportunities to utilise mathematical vocabulary.
- Good range of resources.

Commentary

35. Children's mathematical skills are developed well and by the time children enter Year 1 most have achieved the Early Learning Goals, with a minority reaching standards beyond this level. Teaching is good which ensures that children achieve well. The good quality teaching means that counting objects and people is a regular feature of classroom routines and the children are provided with many good opportunities to learn a range of songs and rhymes to reinforce their understanding of numbers and addition and subtraction. Children engage in a wide range of mathematical activities using interesting resources, for counting, sorting, colour and shape recognition, which they thoroughly enjoy. This purposeful play is well supported by all the adults who very effectively promote the development of sound mathematical concepts and language at every opportunity. The emphasis that the staff place on children learning through practical activities as well as through guided teaching and learning means that children get a good early grasp of mathematical concepts.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

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

- Good teaching.
- Good range of experiences planned
- Good balance between directed and independent learning.
- Good range of resources.

Commentary

36. Children, on entry, have an average knowledge and understanding of the world in which they live, but the range of experiences offered to them in their reception year means they make good progress and achieve well, with a majority successfully attaining the Early Learning Goals. Teaching is good and often very good. The very good range of resources, especially large and small construction toys, captivate the interest and imagination of the children and enable the children to learn, through first hand experiences. In both classrooms the children have access to two computers and

confidently make use of suitably well-chosen programmes to develop their skills. In all these activities a good balance is maintained between allowing children to experiment, discover and problem solve for themselves and adults intervening and skilfully utilising the opportunities afforded, to extend the children's curiosity, understanding and language development.

Physical development

Provision in physical development is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching
- Good, safe outside play area.
- Good range of wheeled toys.
- Good range of resources for developing fine motor skills.

Commentary

37. The varied, enjoyable activities provided for physical development and the good quality of teaching and learning enable children to achieve well and reach the Early Learning Goals by the end of their reception year. Good use is made of a range of small apparatus and children learn to skip and become increasingly skilful with balls, hoops, beanbags and skittles. The children thoroughly enjoy the recently introduced sessions of braingym, which not only increases their accessibility to learning in general, but also helps them learn how to move their bodies well in the space available. Fine motor skills are constantly being taught well. The good quality teaching allows the children to play and experiment freely but at the same time adults are always ready to provide additional adult help if necessary.

Creative development

Provision in creative development is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good enthusiastic teaching.
- Good range of purposeful activities.
- Enthusiasm of children.

Commentary

38. Children's ability in this area is average on entry but they make good progress throughout the year and most will attain the Early Learning Goals. The good quality of teaching ensures that children soon learn a good range of creative skills which enable them to create good quality pieces of work. Many good opportunities are provided for the children to sing together in the classroom or with the rest of the Key Stage 1 pupils. The songs often help with their learning of phonics or number concepts and are always with the enthusiastic participation of the children. They have access to percussion instruments with good opportunities for free experimentation and more guided experiences. The role-play areas are very well equipped and encourage the children to play imaginatively and develop their social and language skills well.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision for English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses.

- Standards are above average and pupils of all abilities achieve well.
- The quality of teaching is good.
- Teaching assistants make a significant contribution to how well pupils learn and achieve.
- Very good procedures are in place for target setting and assessing and tracking pupils' progress.
- The subject is well led and managed.
- Standards in speaking and listening are not high enough.

Commentary

39. National Curriculum test results over time show that by the time that pupils leave school they attain standards that are well above average and at times very high, in the top 5 per cent of schools nationally. The school often performs equally well when compared to similar schools. In the 2002 National Curriculum tests, standards in reading and writing at the end of Year 2 showed that attainment was well above the national average and well above average compared to similar schools. Inspection findings show that standards are above average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This does not suggest that standards are falling but simply reflects the differences in natural ability of the different groups of pupils. Standards are set to rise again in subsequent years. The important factor is that all pupils, including the higher attaining pupils and pupils with special educational needs, achieve well. Inspection findings also show that there is no significant difference in attainment between boys and girls. Improvement since the last inspection has been good.
40. Pupils achieve well in school because of the good and at times very good teaching, the leadership and management of the subject and the very good procedures that are in place for assessing, tracking and setting targets for pupils. Teaching is equally good for pupils of all abilities and so ensuring that all pupils achieve equally well. Standards are very good in reading because of effective teaching and very good support from home. From an early age pupils are directly taught reading skills that enable them to tackle unfamiliar words and phrases and to gain a good understanding of texts. By the time that pupils leave school many are very competent readers. Pupils read with a high level of expression and understanding with the highest attaining pupils able to read and understand beyond the literal level. Pupils are taught well, skills such as skimming and scanning and referencing skills.
41. Writing skills are taught equally well and this is a key factor for the continuing rise in standards in writing. A good balance is struck between teaching pupils a structured approach to writing and not stifling pupils' creativity. The teachers provide a good range of writing stimuli that motivate and enthuse the pupils. Particular attention has been paid over time to selecting titles and purposes of writing that capture the interest and imagination of boys. Teachers throughout the school set high expectations and pupils respond well to this. Many pupils are keen and enthusiastic learners who behave very well and are keen to achieve to the best of their potential. The introduction of writing targets and regular assessments of pupils' writing are proving to

be successful initiatives which reinforce to the pupils the responsibility that they have for their own learning. The marking of pupils' work is often good and at times very good. The important factor is that pupils are often only too ready to act on the comments and as a result improvements are visible and pupils' achievement is enhanced.

42. Standards in speaking and listening are satisfactory. The school has already identified in its school improvement plan the need to raise standards in this area. Although many pupils are attentive listeners and are always willing to make their views known in discussions a few pupils do not always listen to the contributions of others or are a little reluctant to offer their views. Teaching is at its best in this area when open-ended questioning is used skilfully and pupils are prompted to expand on their answers or more complex discussions, debates or drama and role play are used to prompt better responses from the pupils.
43. Teaching assistants play a most important contribution to how well pupils learn. Their help and support enable the lower attaining pupils to achieve well. Their input is often demanding and challenging and yet at the same time responds sensitively to the individual needs of the pupils. Although they work very closely with teaching staff they use their initiative very well and the winners are always the pupils who invariably make big strides in their learning.
44. The subject is well led and managed. Good procedures are in place for monitoring teaching and learning through direct lesson observation and scrutiny of teachers' planning and pupils' work. The co-ordinator has a very good grasp of the areas for development in the subject. Very good procedures are in place for assessing and tracking pupils' progress and information from these analyses is used to target support where the need is greatest or to ensure that a greater level of challenge is provided for some pupils. Very good procedures are in place for analysing test and assessment data with careful attention paid to factors such as gender and pupil mobility. Target setting procedures are equally good and are used most effectively to have the biggest possible impact on pupils' attainment and achievement.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

45. The school promotes language and literacy well across the curriculum. Teachers are effective in exploiting writing opportunities in other subjects of the curriculum such as in history, science and design technology and this is impacting on how well pupils achieve. The push is now on to exploit every opportunity to enhance pupils' speaking and listening skills in a similar way.

MATHEMATICS

Provision for mathematics is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses.

- Pupils of all abilities achieve well and standards are above average.
- The good quality of teaching.
- Very good leadership and management of the subject with very good procedures in place for assessing and tracking pupils' achievements.
- The high levels of expertise of teaching assistants and the impact that they have on how well pupils achieve.

- Not all pupils are aware of their individual targets.

Commentary

46. Pupils of all abilities achieve well. Standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are above average. Throughout the school pupils have well developed numeracy skills. Younger pupils reach above average standards in their accuracy of calculation and recognition of number sequencing and patterns. Pupils use mathematical language well. Older pupils have a good understanding of computation and place value and reach good standards in shape, measures and data handling. Standards over time for pupils in Year 6 have often been very high with standards being in the top 5 per cent of schools in the country. Attainment has also been very good when compared to similar schools. Standards at the last inspection were well above average. The situation at present does not suggest a fall in standards but reflects the differences in natural ability between the different groups of pupils and improvement in provision in the subject has been good since the last inspection. Inspection evidence shows that there are no significant differences between the attainment of boys and girls.
47. The good levels of achievement and the good learning opportunities that pupils benefit from are as a result of the good quality of teaching throughout the school. The teachers are enthusiastic, have good subject knowledge, and match the work well to the different abilities of the pupils, setting high standards and providing suitable levels of challenge. The classroom assistants have received specific training in mathematics and this enables them to provide high quality support to small groups of pupils. Basic skills are taught very competently with a good emphasis placed on the appropriate methods and strategies to be adopted and the correct mathematical vocabulary. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to learn through practical and investigative activities where pupils put their numeracy skills to good and effective use. Very effective reinforcement and new learning takes place in mental agility sessions, which the teachers manage very well. Assessment processes have also been used effectively to set the pupils in Years 3-6 for mathematics for one lesson a week. This is a new innovation, which is working well and is helping to raise standards further. The work in these lessons is very well matched to the needs and abilities of the pupils. The pupils apply themselves well and when questioned, express their enjoyment in the subject and agree that the level of difficulty provided is suitably challenging. Lessons throughout the school are generally well structured and move at a good pace, although on occasions some teachers spend too long on explanation and do not allow enough time for the pupils to work on examples. Marking of pupils' work is good and often includes suggestions for improvement but there is no consistent system for referring to the pupils' individual targets to help them achieve even better.
48. The good relationships the teachers maintain with the pupils, providing positive support and encouragement, mean that most pupils are enthusiastic about mathematics and work hard in lessons, concentrating well and are willing to answer questions. They are particularly enthusiastic when recording answers to quick-fire mental problems. They take pride in their written work and understand the value of neat presentation; as a result their books are well organised, tidy and legible. All these factors impact most positively on how well pupils learn and achieve.
49. The quality of leadership and management in the subject is very strong and does much to promote the good standards achieved. The co-ordinator has good knowledge and expertise, which she shares very effectively with her colleagues, through monitoring the teaching and learning in lessons and scrutinising the pupils' books. Results of national tests are carefully analysed so that suitable aspects of the curriculum can be focused upon in order to generate a rise in standards. Very good

procedures are in place overall for assessing and tracking pupils' progress and for setting targets for improvement. Planning is good and the valuable innovation of the assessment book system is proving to be a valuable aid to tracking individual progress and a very useful guide for future planning.

Mathematics across the curriculum

50. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to apply their mathematical skills in other subjects. Good links are made in information and communication technology where pupils construct graphs and pie charts and pupils use a good range of computer programs to support and enhance their learning. Pupils' mathematical skills are also put to good use in subjects such as geography, science and design and technology.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses.

- Standards and achievement are good.
- Teaching is good in science, especially in Years 1 and 2.
- There is a good scheme of work appropriately adapted from the national schemes which enhances pupils' learning and achievement.
- Assessment and monitoring are not rigorous enough.

Commentary

51. Results in science over time have been very good in national tests, with the pupils often attaining results that compare very favourably with both national averages and those of similar schools. Results have on occasions put the school in the top 5 per cent of the school's nationally. Standards seen during the inspection of the present Year 2 and Year 6 are above average with pupils having a good knowledge of, for example, materials and their properties and physical processes. Throughout the school pupils of all abilities achieve well because of the good quality of teaching and the good planning and curriculum provision which ensure that pupils' scientific and investigative skills develop at a good rate alongside the systematic development of their scientific knowledge. There is no significant difference in attainment between boys and girls. The difference between inspection findings and past test results can be explained by the difference in natural ability of the different groups of pupils.
52. The school has established an effective science curriculum which ensures that the pupils are taught the subject systematically and rigorously. Adaptations have been made to the national scheme of work to make sure that the work the pupils are covering is appropriate to the school and the needs of pupils. Plenty of opportunities are provided for scientific enquiry. Work is often modified to fit in with pupils' topic work or adapted so that the pupils can make better use of an educational visit. It is this attention to detail which is one reason why the pupils are doing well.
53. The good teaching has some distinctive features and impacts well on pupils' learning and achievement. At the time of the inspection it was very close to the start of the term and usually the second lesson of the unit of work. Teachers were nevertheless very careful in their recap at the start of the lesson to remind the pupils of the area of study and reminded them of what they had done already. This helped all the pupils

concentrate well and especially in classes with younger pupils focus on the subject they were about to study. The best questioning allowed the pupils to draw from their own experiences. The opportunities that are provided for pupils to learn through experiments gives them a better understanding of scientific concepts and to understand a fair test and for the older pupils to initiate their own investigations. Investigations are often well planned and pupils successfully test their hypotheses and draw scientific conclusions. Such activities also enthuse and motivate the pupils and engender a genuine scientific inquisitiveness which contributes much to the quality of pupils' learning and achievement. Work is often well matched to pupils' ages and abilities. Good teaching takes place for younger pupils when pupils learn through practical experiences. Some good examples were seen of using information and communication technology to support learning in science, for example using graphs to show results.

54. Leadership and management of the subject are effective. The co-ordinator has a good grasp of the areas for development and improvement in the subject through scrutiny of teachers' planning and pupils' work although there is scope for monitoring to be improved through more direct classroom observations of teaching and learning and for more rigorous assessment procedures.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There has been a substantial improvement in the quality of provision since the last inspection. The curriculum is now taught systematically, regularly and well throughout the school.
- The school makes very good use of the resources available to it.
- Standards are now satisfactory and the pupils currently achieve well although over time achievement has been at a satisfactory level.
- Leadership in the subject is good and is enhanced by the role played by a teaching assistant who is very skilled in information and communication technology.
- Assessment is not yet systematically organised and relies on informal arrangements.
- Although there are some very good examples of computers being used to support learning in other areas of the curriculum, on other occasions opportunities are missed.

Commentary

55. The provision for information and communication technology has improved substantially since the time of the last inspection. This is because after the last inspection the school devised a very good strategic plan to improve provision and implemented it systematically. Also a good scheme of work has been written based on a national scheme. The school has adapted this scheme very effectively to the needs of the school. This has been very successful in helping to improve standards and to help ensure that pupils are now achieving well. Standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are at an average level. Pupils throughout the school have acquired satisfactory keyboard skills. Younger pupils know how to save and print work and are developing a greater awareness of computers in the wider world. By the time that pupils leave the school they are competent at data handling and presenting information in a range of formats. Pupils increasingly and successfully use computers

for research purposes and are beginning to recognise the potential and communicative power of the Internet.

56. The new resources available to staff are being used to very good effect both in and out of the classroom. The training that they have received as part of the strategic development of the subject is paying great dividends and teaching is often of a good standard because specific skills are taught in a direct manner and then opportunities provided for pupils to put these skills to good use in meaningful and relevant tasks which challenge pupils' thinking. Pupils thoroughly enjoy working with computers and rise to the challenges that are set for them. The school has also given much emphasis to the training of teaching assistants in the use of computers. This has proved a very successful initiative as teaching assistants are very effective in the classroom and give invaluable support to pupils in lessons and make a significant contribution to how well pupils are currently achieving.
57. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The subject co-ordinator has played a pivotal role in improving the provision and the standards and achievements of pupils since the time of the last inspection. He has a good grasp of precisely what needs to be done to improve the subject. His strategic planning and subject knowledge have been important factors in the development of the subject. He has been helped in the subject's development by a very enthusiastic and knowledgeable teaching assistant who has made a valuable and valued contribution to improving standards and achievement in the subject in addition to making an important contribution to pupils' learning in the classrooms. Assessment arrangements and procedures in the subject still remain to be properly established. Presently end of unit assessment lacks sufficient rigour.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

58. Plans to use information and communication technology to support other subjects have been incorporated into the schemes of work. This is proving effective in some subjects such as science and mathematics. In some instances opportunities are missed. For example in literacy, word processing often improves the appearance of a piece of work but in fewer instances was the writing of pupils enhanced by using word processing for drafting and refining their work.

HUMANITIES

Inspection findings are that provision in humanities is **good**.

History

Provision for history is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average and pupils achieve well.
- The curriculum planning has been adapted well from national guidance documents to meet the needs of the school.
- Good curriculum enrichment through visits and topic days in school.
- A lack of formal assessment procedures.

Commentary

59. Standards are above average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and pupils of all abilities achieve well. This maintains the position found at the last inspection. Year 2 pupils show good knowledge and understanding of some of the main events and people in history that they have studied. The pupils in Year 6 discuss the topics they have previously studied and demonstrate the good knowledge they have gained, in detail and depth. Achievement in both key stages is good. The pupils enjoy the subject and talk about their visits and visitors enthusiastically, all of which help to bring the subject to life and to give pupils a deeper understanding and greater knowledge of the periods of history that they have studied. Teachers are careful to ensure that the pupils' literacy skills are used effectively in their history lessons. The pupils' very well presented topic books demonstrate that a good emphasis is being placed on an enquiry approach to the subject which adds to pupils' achievement. Pupils' work is marked with useful evaluation comments from the teachers.
60. The history co-ordinator has a good overall view of the subject, but there is no systematic system in place to assess and track pupils' progress so that information gathered could be used to impact on pupils' attainment and achievement. The curriculum is well planned to cover all the required topics in the national curriculum using a suitably adapted national scheme to meet the specific needs of the school, using a two-year rolling programme. The coordinator has organised the resources for the subject very well in topic boxes containing books and artefacts and is keen to encourage the teachers to help pupils make more use of web sites when researching information for their history topics.

Geography.

Provision for geography is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses.

- Above average standards and good achievement.
- Good curriculum planning ensures that all aspects are covered in sufficient depth.
- Good curriculum enrichment through field trips.
- No formal assessment procedures are in place.

Commentary

61. Standards in geography are above expectation by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, as in the previous inspection, and achievement is good. Teachers emphasise the use of correct geographical vocabulary and the older pupils use it very effectively. The Year 1- 2 teachers recognise that pupils have their own experiences of the world and tap into their knowledge well, using good open-ended questioning techniques which enhance the knowledge of all pupils. Pupils have good geographical knowledge by the end of Year 6. The very good topic books from the previous year demonstrate that activities are generally enquiry based and pupils learn to use a range of ways to describe the world, using, for example, maps and diagrams as well as narrative descriptions. The emphasis that the school places on geographical enquiry as well as geographical knowledge helps pupils achieve well in the subject.
62. The pupils have access to a wide range of visual materials, and are given good concrete experiences outside the classroom on field trips. These good quality

resources and visits support the quality of pupils' learning as well as bringing a further dimension to pupils' personal and social development.

63. Curriculum planning is good and fully meets the demands of the national curriculum using the schools' adaptation of the national scheme of work. This good coverage gives pupils a good grounding in all aspects of the subject, but there are no formal procedures in place for assessing and tracking pupils' progress.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Overall, **provision is good.**

Art and Design

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards and achievement are good.
- Artistic skills are taught progressively, systematically and well.
- The subject makes a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development
- Good cross-curricular links.
- No formal assessment of pupils' progress.

Commentary

64. Attainment in art and design is above expectation by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, which is an improvement since the previous inspection. All pupils throughout the school achieve well. Curriculum planning is of a good standard and ensures that skills are taught in a systematic and rigorous manner. Much of the work is planned to enhance the teaching and learning of topics in other curriculum areas, which often give rise to lively and informative displays. Teachers have a good understanding of the subject and make very good use of the wide range of materials available and provide plenty of opportunities for the pupils to make choices and investigate ideas. As a result, the pupils produce very good original drawings, paintings, collages and patterns. Year 1-2 pupils' exploration of different textures of natural and man-made materials, has led to the making of good quality collage pictures of bark rubbings and the production of articles woven from variations and combinations of paper, cotton, wool and silk materials.
65. The subject makes a very good contribution to the pupils' spiritual and cultural development. Year 3-6 pupils have worked collaboratively to produce some very good collages of the places of worship for the main world religions and Year 1-2 pupils have created very attractive Tongan patterns. Very good use is made of the work of various world famous artists, whose painting styles are discussed, compared and reproduced with the pupils' own interpretation most effectively in Years 3-6.
66. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and has organised the resources and scheme of work very well to match the needs of the school. She leads the subject well and scrutinises the teachers' plans and examines samples of the pupils' work, although fewer opportunities have been provided for her to directly monitor teaching and learning in the classroom. The school identifies talented pupils and recommends them to attend

the gifted and talented summer schools, which are held in Yorkshire. There are no formal systems of assessment in the subject to track pupils' progress as they move through the school. The resources are very good and add to the quality of the pupils' learning experiences.

Design and technology

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

Main strengths and weaknesses.

- The provision for design and technology is satisfactory, a big improvement since the last inspection.
- Through the good leadership of the subject co-ordinator a good scheme of work is now in place which ensures that pupils prior learning is built on and developed.
- Assessment arrangements and procedures are over reliant on informal contact and do not yet provide information that is sufficiently detailed for teachers to use in planning future work.

Commentary

67. Standards in design and technology are at an expected level and the pupils' achievement is satisfactory. The provision that the school makes for the subject is much improved since the last inspection.
68. Design and technology is now being taught regularly throughout the school. This is another improvement since the last inspection. Several reasons account for this improvement, most of which can be linked to the leadership of the subject co-ordinator and the good strategic planning of the head teacher and the governing body. These include a very good scheme of work that has been adapted in detail to meet the needs of the pupils at this school. The scheme is particularly effective where work is imaginatively linked to topics pupils are studying in different subjects. The scheme also helps stimulate and captivate the interest of the pupils and gives the subject a relevance that is readily understood by them.
69. Good subject leadership has been a crucial factor in the improvements that have taken place. The co-ordinator's subject knowledge is very good and she has a good understanding of what might need to be done next to increase the performance of the pupils. A good practical example of this is the skills scheme of work that plans systematically for the pupils' skill development. Assessment arrangements are not rigorous enough as they rely too much informal contacts and discussion. Whilst this does yield some data on the pupils' performance more detail is needed to help teachers refine their planning of future units of work.

Music

Provision in music is **very good overall**.

Main strengths and weaknesses.

- Standards are well above the national expectation by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and all pupils achieve well.
- Consistently good teaching means that pupils' attitudes towards the subject are very good.

- Good leadership by the co-ordinator.
- A thriving peripatetic programme and a comprehensive out-of-school musical programme in the schools' extra-curricular activities.
- A very good scheme of work supports pupils' learning and achievement.
- Procedures for assessing and tracking pupils' progress are not rigorous enough.

Commentary

70. Standards are high in music because the subject is being taught well and teachers follow a very good scheme of work. Improvement has been good since the time of the last inspection. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6 pupils attain well above average standards in the performance, composing and appraisal elements of the subject. The scheme of work helps to provide a very good structure for units of work and results in lessons that are vibrant, exciting and interesting and encourage acute listening and careful thought.
71. Teaching has many strengths. All staff use the scheme of work as their main source of information and the very good quality of the scheme is one of the reasons why the pupils' achievements are high and they are doing much better than might usually be expected. Each lesson builds on the previous one carefully and over the unit of work there is a good balance between listening and appraising music and performing. The content of each lesson has a high musical content and from the start to finish the pupils are involved. Any input by the teachers is sharp and to the point and this gives the pupils the time to engage with the music and to form their own views and opinions. Much emphasis is also given to developing pupils' compositional skills.
72. The scheme of work has been tailored to the pupils needs in the school. This has been possible because the co-ordinator knows the potential of pupils and staff well and has adapted the national guidelines very successfully. As a result, the units of work are challenging, but attainable. A very good programme of extra-curricular music supports standards in this subject and makes a very good contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural provision in the school. This is seen in the school orchestra, beautiful tuneful singing in assemblies and the very effective peripatetic music programme where a wide range of instruments can be learned and where the pupils benefit from the very good teaching of the peripatetic music teachers that visit the school.
73. Assessment remains an area where improvement could be made. Whilst the informal procedures that at present lie at the heart of assessment are useful they do not provide the rigour that would be helpful for non-music specialists to plan tasks for pupils of differing musical abilities.

Physical education.

Overall provision in physical education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good standards and achievement because of good teaching.
- All aspects of the subject taught in depth with outdoor and adventurous activities being covered by field visits to residential centres.
- Participation in sport fixtures makes a good contribution to the overall social and cultural development of the pupils.

- Assessment arrangements and procedures are over reliant on informal links and discussions.

Commentary

74. Only a small number of lessons were seen during the inspection. The standards seen in these lessons were good. Pupils have developed good ball skills. They pass with accuracy and understand the need for tactics such as dodging and marking. Pupils of all ages have a good awareness of space and move with a good level of agility and show good poise and balance when carrying out floor work. The pupils achieve well. Swimming standards are good by the time that pupils leave the school. The school has maintained the standards since the last inspection. The last inspection also identified health and safety concerns in the hall which had furniture in the way. This has now been dealt with fully.
75. The full range of the required curriculum is taught at the school. In particular the pupils gain much confidence from the outdoor and adventurous activity part of the programme with a residential visit to a local centre. The school participates in a wide range of extra-curricular sporting activities. These, as well as including matches with local schools, also include a very active after school element. These are very much enjoyed and appreciated by the pupils. The level of sporting activity is high and makes a good contribution to the overall ethos of the school and makes a good contribution to the pupils moral, social and cultural education development.
76. The teaching seen was good overall. Teachers make sure that sessions have effective warm ups and cool downs and that the pupils understand why they are important. They also make sure that the pupils understand the importance of exercise. They encourage the pupils to think about what they are doing and through good feedback improve their performance. This means that the pupils know what they have to do to improve. Teachers make sure that all pupils are physically active and involved throughout all lessons. As a result of these characteristics the pupils enjoy their lessons and their attitudes to the subject are good. Assessment arrangements still lack rigour and more needs to be done to record what stage groups of pupils have reached so that future units of work have the right degree of challenge.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION.

77. Few opportunities were provided during the inspection to directly observe the teaching of this element of the curriculum. However scrutiny of planning, discussions with pupils and scrutiny of other school documentation indicates that provision is good. Pupils are provided with good opportunities to learn about the dangers of drugs and other substances. Sex education is catered for well both through the science curriculum and through visits from the school nurse. Initiatives such as healthy schools as well as much work covered in the science curriculum demonstrate well to pupils the importance of a healthy lifestyle. Many good opportunities are provided for pupils to discuss topics such as conservation, prejudice, bullying both in lessons and in circle time. An excellent feature of the school and one that contributes significantly to pupils' personal and social education and to the concept of the citizenship is the manner in which pupils' views are listened to, respected and taken on board. Nowhere is this better illustrated than through the school council. The council plays a very important and respected role in the life of the school and plays a major part in the decision making process. The workings of this body are an excellent, practical and relevant exercise in enhancing pupils' understanding of how democracy works.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	2
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	2
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	2
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The quality of education provided by the school	2
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	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
The leadership and management of the school	2
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	1
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	2
<i>Inspectors make judgements on a scale: excellent (grade 1); very good (2); good (3); satisfactory (4); unsatisfactory (5); poor (6); very poor (7).</i>	