

INSPECTION REPORT

BOROUGHBRIDGE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Boroughbridge

LEA area: North Yorkshire

Unique reference number: 121382

Headteacher: Mr D Roberts

Lead inspector: Mr K Bardon

Dates of inspection: 8th – 10th November 2004

Inspection number: 266458

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	238
School address:	York Road Boroughbridge York North Yorkshire
Postcode:	YO51 9EB
Telephone number:	01423 322208
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr P Harris
Date of previous inspection:	26 th April 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Boroughbridge Primary is an average sized school, pleasantly located just a short distance from the town centre. Two hundred and seven pupils attend full time and a further 31 children attend the nursery on a part time basis. The rural location of the town means that the school draws its pupils from a wide geographical area and a broad range of home backgrounds. Some live in the town itself, others in surrounding villages. A minority of pupils are from forces families and a small number travel a long distance from other towns. At times the school loses or gains a significant number of pupils because families have relocated to or from the area but there is no consistent pattern to this movement. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below the national average. Broadly speaking there are similar numbers of boys and girls. Six pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds and four are at an early stage in the learning of English. Forty-five pupils have special educational needs, mainly for learning and behaviour difficulties, which is average for a school of this size. Six pupils have a statement of special educational needs, which is an above average figure. None of the pupils are in public care. The school received national achievement and Investors in People awards in 2003 and a Healthy School award in 2004. It has been involved in a number of local and national initiatives and has achieved a Gold Award for School Projects and a Best Action for the Environment Award. Broadly speaking, children's attainment when they first enter the school is typical of the age group. During the inspection two of the five classes in Years 3 to 6 were taught by temporary teachers.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
11807	Keith Bardon	Lead inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Physical education English as an additional language
9843	Sarah Drake	Lay inspector	
30724	Delia Hiscock	Team inspector	English Art and design Design and technology Music Special educational needs
8839	Michael Egerton	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Science Geography History Religious education

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Boroughbridge Primary is a **good school** which is held in high regard by the local community. Standards are above the national average and pupils achieve well. The teaching is effective and a number of staff in the younger age classes are highly skilled. The school has a pleasant, productive atmosphere and staff and pupils get on well. The leadership provides clear direction and the school operates smoothly day to day. A broadly average amount is spent on each pupil's education and this represents good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- By Year 2, standards are very high, and, in all classes from nursery through to Year 2, pupils' achievements and the quality of teaching and learning are very good.
- Standards are generally above average by Year 6, but pupils' progress is slower in Years 3 to 6 than in the younger age classes because the teaching and learning are less effective.
- The school successfully includes all pupils in the learning opportunities it provides.
- Pupils benefit considerably from the work of the highly effective support staff.
- Standards in information and communication technology are rising but there is insufficient use of computers in many subjects.
- The provision for pupils' learning is enhanced significantly by the school's very productive partnership with parents and the local community.
- While the school improvement plan contains a considerable amount of relevant information it does not provide a clear, easy to use guide to strategic development.

Since it was last inspected in 1999 the school has made satisfactory progress. The key issues from the last inspection have been constructively addressed. In particular there have been significant developments in information and communication technology which have had a positive effect on pupils' learning. Pupils' performance in the national tests has improved, although standards at the end of Year 2 have been consistently higher than at the end of Year 6. The school buildings and grounds have seen major improvements, enhancing the learning environment for pupils and staff. The school has been involved in a wide range of local and national initiatives and successfully gained a number of prestigious awards.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Overall, pupils' achievement is good. Children achieve very well in the Foundation Stage and meet or exceed the targets for their age in all areas of learning by the end of their time in reception. The achievement of pupils in Years 1 and 2 is very good and by the end of Year 2 standards in reading, writing and mathematics are well above national expectations. Year 2 pupils perform well in the national tests and for the last two years results in writing have been in the top five per cent of schools nationally.

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
English	D	C	B	C
mathematics	C	C	B	C
science	C	C	A	C

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average.
The school and national results for 2004 have yet to be verified.
Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.*

Pupils' performance in the national tests improved in 2004 and results were higher than in any of the previous five years. By Year 6, standards in all aspects of English, mathematics and science are above national expectations. Pupils' achievement in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory in both English and mathematics and there is a steady rise in knowledge, understanding and skills. Pupils achieve well

in science and develop a good range of investigation skills. Standards in information and communication technology are broadly average and better than at the time of the last inspection. Pupils' understanding of how to use computers to help them learn in all subjects is the weakest aspect of their achievement in this subject. Pupils who have special educational needs receive effective support and maintain a similar rate of progress to that of other pupils. The school is decorated with many attractive pieces of art which pupils have produced. Throughout the school achievement in art and design is good and standards exceed expectations. Pupils who speak English as an additional language make very good progress in their reading, writing, speaking and listening.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good. They show positive attitudes to learning, work hard and readily contribute to lessons. Most pupils have a strong sense of responsibility and behave well. Levels of attendance are very good and pupils arrive at school punctually each day.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides its pupils with a good quality of education. Teaching and learning are good overall although they vary in quality and effectiveness across the school. In the nursery and reception and in Years 1 and 2 the teaching is very good and at times excellent. Teachers provide a stimulating range of lively activities which promote pupils' curiosity and excite their interest in new ideas. In Years 3 to 6 the teaching and curriculum are satisfactory but do not generate the same high level of enthusiasm as those provided for younger pupils. Consequently, pupils learn at a steadier pace in the junior classes. It is clear that in the past, some pupils in this age group have not been taught well enough and this has left them with weaknesses in their learning skills. They have difficulty concentrating and little inclination to think for themselves. The highly competent teaching assistants make a significant contribution to lessons, often supporting individual or specific groups of pupils to ensure that they have appropriate opportunities to learn. Pupils of all ages benefit from the well planned additional activities, visits and visitors that enrich the many aspects of the curriculum. Links with parents, and with other schools and the wider community are very good and support pupils learning both in and outside of school. Pupils are provided with a good level of care and welfare and staff monitor their development closely.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The quality of leadership and management is good. The headteacher leads the school with commitment and enthusiasm. Management by the headteacher and senior staff is good. Effective procedures for the day to day running of the school are in place and key decisions are securely based on accurate information. The length and format of the school improvement plan makes the information it contains more difficult to access than it should be. Governance is good and statutory requirements are met. Governors support the school well and ask challenging questions to stimulate further improvement. Finances are prudently managed and care is taken to ensure that the school obtains good value for the money it spends.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents have a high opinion of the school and of the quality of education it provides for their children. They enjoy being able to participate in the life of the school and appreciate the efforts staff make to involve parents in their children's learning. Pupils find school a friendly, welcoming place in which to learn and are happy to attend. They are proud of what the school stands for and of its achievements.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important things the school should do now are:

- Raise standards of achievement in Years 3 to 6 by providing pupils with more consistent and stimulating teaching and learning which is of a similar quality to that in the younger age classes.
- Make more effective use of information and communication technology as an aid to learning in all subjects.
- Construct a school improvement plan which provides a clear, easy to use guide to strategic development.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Pupils' achievement is good overall. In the nursery and reception classes and in Years 1 and 2 pupils achievement is very good. In Years 3 to 6 pupils' achievement is satisfactory. By Year 6 standards are generally above the national average and much the same as those attained by pupils in similar schools to Boroughbridge.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- As a result of very effective teaching and learning, pupils In Years 1 and 2 achieve very well in both English and mathematics.
- Although pupils' achievements are satisfactory in Years 3 to 6 they do not make as much progress as pupils in the younger age classes because the teaching and curriculum do not generate the same level of interest.
- Children are given a very good start by the provision made in the nursery and reception classes and as a result achieve very well in all areas of learning.
- Throughout the school, pupils' receive regular opportunities to experiment and investigate and their achievement in science is good.
- Pupils who have English as an additional language are provided with well structured opportunities to learn and as a result make rapid progress.
- Standards in information and communication technology have improved since the last inspection but pupils have yet to develop sufficient understanding of how to use computers to help them to learn.
- Well structured and interesting lessons enable pupils to achieve well in art and design.
- Well focused support enables pupils with special educational needs to learn effectively and to maintain a rate of progress equivalent to that of other pupils.

Commentary

1. In the national tests in 2004, Year 2 pupils attained results that were very high in writing and well above the national average in reading and mathematics. For the second year in succession the school's results in writing were in the top five per cent nationally. In comparison with schools in a similar context to Boroughbridge, pupils' performance was well above average in reading and writing and above average in mathematics. The proportion of pupils who attained at a level above expectations for their age was particularly good in all three subjects.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2004

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	17.7 (18.0)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	17.6 (17.6)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	17.8 (17.3)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 35 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. Year 2 pupils' impressive performance in the 2004 tests continued a trend of improvement which, over the last five years, has been above the trend in national standards. In contrast to many primary schools, there has been little difference in the results of boys and girls and none was found in the work seen during the inspection.

3. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are achieving very well. The solid base of attainment reported during the last inspection has been built upon and high standards maintained. Pupils' achievements in reading and writing are very good and by Year 2 standards are well above national expectations. Achievement in speaking and listening is good but standards are above rather than well above expectations because pupils enter school with weaknesses in their communication skills, some of which are still apparent at the end of Year 2. Standards in mathematics are well above national expectations and pupils achieve very well in all of the different areas of the subject. Pupils' achievement in science in Years 1 and 2 is good and by Year 2 standards are above the level expected.
4. The results attained by Year 6 pupils in the national tests in 2004 were an improvement on 2003 and higher overall than in any of the previous five years. Pupils' performance was above the national average in English and mathematics and well above average in science. On the basis of the results pupils attained when they took the tests as 7 year olds, this level of performance was much the same as that found in similar schools to Boroughbridge. Although there have been year on year fluctuations due to variations in the attainment of different cohorts of pupils, a pattern of improvement has been established and the trend in the school's results has been better than the national trend. The school has recognised that while a good proportion of pupils attain at an above average level in the tests the number who reach the expected level could be higher. Strategies have been put in place to ensure that pupils who have the potential to reach the expected level receive the support they need to do so.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2004

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.7 (27.0)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	28.2 (27.2)	27.0 (26.8)
science	30.2 (29.1)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 38 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

5. Overall, pupils' achievement in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory and has hovered around or a little below this level for some time. Standards in English and mathematics are generally above national expectations by Year 6 and in all aspects of these two subjects pupils' achievement is satisfactory. However, as the attainment of Year 2 pupils shows, pupils have the capacity for higher standards. At present the teaching in Years 3 to 6 promotes steady progress rather than the high rate found in other classes. Pupils achieve well in science in Years 3 to 6 because they acquire a good range of investigation skills. Year 6 pupils are currently attaining standards in science that are above average. This judgement is a grade below last year's test results but reflects a cohort with slightly fewer pupils working at an above average level.

Other aspects of standards and achievement

6. When allowance is made for Year 6 pupils who were absent from school and missed the tests in 2004, the school met its targets for pupils' performance in both English and mathematics. The school has set challenging targets for 2005 in order to promote a further rise in standards.
7. In general, when they first enter the school, many children have the expected range of basic skills, although their language and number skills are often better developed than their social skills. During their time in the nursery and reception classes, children achieve very well in all areas of learning and particularly so in their personal and social development. By the end of their time in the Foundation Stage many pupils are likely to have attained the Early Learning

Goals (the goals they are expected to reach by the end of Reception) and a minority will have already moved beyond and onto the early stages of the National Curriculum.

8. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) meet national expectations by Year 2 and Year 6, and across the school as a whole, pupils' achievement is satisfactory. This represents a marked improvement since the last inspection, particularly in Years 3 to 6 which has been achieved through better and more effective subject provision. There is however more to do to increase pupils' ability to use ICT as an aid to learning in different subjects.
9. Pupils' achievement in religious education is satisfactory and the attainment of most Year 2 and Year 6 pupils meets the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. The school is decorated with many attractive examples of pupils' art work and pupils of all ages attain at an above average level in art and design. It is not possible from the small number of lessons seen in design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education to make secure judgements of the standards pupils' attain. However, in none of these subjects was there anything that gave inspectors cause for concern.
10. Pupils with special educational needs maintain a rate of progress very similar to that of their peers, it is very good in Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory in Years 3 to 6. Pupils are fully included in all lessons and make most significant gains when they are supported individually or in small groups by the effective teaching assistants. The very small number of pupils who speak English as an additional language achieve very well. The support provided is very effective and gives these pupils the confidence to use and explore their rapidly developing understanding of English. The proportion of pupils who attain at an above average level in the national tests gives a positive impression of the achievements of higher attaining pupils. However, it is not possible to make a judgement of how well gifted or talented pupils achieve as the school has yet to identify clearly the pupils who fall into these two categories and to make specific provision for their learning.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are all good. Pupils behave well and their attendance and punctuality are very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Younger pupils, in particular, enjoy learning and are full of enthusiasm, while the response of older pupils is more muted.
- The very good quality of relationships throughout the school helps to create a pleasant and productive learning environment.
- There are good opportunities for pupils to extend their personal development.
- With very few exceptions pupils attend school regularly and punctually.

Commentary

11. Most pupils are happy at school and enjoy involving themselves in the different activities that are on offer. In general, the strengths identified in the last inspection report have been maintained. Older pupils' response to the questionnaire they filled in before the inspection was significantly less positive than that of younger pupils but those spoken with during the inspection were happy to talk about the interesting things that they had done and appreciative of their teachers' efforts and helpfulness. Although some strong teaching was seen in Years 3 to 6, overall, pupils' experiences in these year groups are less dynamic than those for pupils up to the age of seven, and they respond accordingly. In general, and particularly when activities are original and interesting, pupils of all ages listen well, are keen to take part, work hard and think about what they are doing. They are prepared to offer

suggestions and confidently talk about their work, because teachers value their efforts and praise them for trying, even if the answer is not always right. In almost all the lessons for younger pupils, there was an atmosphere of enjoyable busyness, with pupils and staff working as one, leading to pupils making rapid progress. Where the teaching is more pedestrian, pupils take time to settle, lack concentration and, while seldom misbehaving, show little enthusiasm for moving their learning on. Children in the nursery and reception classes make very good progress in developing the skills they need to work and play sociably and in harmony with others. Children's achievement in the personal, social and emotional area of learning is very good and the weaknesses many demonstrate when they first enter the nursery have been eliminated by the time they move into Year 1.

12. Pupils are friendly and form very good relationships with each other and with adults. Bullying or other harassment is rare and that, when it does occur, staff deal with instances swiftly and effectively. Older pupils understand that falling out and mending relationships are inevitable parts of growing up. Pupils who are new to the school, those with special needs and those who are of a different ethnic heritage from the majority are all made to feel very welcome and are fully included in activities. Staff are very good at encouraging pupils to take an active part in the community, both in school and in the wider neighbourhood, offering them plenty of responsibilities, from operating the fruit shop at break times to acting as road safety officers. Even the youngest children are self-confident about making decisions and have a very strong sense of equity about, for instance, distribution of treats or tidying up at the end of sessions. Pupils throughout the school are helpful to each other, co-operative with staff and collaborate well when, for example, undertaking scientific experiments. They also behave well so that there are very few disrupted lessons. During the most recent academic year, only one pupil was excluded; this was for brief periods, after much support from school and for entirely appropriate reasons. Staff generally use the school's clear behaviour management routines well, and are quick to help pupils remember what is, and is not, acceptable. The very good relationships and good behaviour mean that the school is a pleasant place for both staff and pupils to work in.

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	200	2	0
White – any other White background	2	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	2	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	1	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	1	0	0

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

13. All aspects of pupils spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good. Staff members' good questioning and example, together with good quality displays and the messages given in assemblies combine well to encourage pupils to develop their personal qualities. They are thoughtful readers and, particularly in personal and social lessons and arts subjects, they have plenty of opportunities to reflect on their feelings, actions and emotions. In an afternoon dedicated to celebrating Divali, younger pupils showed an unusually mature understanding of, for instance, the different movements of their dance, such as picking flowers or performing a welcoming step, and could readily relate them to the stories surrounding Hindu gods. Projects such as the improvement of the school grounds, Healthy Schools activities, the school council and Eco Warriors help pupils to develop a responsible attitude to life. Two pupils are independently organising a sponsored hula-hoop

to raise money for the victims of war in Sudan, and throughout the year, pupils are generous in their support of charities. Through English and history, for instance, they learn to consider others' points of view and the whole school atmosphere of enjoyment and respect helps pupils to mature into confident, pleasant young people.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year 95.1% (2003/4)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.78	School data	0.07
National data	5.08	National data	0.41

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

14. Over a number of years, pupils' attendance at school has been considerably above the national average. Few pupils are taken on holidays during term-time and most arrive regularly and in good time each morning, getting the day off to a good start. This means that teachers do not have to waste time repeating work that has already been covered, and that pupils can make uninterrupted progress in their learning.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides its pupils with a good quality of education. Generally good teaching is combined with a broad curriculum, effective care and welfare and very strong links with parents and the community.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

The quality of teaching and learning is very good in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2. In Years 3 to 6 the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Teachers make frequent assessments of pupils' work and use the information well when planning lessons.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Very effective teaching in the nursery and reception classes provides pupils with a secure start to learning at school.
- The consistency and high quality of the teaching in Years 1 and 2 enables pupils to make rapid progress in their learning.
- While the teaching in Years 3 to 6 is sound it often lacks the sparkle of that in other year groups.
- Teaching assistants make a significant contribution to pupils' learning.
- Some pupils in Years 3 to 6 are suffering the legacy of weak teaching.
- Although there are inconsistencies, most teachers use assessment constructively to determine what pupils need to learn next.

Commentary

15. Overall, there has been good improvement in the teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2 since the last inspection. Teachers have built successfully upon the strengths identified in the last report and improved further the provision made for pupils' learning.
16. Teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage are very good. Staff in the nursery and reception classes understand very well how young children learn best and provide them with a wide range of well planned activities that stimulate interest and aid the development of basic skills. Children learn very well because the colourful learning environment teachers provide stimulates their curiosity and encourages them to look, think and do. By the time children move into Year 1 a firm platform for future learning has been established.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 39 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2 (5%)	11 (28%)	13 (33%)	13 (33%)	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. One additional lesson was seen in which there was insufficient evidence to make a judgement about the quality of teaching.

17. The teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 are very good and build very successfully on this positive start. Pupils' learning is at the heart of all the decisions that teachers in these classes make. Consequently, the match of task to what pupils need to learn next is excellent. A key strength of the teaching is the high level of interest and enthusiasm that lessons generate. Pupils enter the classroom eager to know what the teachers have prepared for them and keen to get on with the task of learning new things. Teachers draw well on pupils' own ideas and provide good role models by listening to them carefully and valuing all contributions to discussions. The outcome is lively lessons with hard working pupils who concentrate hard in order to meet the challenging targets the teachers have set.
18. The teaching in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory overall, but does not stimulate learning as well as that in the younger classes. Teachers focus closely on an accurate delivery of the school's programmes of work. While this provides a sound platform for learning, after the lively, innovative activities pupils experienced in the younger classes lessons are more ordinary. Pupils' learning is less active and their rate of progress slows. When asked whether they found their lessons interesting and fun, pupils in Years 3 to 6 were far less positive than their younger colleagues. Good lessons are taught to this age group which have pace and challenge, but at other times the pace of learning is steady at best, leaving more that could have been achieved. On occasions there are weaknesses in lesson organisation which detract from their overall quality. Introductions go on too long and pupils are expected to retain too much information. When this happens the teacher has to spend time repeating and reinforcing instructions that could be better spent supporting or extending learning.
19. The close working relationship between teachers and teaching assistants benefits pupils' learning significantly. Teaching assistants have well defined roles and are given clear responsibilities by the class teachers, which they carry out conscientiously and with skill. Whether it is supporting pupils in class or taking small groups for focused activities, teaching assistants promote pupils' learning very effectively. Pupils have respect for the teaching assistants and generally work as hard for them as they do for their class teachers.
20. Since the last inspection the improvement made to teaching and learning in Years 3 to 6 has been inconsistent; satisfactory in most classes but unsatisfactory in others. In one particular class, pupils show clearly the negative effects of the inadequate teaching they have received in the recent past. Many pupils in this class lack the learning skills that others in the school often demonstrate. For example they are slow to get down to work and often have difficulty concentrating for any length of time. Many pupils show little inclination to work things out for themselves and the teacher whose class they are now in has to spend too much time ensuring that they are not distracting each other. This slows the pace of learning and limits what can be achieved in lessons.
21. There has been satisfactory improvement in the quality of assessment since the last inspection. As with other aspects of teaching and learning, the effectiveness of assessment varies across year groups. In the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2 it is a far more active process, with teachers gathering information constantly and utilising it quickly to fine tune their lessons. In Years 3 to 6, assessment is more formal and while teachers use the information they collect productively it does not have the same immediate impact.

The curriculum

The curriculum is good. The school provides a vibrant range of enriching activities for all its children that add refreshing qualities to pupils' studies. The school's accommodation and the quality and number of resources to support learning are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Children in nursery and reception classes and in Years 1 and 2 gain tremendously from a rich array of opportunities to learn, but the curriculum for older pupils is less stimulating.
- Personal, social and health education is planned well and pupils show good understanding of its relevance to their lives.
- Effective provision is made for pupils with special educational needs and teaching assistants add a great deal to their success.
- School and community activities enrich pupils' lives and widen the scope of their learning.
- The school's accommodation is hugely enhanced by the outdoor areas for learning;
- There are limited opportunities for pupils to use computers in other subjects.

Commentary

22. A good variety of experiences are planned to meet the needs of all the pupils and especially so in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2 where the quality of activities is very good. Here there is a breadth and momentum to activities that not only broadens the scope of ideas and opportunity for new skills but brings depth and challenge into pupils' work. For example, pupils in Years 1 and 2 talk excitedly and spontaneously about adverbs they find. Very good progress in pupils' reading and writing from nursery onwards sets a high standard of skill for their work in the juniors. Equally, these pupils handle data and carry out simple problems and investigations very well in mathematics and science.
23. These skills do not keep pace in the juniors and the activities are not as rich and varied. The curriculum for Years 3 to 6 is closely aligned to the extensive national guidelines that have been produced over the last few years. While this gives a solid base for learning it does not provide the highly motivating and innovative curriculum younger pupils enjoy. Nevertheless, the strengths in reading for pleasure and writing of stories continue into Year 3 and pick up momentum in Years 5 and 6 now because good planning has targeted areas that have been weaker in the recent past. Broadly speaking there has been satisfactory improvement to the curriculum since the last inspection, although more remains to be done.
24. The emphasis on children's personal, social and health education plays an important and successful role in the work of the school in delivering personal development. Pupils develop as secure individuals who flourish in their understanding of the implications of choice and decision-making in their lives. The approach is well planned and pupils have good opportunities to explore options with others, the best of which is often outside lessons. Important aspects such as sex and relationships and drug education form an integral part of the curriculum.
25. The school provides well for children who are identified as having special educational needs. In Years 1 and 2, these pupils make rapid progress because of huge strengths in teaching that quicken and widen the scope of their learning. All the pupils, including those in Years 3 to 6, benefit from the very effective support provided by teaching assistants, who make a significant contribution to the progress made by these pupils. This is because staff are well informed and skilled in their work. Pupils' work is closely tailored to their needs and builds good habits for learning in life. In some instances, junior pupils with specific needs make rapid gains in their literacy skills in a short time. The school is thoroughly committed to making sure that all of the pupils take a full part in whatever activities are provided and are relevant to them. As with other pupils, the pace of their progress varies from time to time in Years 3 to 6 because of the uneven quality of provision. Nevertheless, these pupils achieve

well in their time in school. The work provided for pupils with English as an additional language is closely matched to their individual needs and enables them to make rapid progress, particularly in acquiring the language they need to learn effectively in all subjects.

26. The school enriches the curriculum with many inspiring additional visits and visitors that help pupils to experience the richness in the arts, literature and the environment. Together with the local community, the school has thoughtfully designed gardens, mosaics and play areas and these bring a wealth of diversity into pupils' study and use of the outdoor environment, especially for children in nursery and reception. The good variety of activities beyond the school day forges beneficial involvement with the local community. The curriculum for ICT has improved since the last inspection and now covers all aspects of the National Curriculum programmes of study. However, in day to day studies, the scope of learning is hampered somewhat by limited access to computers to broaden study in other subjects. The use of ICT as an aid to learning is not a yet natural part of the school curriculum.
27. Since the last inspection there have been major developments to the buildings and grounds resulting in accommodation that is bright, welcoming and conducive to effective learning. Resources for learning are plentiful and of good quality and support the delivery of the curriculum well. The levels and quality of staffing are good.

Care, guidance and support

The school provides good levels of care, welfare, guidance and support for pupils and involves them very well in its developments.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- The school provides very well for the individual needs of pupils.
- Pupils are confident that their views will be taken into account and acted on.
- Although staff care for pupils well on a day to day basis, there is a need to tighten up some of the safety practices.

Commentary

28. In their responses both to the inspection questionnaire and at the pre-inspection meeting, parents were extremely positive about the care provided for their children. One hundred per cent of those who replied agree that their child is happy at school. This confirms that staff know the children well as individuals and work hard to nurture and support them while they are at the school. They listen well to pupils and treat them in a predictable, reliable way which helps them to feel secure and comfortable in their surroundings. Many of the strengths found at the time of the last inspection are reflected in this report.
29. Class teachers make useful notes about individual pupils' up and downs, together with any meetings with parents or other significant events, which follow the child through the school and act as a useful reference point charting their personal progress. Arrangements are in place to track pupils' academic progress in English, mathematics, science and ICT and the information these provide is used by staff to guide decisions about who needs extra support. These are helping to raise the standards that pupils achieve in these subjects. Teaching assistants provide very good quality support in lessons and help pupils to use their time purposefully. There are good arrangements in place to help pupils settle into school, whether as a nursery pupil transferring into full-time education, moving on at age seven, or when pupils transfer to secondary school. Pupils who have arrived midway through their schooling speak positively about how they were made to feel welcome. Very good support is provided for those pupils who are at an early stage of learning English, which helps them to make rapid progress.

30. Pupils are encouraged to voice their opinions and they do so confidently. School council minutes are fed through to the governors' welfare and buildings sub-groups and inform the decisions made by the governing body. Pupils have clear ideas about what needs to be improved, such as lunchtime arrangements, and are prepared to put their case forward in order to improve life for their peers. They have chosen the playground equipment, and are responsible for its care, and they also made a major contribution to decisions about how the grounds should be developed.
31. While the school complies with statutory requirements relating to child protection and health and safety, it needs to strengthen its practice in this area of its work. Good risk assessments, some carried out in collaboration with pupils, are conducted to assess the potential hazards on educational visits and there are regular inspections of the building both by the local authority and governors. However, risk assessments relating to the use of the building have yet to be completed, and the hygiene arrangements around the toileting of very young children are unsatisfactory. The school has evidence of good child protection intervention bringing about improvements for some children but its policy does not give sufficiently clear guidance about how staff should act if a child discloses to them, and not all staff have received recent awareness-raising about this aspect of care.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's partnerships with parents, other schools and the wider community are all very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- The school welcomes parents as partners in their children's education and parents are very supportive of its efforts.
- The school makes very good use of community expertise to enhance the quality of pupils' education and encourages community use of its resources.
- Constructive partnerships with other schools strengthen the provision for pupils.

Commentary

32. Parents are very happy with the school's provision, citing its friendliness and support for individual pupils as its main strengths. Those whose children have already moved into Year 7 and beyond, say that they settled swiftly to high school life. Parents state that they find the school easy to approach staff and have confidence in the way that the school is led and managed. The school is committed to assisting parents help their children to learn. It has recently run very successful Family Learning Programmes with the parents of younger children, which it hopes to extend to parents of older pupils soon. The school consults parents' opinions through questionnaires and small group discussions and acts upon their views, for example, sending increased information home about the topics being covered and pupils' mathematics targets. It keeps them regularly informed about activities and provides good quality information, through meetings and written reports, about their children's progress. A number of parents volunteer their help, supporting pupils' reading, leading cooking activities, or cataloguing the new library books. Almost all parents ensure that their children attend regularly and they support their work at home. The lively Friends Association raises considerable funds for the school which have recently been spent on, for instance, stage lighting and large equipment to support pupils' physical education. The major grounds improvement work over recent years would not have been possible had it not been for the freely given hard labour and skill of parents.
33. The school is very outward looking, seeking support from a broad spectrum of the community and other schools and, in turn, offering its own facilities and expertise elsewhere. As the largest member of the local group of primary schools, it helps pool resources for all, leading to, for instance, pupils experiencing performances by theatre groups and staff observing successful teaching methods in other settings. It also works in close liaison with

the local high school, particularly in relation to physical education, dance and drama. The school hosts a community toy library and youth club and takes part in community events such as Harrogate's Best Action for the Environment Roadshow, at which it won an award. It welcomes members of the community and makes very good use of their expertise. For example, a local resident has provided a wealth of first hand information and support to younger children who having been learning about Hinduism and the Indian way of life. Staff work closely with members of the local authority to increase their own expertise and also, for instance, to enhance pupils' understanding of road safety.

34. All these partnerships broaden the range of opportunities and activities available to pupils and also deepen their understanding of the benefits of living in a supportive community. They help them to realise that individuals can make a difference, thus increasing their confidence and preparing them well for later life.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school is good overall. The school's leadership, management and governance are all of good quality.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- The headteacher is enthusiastic about making school an enjoyable place for pupils and staff to work in.
- Governors are committed, well informed and work closely with school staff.
- Leadership of the provision for younger pupils is very strong, but that higher up the school is less cohesive.
- There is a very strong commitment to inclusion and concern for the needs of individuals.
- The school improvement plan gives a considerable amount of information but does not give a clear, easy-to-use guide to strategic development.

Commentary

35. The headteacher works tirelessly to foster the school's welcoming and positive atmosphere. He is very supportive of pupils, staff and parents, and determined to ensure that the school is inclusive and provides well for the needs of individuals. In this, the school is particularly successful. He is approachable and open to new ideas, empowering those who suggest them to carry them through. This means that, for instance, the school's impressive involvement in environmental work and grounds development has not distracted staff from their main purpose of helping pupils to achieve high standards. The school has recently reworded its mission statement which clearly states that, working in partnership with the community it, 'aims to ensure that it is a happy place where children learn respect for each other and their surroundings.' Staff work well together to ensure that this is the case.
36. The governing body has a wide range of expertise among its members which it uses well to guide and monitor the school's activities. The different sub groups meet regularly and have decision making powers relating to their areas, with the chairs of each group working closely together to oversee progress. Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development which is based, increasingly, on analysis of data such as national test results, and they are prepared to question the headteacher and other staff closely about the actions that have brought about the results. Governors have evaluated their own effectiveness and developed a relevant plan for improvement, and also take into good account pupils' and parents' views when deciding on action. They ensure that the school fulfils its statutory requirements.
37. The leadership of the overall provision for pupils up to the age of seven ensures that they receive a very good quality of education. All staff work closely together, bounce ideas off each other well and create an exciting environment in which pupils enjoy learning and have

a good understanding of how different aspects of what they are learning interweave. The leadership of English, mathematics and science is helping to raise standards, but more slowly for pupils in Years 3 to 6 than for the younger ones. Although subject managers have more opportunity to monitor what is happening in their areas of responsibility than they had at the time of the last inspection, in most subjects they have still not observed colleagues teaching which makes it hard for them to identify areas of strength and to plan in detail for improvement. In the absence of the subject manager for ICT the subject is currently being overseen by several members of staff. This is enabling some development to take place but the school's picture of the effectiveness of provision and of teaching and learning lacks fine detail. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is managed well and this is reflected in the progress pupils make.

38. The school has been supported well by the local authority in developing its improvement planning so that it now identifies clearly what action is to be taken by whom, within what timescale, what resources will be needed and how progress will be monitored. Over recent years the strategic plan has increased in size so that the current one extends to more than thirty pages. This makes the main priorities and how success will be assessed in terms of rising standards difficult to identify. Too many success criteria relate to activities, for instance, that a policy has been written and is in place, rather than indicating, through succinct, measurable outcomes, why the action is being taken. Action planning is firmly based on reliable and accurate information from the school's self evaluation and identifies appropriate areas for development, but it only relates to the current year, with no strategic overview of how leaders wish the school to develop over future years.
39. The school day runs smoothly and it is efficiently administered. Relevant policies are in place, although there is no register of gifted and talented pupils yet, nor identified strategies for extending and supporting them in their specific areas of strength. The headteacher has developed a good method for monitoring individual teachers' effectiveness, by relating it to the progress each pupil makes while in their class. There is a programme of lesson monitoring by members of senior management but the feedback tends to be over-generous on weaker aspects of teaching and not sufficiently rigorous in identifying specific development points essential to improving individuals' performance. Staff have good access to further training that is relevant to their own and the school's needs and those new to the school are well supported.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	712,364
Total expenditure	710,668
Expenditure per pupil	2,889

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	62,865
Balance carried forward to the next	53,843

40. Financial management is prudent, with governors and staff comparing the school's performance with others in the area, committed to seeking best value from purchases and basing decisions firmly on educational priorities. The large carry-forward from year to year is partly accounted for by the school's success in attracting extra funding, and has also been maintained to help the school cope with uncertainties brought about by the increasing mobility of pupils. Given the around average expenditure per pupil, the good quality of education provided and the above average standards achieved, the school continues to provide good value for money.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

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

In the nursery and the reception classes, children make a very good start to school life in environments that are rich in interest and very caring. Children achieve very well in all the areas of learning and particularly well in their personal development. This applies equally to children who have special educational needs and the very small number with English as an additional language. On entry to the nursery there is a wide spread of ability but overall children come in with average levels of attainment. There are, however, significant weaknesses in many areas of personal and social development and in communication skills. Thirty-one children attend the nursery for half of each day and there are ten Foundation Stage children in the mixed reception/Year 1 class. The number of reception children will increase to 25 after Christmas.

There is an exceptionally strong drive for learning in the Foundation Stage and many reasons why children are achieving so well. Teaching is very good in all the areas of learning and at times excellent. The nursery nurse and the teaching assistants provide very high quality support for the children and work together as a unified team with the teachers. They are ambitious for the children, set high expectations and provide a very good and imaginative curriculum, which meets children's needs extremely well. Relationships are excellent and as a result the children's personal skills improve rapidly and this has a very positive impact on standards in all areas. Highly effective leadership and management have ensured that the Foundation Stage goes from strength to strength, improving all the time. Improvements are continually being made in planning, monitoring and assessments. Assessments are used continually to plan work at the correct level for all children, including those with special educational needs.

A very positive aspect of the work of the Foundation Stage staff is the time and effort they give to parents to enable them to help their children at home. This work is showing clear dividends, and parental support contributes effectively to the progress children make and their attitudes to learning. Currently the nursery and the reception classes are set apart from each other. The school accepts that this is not ideal and appreciates that as soon as possible changes in the present accommodation need to be made to further enhance the provision for Foundation Stage children. Recently some children have been enrolled into the younger afternoon group in the nursery who are not toilet trained. The nursery does not have full provision to deal with this and an extension to the current washing facilities needs to be an immediate priority for the school.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Excellent relationships between children and adults create an atmosphere which promotes highly effective learning.
- Children develop very good independent learning skills.
- In their own play a significant minority of children continue to find sharing and taking turns difficult.

Commentary

41. This area of learning is given considerable attention by staff and has a high profile from the moment children enter the nursery to the end of their time in the reception class. Children make rapid progress in this area of learning. By the time they start in Year 1 the majority of pupils have reached the early learning goals and from their low starting point have achieved very well. This is due to the very good teaching, excellent relationships and a well planned

and ordered environment where children acquire high levels of self-esteem and independent skills. The youngest children are still heavily dependent on adults, but others, having been encouraged to take responsibility, are now confident to work on their own on designated tasks. They take turns being milk monitors, tidy away the activities they have used and help each other. Behaviour is very good and on the occasions when disagreements arise over who is playing with what, the staff deal with them in a calm, firm but friendly manner. Because staff are highly skilled and know how young children learn effectively, they plan an excellent range of activities, which lead to sustained interest and concentration from the children and a strong desire to learn.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision for communication, language and literacy is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Writing is taught exceptionally well.
- Every opportunity is taken to enhance children's communication skills.
- Speaking and listening skills continue to be the weakest aspect of pupils' attainment.

Commentary.

42. In all activities there are excellent opportunities for the children to develop their communication skills, which is an area of weakness when they enter the school. Throughout their time in the nursery and reception classes, all children achieve very well and the majority achieve all the early learning goals by the end of reception. In every aspect of this area of learning children are taught very well, with particular strengths in the teaching of writing. In the nursery there is a strong emphasis on letter sounds work, and continual opportunities for writing as they play gives children confidence and a strong feeling of success. The children are planning a birthday party for Kipper, one of the characters in the reading scheme, and already two out of the group of four can write their own name and one of the children writes 'Happy Birthday' accurately.
43. Throughout the nursery and reception classes speaking and listening are priority areas. Children find it difficult to listen to each other and will often interrupt when someone is talking. In the majority of cases this is due to their eagerness to make their own contribution to the discussion. The teachers and support staff very patiently insist on the children listening and taking turns and by the end of the reception year they have come on by leaps and bounds. In the nursery the sharing of books, listening to stories and singing rhymes are carefully planned so that the children quickly learn letter sounds and words. Their learning is fun and highly effective. The very good progress and provision continues in the reception class, with a wealth of opportunities for language development to flourish. A group working with the reception teacher explore the forest environment of the Three Bears and go outside to collect leaves and twigs. This creates an opportunity to explore words that describe the items they have collected and the children contribute 'scrunchy', 'snap' and 'crackling'. A good number of parents take an interest in helping their children with reading at home. By the time they leave the reception class the children have a wide vocabulary and many are already reading simple stories.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Children thoroughly enjoy their work in mathematics.

- Teaching is of a high standard and places a strong emphasis on learning through practical activities.
- Mathematical vocabulary is given a high priority both in the nursery and in reception.

Commentary

44. The high quality teaching of practical activities helps children to achieve very well and the vast majority attains the early learning goals by the end of the reception year. The stimulus the teaching provides helps children to use mathematical language more confidently, and through structured play, to develop their ideas on how to solve number problems. In the nursery, a group of children set out the birthday party table, organising the correct number of chairs and equally distributing the cakes. Not a single opportunity is missed by the teacher to develop their counting skills.
45. In reception, the morning begins with a number of counting songs which the children join in with great enthusiasm. They delight in counting and help the teacher to re-build the counting rocket that has been knocked down by the glove-puppet character, Counting Crocodile. This opening session is followed by a range of excellent activities of varying degrees of difficulty all relating to measuring. While the focus group work with the teacher in the water tray, developing understanding and the language of capacity by filling containers, a small group work on their own, drawing round their feet and then measuring them in Teddy Bears. Numeracy skills are extended very successfully across all the areas of learning.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- The children are provided with a rich range of opportunities to learn about the world around them based on first hand experience.
- Provision for ICT in the nursery is limited.

Commentary

46. Children achieve very well in this area of learning due to the very practical nature of the planned activities and the very good teaching they receive. The majority of children achieve all the early learning goals by the end of reception. Many enter the nursery with very little knowledge of the own world and staff make extensive use of visits and visitors to increase their awareness of the things around them. In the nursery, they are beginning to develop a sense of how things change over time by using an old rubbing board to wash the dolls' clothes. They are learning about different materials by making a rain hat for Teddy and testing which of the materials they have collected are waterproof.
47. This practical approach continues into reception, capturing the interest and imagination of the children. Here they learn more about the properties of materials by baking bread and seeing how it changes from dough to bread when it is baked. In both the outdoor area and in the classroom there is a dark place where they can go in with their teachers and discover reflective objects. During the inspection, reception children held a Divali party with Divali sweets and a local Indian lady joined their celebration, an excellent way to learn about other cultures. Although the nursery children have access to the computer suite they do not have a computer in their room and this prevents them from having regular experience throughout each day.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **excellent**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Provision for outdoor play is of the highest quality.
- Staff provide an extensive range of activities for children to develop fine control.

Commentary

48. Provision for outdoor play is some of the best observed in any school and the teaching is very good. In a safe and secure central quadrangle the children can experience a wealth of activities that not only make excellent provision for their physical needs but at the same time provide valuable experiences in all the other areas of learning. Whilst much of the apparatus is manufactured equipment there is also the opportunity for children to use their imagination and to turn the boxes the nursery nurse has provided a tunnel for crawling in and out of. There are endless opportunities for climbing, jumping, throwing and catching and using a variety of wheeled toys that can be ridden round the hard surface. The children achieve very well in this area of learning, not just because of the quality of the provision but also as a result of the very skilled interventions by the nursery nurse during their play. In both the nursery and the reception class there are endless opportunities for the children to develop their fine control skills. Children's skills in handling pencils, scissors, brushes and other tools are well developed by the time they leave the reception class and most have attained or exceeded all of the early learning goals.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **excellent**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Very effective teaching of direct skills is combined with very good opportunities for children to learn through play.
- Children are provided with a vibrant range of activities that enriches their learning.

Commentary

49. Staff plan a wide range of stimulating activities and with very good teaching and high levels of support the children achieve very well. The majority reach or exceed all the early learning goals. Many children need a lot of help to learn important skills when they first start in the nursery. Teachers target specific skills in their planning and build these into the many play activities provided during the day. As a result, children are continually refining skills they have acquired or learning new ones that move their learning forward. They are taught the skills needed to mix paint so that eventually they are able to produce fine examples of Van Gogh's sunflowers. They learn how to manipulate clay so that they can produce their own tiles. They thoroughly enjoy re-telling a story through actions, and in the Three Bears' house they make up their own adventures. The children have a good repertoire of favourite songs and while waiting in the dinner queue they sing with great enjoyment and pleasure. Songs and rhymes play an important part in the learning in mathematics, where they are often used to stimulate learning. Creative work is linked very well to other areas of learning.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Pupils gain a lot of pleasure from the rich variety of storybooks they read.
- In Years 1 and 2 pupils respond very well to the skilfully designed lessons and high level of challenge.
- The work of teaching assistants is hugely effective in the support of groups of pupils with different literacy needs.
- Even though pupils attain above that of most pupils age 11, at times, more able pupils in Years 3 to 6 could achieve more than they do.
- A proportion of average attaining pupils in the juniors do not make consistent progress in their basic skills for writing.
- Opportunities for juniors to use their writing skills in other subjects are missed and computers are not used enough to enhance literacy studies.

Commentary

50. The good provision overall covers a variable range of quality and circumstances in Years 3 to 6 that has peaks and troughs in the rate of progress that pupils make. This difference is evident in the achievement of pupils in Years 1 and 2, which is significantly better than in Years 3 to 6. Inspection evidence of pupils' work and discussion with pupils and staff show that standards in Year 2 are well above expectations in reading, writing and pupils' use of language. Creative teaching approaches and exciting opportunities for learning mean that pupils achieve very well in Years 1 and 2 and the rate of progress made by all pupils in these classes is momentous. Some of these pupils understand adverbs and use them in their writing with flair and talk about them with an awareness of their purpose and value in writing. These standards are reflected fully in the results Year 2 pupils attain in the national tests, which are consistently very good. While improvement overall since the last inspection is satisfactory, it is far more evident in Years 1 and 2 than in the older classes.
51. Teaching and learning in literacy are very good in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory in Years 3 to 6. The difference can often be traced to the pace and challenge in lessons, which is significantly higher in the infant classes than in the juniors. During the inspection, the pupils in Year 3 made good progress. For example, pupils used their high standard of writing skills gained in their infant lessons to compose sophisticated notes – a skill that older pupils often find difficult. In response to the plateau in pupils' progress in the older classes, the subject leader has rightly identified the need to tackle the gaps in the writing skills of a number of average attaining pupils. Action taken is starting to pay off. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 pupils generally make a better rate of progress than those in Years 3 and 4 and pick up some of the lost ground. This is reflected in the results Year 6 pupils attained in the national tests in 2004, which were the best for some considerable time. The quality of pupils' reading is a continuous and sustaining strength that supports pupils well across the school.
52. Pupils' achieve well in speaking and listening and their skills and confidence are above average throughout the school. This is reflected fully in the fluent turn of phrase and vocabulary they use, especially in conversations about the books they read. When teaching lacks flair and lessons have a slow pace, pupils in Year 4 become a little distracted and lose the thread. In the main, progress picks up in Years 5 and 6, though not consistently so. Even so, pupils generally behave well in lessons and listen well.
53. The very good contribution of the classroom assistants lifts the quality of teaching and makes a huge difference to the pace of progress that pupils make. In particular, strong

relationships and knowledgeable approaches support pupils with special needs very well. In addition, where one or two infant pupils need support in acquiring English as an additional language to their mother tongue, regular and consistently good quality support accelerates the progress they make and supports their newly acquired skills very well.

54. Pupils achieve very well in reading in Years 1 and 2. They have a very clear understanding of the content of different texts and of what goes on in stories. Good achievement in reading continues through Years 3 to 6 because the school has developed common ways of working that links exciting books with regular teaching in groups and frequent weekly home tasks. All the pupils read a good range of literature, can discuss their choices of author and the kind of story they like best. Most read with some depth of thought about the implications of what characters get up to. The subject leadership is good. The subject manager is knowledgeable and has ensured that the literature available to the pupils is of a good quality.
55. Pupils' achievement in writing is very good in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory in Years 3 to 6. As a result standards are well above average at the end of Year 2 and above average at the end of Year 6. The high proportion of more able pupils in Year 2 write with a fluency and turn of phrase well beyond that typical of their age. Their stories have zest and the sophistication of children who read a lot and use language to very good and often humorous effect. In Years 4, 5 and 6 some of the average attaining pupils have gaps in their spelling and do not use punctuation as well as they might. The subject leader has tackled this to deal with the catch-up needed in basic skills. In Years 1 and 2, where teaching is often very good, teachers pay close attention to matching the work to the needs of the different abilities and the pace of lessons is brisk so pupils move on well.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

56. Pupils' robust attitude and good reading skills stand them in good stead for their studies in other subjects of the curriculum. As yet, the richness of language in the infants is not replicated fully in junior lessons. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are taught very well to use different forms of writing for information but this strand of writing is not as strong in the older classes. This is because there is often too little writing in other subjects of the curriculum. Moreover, pupils do not have enough access to computers to develop important literacy skills – a vital component in learning for the future.

MATHEMATICS

The provision for mathematics is **good** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Very effective teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 provides a secure platform for further learning.
- The quality of teaching varies across the year groups and as a result pupils make uneven progress.
- Pupils' attitudes to the subject are good although a minority do not apply themselves as well as they could.
- Teaching assistants work effectively alongside class teachers to provide very effective support for pupils.
- There is too little use of information and communication technology to aid pupils' learning in mathematics.

Commentary

57. Unvalidated data from the national tests show that in 2004, Year 6 pupils attained results that were above the national average and much the same as those of pupils in similar schools. A good proportion of pupils attained an above average level but a number of others

who had the potential to achieve the national average fell a little short of this standard. From its analysis of the results the school has identified this pattern and put sensible measures in place to help these average and lower attaining pupils achieve to their full potential in the tests. Year 2 pupils have performed consistently well in the national tests for a number of years and in 2004 results were well above the national average and above those of similar schools. Test results have improved since the last inspection and there has been satisfactory subject development over this period.

58. The test results are an accurate reflection of pupils' attainment in lessons. By Year 2 most pupils are calculating quickly and accurately, using a range of different strategies with understanding and skill. Many Year 6 pupils manipulate numbers competently when solving problems although lower attaining pupils experience difficulty with larger or more complex numbers. Overall, pupils' achievement in mathematics is good. They enter nursery with broadly average number skills and leave at the end of Year 6 attaining standards in mathematics that are above average. However, pupils do not progress at an even pace. Pupils' achievement and progress is very good in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory in Years 3 to 6. This applies equally to pupils who have special educational needs and to the small number of pupils in Years 1 and 2 with English as an additional language.
59. The difference in achievement in the two key stages stems from the quality of teaching pupils receive, which is very good in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory overall in Years 3 to 6. Teachers in Years 1 and 2 have a very clear vision of what they want pupils to learn and pursue this rigorously. Lessons hum with activity as pupils strive to meet the high level of challenge of the work they have been set. As pupils work, teachers continually assess how well they are doing and have the knowledge and vision to adjust and manipulate activities to ensure these match exactly to what pupils need to learn next. While all lessons in Years 3 to 6 are of at least a satisfactory standard and on occasions they are good, they do not stimulate the very high level of interest seen in the infant classes. Teaching is more focused on delivery of the scheme of work rather than on how pupils learn best, and, while the curriculum provides pupils with their basic needs, it does not have the life and passion of that provided for younger pupils. While pupils in Years 1 and 2 sit eager eyed in anticipation of what they teacher will ask them to do next, older pupils are more passive and carry out the tasks conscientiously but routinely.
60. Relationships between staff and pupils are very positive and the constant interactions which take place enable pupils to express their ideas and keep them thinking. Teaching assistants are deployed well and make a significant contribution to pupils' learning. They are given clear roles and responsibilities in lessons and use their experience and skills very well to promote pupils' ideas and understanding. Observation of one particular class shows that past weaknesses in teaching and learning are still having a negative impact on pupils' achievement. In this lower junior class, pupils lack the learning skills of concentration and application and the teacher has to spend too much time managing class discipline. This slows the pupils' learning and adversely affects their progress in lessons.
61. Subject management is generally good but has had more impact in the Years 1 and 2 than in Years 3 to 6. This is primarily because the strategies needed to raise standards of attainment have been more clearly identified and more systematically applied in the younger age classes. Areas for improvement have been accurately determined but the issues around the variable quality of teaching and learning have still to be meaningfully addressed.

Mathematics across the curriculum

62. Teachers make satisfactory use of the opportunities other subjects present to extend pupils' learning in mathematics. Pupils use and develop their skills of measurement in subjects such as science and design and technology and employ data-handling techniques to help them evaluate the information gathered from science investigations. Some links between mathematics and information and communication technology are made, such as when pupils use spreadsheets to extend their understanding of how to assemble and utilise numerical

data or when the interactive whiteboard is used in lessons. However, in general there is too little use of computers to aid pupils' learning in mathematics.

SCIENCE

The provision for science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- The efforts the school has made to improve pupils' achievement are bearing fruit and standards are rising.
- Investigative work is a strong feature of the teaching and learning.
- Pupils thoroughly enjoy their work in science.
- There are insufficient opportunities for the monitoring of teaching.

Commentary

63. In 2004, the test results attained by Year 6 pupils were well above the national average and much the same as those of similar schools. This improved performance bore testimony to the hard work that has gone into raising standards. The work scrutinised in the pupils' books and the observations made during lessons indicate that standards are continuing above average though the number of pupils attaining at an above average level in the current Year 6 is not quite as high as in 2004. Improvements in standards by the end of Year 6 have resulted from a whole school focus on the area of scientific investigation and an increased emphasis on the development of scientific language. This has led to good improvement since the last inspection. Pupils in Year 2 also attain standards that are above expectations for their age. Throughout the school pupils achieve well in science due to the good quality teaching they receive.
64. In Years 1 and 2 the use of very practical activities has helped pupils to gain a clear understanding of many key ideas. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 carried out an investigation into electricity. The activity challenged the pupils to think for themselves and to experiment freely with the materials they had been given. The group investigating battery powered toys had to work out how to fit the batteries correctly and then explain to the teacher the correct procedure for doing this and why this was important. Very quickly they were discussing the positive and negative markings on the batteries and how these matched with the similar markings on the toys. Teachers' ability to stretch pupils' thinking is a characteristic of the good technique they apply to pupils' learning.
65. In Year 6, pupils showed how seriously they take their investigative work in a lesson where they were investigating six different examples of soil and trying to identify the kind of environment they came from. They worked diligently in groups of three, carefully using their recording sheets to collect the same information from each sample and then, through discussion and an assessment of the information collected, coming to a conclusion as to where the soil had originated. All the groups pinpointed the correct areas with considerable accuracy. Through their investigative work they are gaining a lasting understanding of basic procedures that need to be followed. Work in their books indicates a clear understanding of how to carry out a fair test. In discussion, pupils in Year 6 could analyse data from a test accurately. Higher attainers identified anomalies in the data that needed re-examination and gave possible explanations for these anomalies.
66. In the lessons observed and in discussions with the pupils it was clear that they derive considerable enjoyment from their work in science. Teachers' careful planning and resourcing provide pupils with activities that stimulate their interest in the world around them and how it works. Pupils acquire very positive attitudes to science, which are reflected in the good progress that they make. Where it is appropriate, teachers forge very good links between science and other areas of the curriculum. Work on the apparent movement of the

sun in Year 6 provides focus and stimulus for literacy, with pupils making detailed descriptions of night and day and the feelings and moods that are generated by aspects of lightness and darkness. Their work on rocks and soils had clear links with aspects of geography and different areas of the country. These links with other areas of the curriculum are an important factor in making pupils' work in science relevant to their real life experiences. Pupils employ their literacy and numeracy skills productively when collecting and analysing data or recording their findings but their understanding of how to use ICT to help their learning in science is underdeveloped.

67. Subject management is good. The co-ordinator has a secure understanding of the subject's strengths and of those areas requiring further improvement. Much of this information comes from discussions with staff and from a detailed analysis of pupils' work. The subject manager has very little opportunity to make direct observations of lessons and to make a complete evaluation of the quality of teaching in each classroom. This makes it difficult for her to pinpoint exactly where support may be needed and to fine tune the subject development plan. This is a weakness that the school has recognised but still has to address.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

The provision for information and communication technology (ICT) is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Standards are rising.
- The curriculum provides pupils with a broad range of opportunities to learn but too little planned use is made of the computers to support teaching and learning across the curriculum.
- Lessons are taught competently, although, on occasions, they could be organised better.
- Most pupils apply themselves well in lessons but they have too little understanding of how the things they are learning link to their everyday lives.
- Staff have a broad picture of the effectiveness of provision but lack some of the information needed to plan for improvement in detail.

Commentary

68. Since the last inspection there has been satisfactory improvement in ICT. In extending the quality of resources and the range of educational provision, improvement has been good. The school has made a concerted effort to address the key issue from the last report and to provide pupils with better opportunities to learn.
69. Standards have improved since the last inspection and now meet national expectations in both Year 2 and Year 6. Across the school as a whole, pupils' achievements are satisfactory. By the end of Year 2 the majority of pupils demonstrate many of the skills associated with this age group, such as effective control of the mouse and quick locations of keys on the keyboard. Higher attainers know the zig zag red line under a word they have typed means they have made a spelling error, and, after discovering how to use it, employ the correction function effectively. Lower attainers are not as familiar with the computer and operate at a slower speed and with much less confidence. Quite often teaching assistants will lead small groups of pupils who are working on the computer, or interactive whiteboard. This method of organisation works effectively because the teaching assistants are able to use their secure subject knowledge to move pupils forward at a rate that is appropriate to their individual needs.
70. The quality of teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Teachers demonstrate new skills and program functions clearly and with confidence and provide pupils with plenty of opportunity to practice and utilise what they have been taught. Pupils respond well to the opportunities they are given to use the computers and other equipment. They work with interest and enthusiasm and readily pass on what they know and can do to others. In many

lessons teachers set a good example by making effective use of the interactive whiteboards that are now in place around the school. On occasions teachers give too much information during the introduction to a lesson and fail to provide written support for pupils to refer to. This results in the teacher having to reinforce instructions repetitively because pupils have been unable to retain all the details. When this happens time that could have been used to provide focused support or to extend pupils' learning is lost.

71. Pupils receive a much broader curriculum than they did at the time of the last inspection and elements that were missing at that time are now clearly evident. By Year 6, pupils know how to write instructions to enable the computer to control the actions of a variety of models and can construct multi-media presentations that are lively and colourful. A weakness in pupils' attainment is a lack of understanding of how the things they are experiencing in ICT lessons relate to their everyday lives. For example they fail to make the link between the control technology mentioned above and the devices they have at home which use similar systems, such as automatic washing machines.
72. Subject management is satisfactory. In the absence of the coordinator, the subject is being overseen by the headteacher and other staff, with help from the Chair of Governors. Through their efforts, resource development is continuing logically and systematically. However, while the school has an accurate overview of the subject it does not have a fully detailed picture of where teaching and learning are most successful and what remain as priorities for improvement to raise standards further.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

73. There has been insufficient improvement in this aspect of provision since the last inspection. While pupils develop a range of reliable ICT skills they do not receive sufficient opportunity to use and apply these across other subjects. There is some use of the Internet for research and of word processing for writing. Younger pupils use a talking books program to aid their reading and art programs are used satisfactorily to provide pupils with an additional medium for their ideas and creativity. However, pupils' use of computers outside of their ICT lessons is too limited and machines sit idle when they could be enhancing learning. Pupils get little opportunity to construct text directly onto the computer and to then use its facilities to improve the quality of their work. Pupils do not have a secure understanding of how computers and other technology can aid their learning in different subjects. As a subject in its own right, there has been clear improvement, but further development is needed to ensure that pupils' learning in ICT is put to the best possible use.

HUMANITIES

74. There was insufficient evidence to support overall judgements about provision, achievement or the quality of teaching and learning in **geography and history** as no lessons were seen in geography and only one in history. Teachers' planning was examined, samples of work analysed and discussions held with pupils.
75. Teachers' planning shows that there is a satisfactory curriculum in both subjects. In discussion pupils readily recalled studies they had carried out in both subjects. It was also very evident that visits to places of interest and the local environment were enhancing their knowledge and understanding of history and geography. Of particular note is the residential visit for older pupils to the Farne Islands which provides a wealth of experience that feeds in, not only to history and geography, but also to many other areas of the curriculum.
76. An analysis of pupils' work and planning shows that by the time they reach Year 6 they have covered a range of appropriate topics in geography. In Years 1 and 2, pupils become familiar with simple maps of school and the local area. These skills continue to develop throughout the school, so that by Year 6, pupils are able to use maps effectively in history to plot the exploits of the Tudor explorers. Living alongside a major river, they are able to learn

about river sources and the structure and course of the river as well as the threats it has posed to the town on many occasions.

77. In history there is a similar range of work, with pupils in Years 1 and 2 looking at famous characters in our history such as Florence Nightingale. They compare things from the past with things we have now by looking at their parents' favourite toys and the ones in their own toy boxes. In Year 3, pupils study the Egyptians, finding out what the tomb paintings tell us about daily life and then creating their own tomb paintings. In the history lesson seen in Year 5 the teaching and learning were good. The headteacher and class teacher dressed as Victorian teachers and pupils were transported back in time, gaining a very interesting insight into how school life has changed over time. Although pupils are given some opportunities to use computers for research, these tend to be infrequent and not as well planned as other aspects of lessons.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Provision in religious education (RE) is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Pupils have sound knowledge of the key features of different faiths.
- Pupils' speaking and listening skills are developed well.
- In Years 1 and 2 exciting ways to integrate RE and other aspects of the curriculum are used.
- The curriculum is well organised but not enough work is recorded in pupils' workbooks.

Commentary

78. By Year 2 and Year 6 pupils' attainment meets the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus and across the school as a whole, their achievement is satisfactory. Pupils study the major world faiths and they understand the similarities and differences between them. They are aware that each faith has its own festivals, holy writings and special places in which to worship. In discussion, pupils talk about the fact that Christians worship in a church and that Jews visit the synagogue. Teaching is generally good, with lessons carefully planned and based on clear learning objectives.
79. Teachers make lessons interesting by linking the learning to the pupils' own experience and by provided relevant artefacts and books. An excellent range of books, some of which dealt with sensitive issues such as terrorism, supported the Year 6 study about Israel. This enabled pupils not only to learn about religion in the past but how some religions had evolved and developed into the 21st Century.
80. In Years 1 and 2, a Divali celebration party added life and colour to pupils' work about this Hindu festival. Pupils and staff dressed up in their saris, sweets and cards were made and the children danced and made music. During the party they were joined by a local Indian lady who delighted in being involved in the celebration. Links were forged which promised to be long lasting and productive; typical of the school's highly effective links with the local and wider community. This was an excellent way to raise pupils' awareness of another world faith and one that they will never forget.
81. During lessons the teachers take every opportunity to develop the pupils' speaking and listening skills. Year 2 pupils talked about the kinds of festivals they had been to, and, through good prompts from the teacher, they drew up a long list of many different festivals and celebrations. In the lesson the teacher explored the use of alternative words to the ones which the pupils were using in their descriptions, in order to extend their vocabulary and their confidence in being able to describe things accurately.

82. Subject management is satisfactory and there has been steady improvement since the last inspection. The school follows the Local Authority syllabus for religious education and, although the coverage of this is good, there is not a great deal of work recorded in books. Opportunities for pupils to record their thoughts and ideas and to extend their literacy skills, particularly writing, when studying the topics in religious education are not used well enough.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

83. Only a small number of lessons were seen in **design and technology** (one), **music** (one) and **physical education** (two). It is, therefore, not possible to make detailed judgements about the provision in these subjects. Further information was gained from discussions with staff and pupils, teachers' planning and pupils' work. Hymn practice and assemblies provided additional evidence in music.
84. Samples of **design and technology** work around the school and discussions with Year 6 pupils indicates that pupils have a secure understanding of the nature of the subject and of the technical vocabulary associated with it. The models they have made indicate broadly typical skills in Years 1, 2 and 3 but a much higher level of design. Pupils' imagination blossoms and this can be seen in the products they design. Year 1 pupils use their developing mathematical skills of measurement and balance well when constructing beautiful hanging mobiles. In a sample seen in Year 3, pupils showed a rich use of ideas and awareness of purpose in their box designs. The lesson observed was taught and resourced well. Pupils experimented constructively with a variety of resources as a precursor to designing and making a working model of a fairground ride.
85. Teaching and learning in the one **music** lesson seen were good. Pupils matched the playing of tuned and untuned instruments well to the Hindu story of Rama and Sita, suggesting, for example, a low sound to reflect the majesty and strictness of a king. The singing of pupils in Years 3 to 6 is harmonious and well tutored. They sing very well in two and three parts and show great pleasure in performing. The school provides pupils who have an interest in playing an instrument with the opportunity to attend tuition and many of the pupils take up this option. Pupils of all ages enjoy rehearsing and performance is an exciting part of their school life which adds much to their personal development and sense of community.
86. Both of the **physical education** lessons seen during the inspection were taught well. Teachers had a clear understanding of the skills they expected pupils to acquire and with the able help of the teaching assistants promoted these effectively. A classical Divali dance formed the focus of the lesson for Year 1 and 2 pupils. The different elements which had to be performed in sequence provided a high level of challenge for such young pupils and they concentrated and worked very hard to follow the actions clearly demonstrated by their teacher. The quality of their performance by the end of the lesson was a pleasure to see, with actions that flowed smoothly to the rhythm to the music. The school's strong commitment to the inclusion of all pupils was clearly demonstrated through the full involvement of a pupil with severe physical disabilities who gained immense pleasure from the experience. The rapid progress made by pupils who speak English as an additional language was also in evidence as they followed the teacher's instructions closely and with understanding. In the lesson for Year 5 and Year 6 pupils the teacher used her games experience well to teach pupils the correct way in which to hold and use a hockey stick. Good organisation resulted in a carefully balanced lesson which provided pupils with both basic skills development and the opportunity to play team games. These were played in good spirit, with pupils adhering to the rules and celebrating each other's successes. The standards in this lesson were broadly as expected for pupils of this age, with a minority showing above average technique and similar number struggling to coordinate their actions effectively.

ART AND DESIGN

Provision for art and design is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Infant pupils progress in leaps and bounds because of the rich variety of activities that link so well with other subjects.
- Staff have a very good knowledge of how well pupils are learning.
- In junior lessons, pupils respond very well to good lessons that encourage experimentation and choice.
- Pupils' achievement is enriched by the abundance of activities that link outdoor art and the history of the area with a wide range of tools and media.

Commentary

87. The range of work on display and sampled in pupils' sketch books indicate that by Year 2 and 6 pupils show a higher level of skills than most pupils of this age, but a more typical knowledge of the work of artists. Overall pupils' achievement in good and in Years 1 and 2 very good. Standards are above expectations and art and design has maintained its position as a popular and effective subject since the last inspection.
88. Teaching and learning are very good in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6. At its most effective, teaching is energetic and finely tuned to pupils' skills and understanding. Staff observe how well each child copes with a new skill or idea and use the information to widen or step up the challenge they set. This focuses teaching plans on the next stage of each child's steps in learning very well. Activities invite exploration and the chance to "see" as would an artist. Pupils use charcoal, paint, pastel and collage as they work in the style of an artist such as Van Gogh to interpret and re-create the picture: "Starry Night". Pupils in Year 2 show a pleasing appreciation of pattern and different styles.
89. Pupils make choices and receive good guidance in their use of tools and media so they make skilful use of even ordinary resources such as powder paint and glue. They have a very good sense of design and use colour dynamically when they experiment with marks, symbols and patterns. For example, Year 6 pupils' design of kites, inspired by Guatemalan patterns, is pleasing to the eye and shows a skilful use creative repeating designs. Teaching assistants provide additional discussion for those pupils with special needs, so these pupils make similar progress to other pupils. Any difficulties they might have are overcome so pupils enjoy these lessons considerably.
90. The subject is managed well and celebrates successfully much of the work of the school. Community projects outdoors, many of which are inspired by the Roman heritage of the village, link art with history and ecological awareness. In addition, the diversity of art globally, inspires pupils' studies and includes rich collaborative work in Year 5 based on Polynesian art.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

91. Only three lessons were seen in this subject area and it is not possible to give secure judgements about provision, standards or the quality of teaching and learning across the school. However, from the lessons seen and from discussions with pupils and staff it is clear that personal, social and health education fits seamlessly into the curriculum as a whole. The teaching and learning in the lessons observed was satisfactory and at times good and effectively promoted key aspects of pupils' education, such as the importance of making sensible choices and of showing respect to those who have made sacrifices for others. As well as personal, social and health education lessons, teachers plan feature activities, such as the Divali afternoon, that was much enjoyed by younger pupils and staff alike. Such activities contribute well to pupils' personal development, giving them an appreciation for the richness of cultures other than their own. There are also regular opportunities for pupils to sit in a circle to discuss issues that guide their relationships with others.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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