

INSPECTION REPORT

CARR INFANT SCHOOL

Acomb

LEA area: York

Unique reference number: 121273

Headteacher: Mrs A McKeown

Lead inspector: Miss K Manning

Dates of inspection: 27th – 30th June 2005

Inspection number: 266570

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant
School category: Community
Age range of pupils: 3 - 7
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 190

School address: Ostman Road
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York
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Appropriate authority: The governing body
Name of chair of governors: Mr Paul Ellis

Date of previous inspection: April 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This is an average size school. It serves the local community, where the population is made up of a wide range of social and economic backgrounds but which in general is more disadvantaged than most. The proportion of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is broadly average. Almost all pupils are from white British families and only a very small number do not speak English as their first language.

There are 151 pupils in classes from reception to Year 2 and a further 36 boys and 42 girls attend the nursery either mornings or afternoons. For part of the day, children in reception are taught with pupils from Year 1. The numbers on roll have fallen in each of the last three years and it is currently under subscribed. Most children join the school in the nursery, where many do not have the skills and knowledge expected for their age, particularly in their personal, social and emotional development and in their ability and confidence to communicate through language and literacy. For many their mathematical understanding is also lower than expected.

The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs is well above the national average; making it the school's most relevant barrier to learning. Sixty-three pupils have special educational needs and two of these have a statement of special educational needs. Ten of these pupils attend a 'nurture class' aimed at helping them overcome social and emotional difficulties. In contrast, a small number of pupils have been identified as being gifted or talented.

In recent years the school has gained a Silver Artsmark award and a Basic Skills Quality Mark. It is involved in several local and national initiatives such as the Leadership Development Strategy in Primary Schools and the Gatsby Foundation. It receives an additional grant from the Children's Fund project and is part of a local 'network' with other infant and junior schools.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
2026 7	Miss K Manning	Lead inspector	Mathematics
			Information and communication technology
			Art and design
			Design and technology
			Physical education
			Foundation Stage
			English as an additional language
1408 3	Mr A Anderson	Lay inspector	
1470	Mrs K Ford	Team inspector	English
			Science
			Geography
			History
			Music
			Religious education
			Special educational needs

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a very effective school where good teaching and very good promotion of personal development ensure that they achieve very well. Pupils benefit from a very rich curriculum and a very effective partnership with parents. They have positive attitudes to learning and are happy in school. Good leadership and management overall and very good leadership by the headteacher have ensured that standards have either been maintained or improved. The school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Very good leadership and management from the headteacher have helped the school improve substantially since the previous inspection.
- The monitoring of provision in science, information and communication technology and religious education lacks rigour.
- Children get off to a fine start in the Foundation Stage.
- Standards in reading, writing and mathematics are above average by Year 2. Standards in science are above those expected for pupils' age.
- The quality of marking is inconsistent and some teachers do this better than others.
- Staff promote pupils' personal development very well.
- The school's arrangements for ensuring the well being, health and safety of pupils are very good.
- The school's outstanding efforts to raise attendance are working.

The school has improved at a very good rate since it was last inspected in 1999. All of the key issues have been tackled successfully and standards in information and communication technology have risen. The curriculum continues to improve as staff introduce national projects and with initiatives such as the 'nurture class'.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
reading	D	C	B	A
writing	D	C	B	A
mathematics	D	C	B	A

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average
Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals*

Overall, pupils achieve very well. The results of national tests show that standards have risen in each of the last two years and last year were above average in reading, writing and mathematics. Teachers' assessments indicated that standards in science were also above the expectation for pupils of this age. Pupils performed very well when compared with similar schools and the school's results are rising faster than the national trend. Boys and girls did equally well and teachers succeeded in reversing the trend of girls doing better in reading and writing.

Inspection findings are that children in the Foundation Stage achieve very well in their personal, social and emotional development and well in other areas of learning. They are on course to reach many of the early goals by the end of reception. In Years 1 and 2,

pupils continue to achieve well in English and mathematics and by Year 2 standards are above average. In science, pupils know enough scientific facts to attain standards that are above those expected but their knowledge of experimental and investigative science is not as good. Pupils who have special educational needs achieve well and reach the levels of which they are capable. The very small number of pupils who speak English as an additional language achieve well. Pupils who are gifted academically or have talents in sports or music achieve as well as other pupils. In information and communication technology, pupils achieve steadily but the improved resources have not been in place long enough to raise standards beyond those expected for pupils' age. Standards in religious education match those prescribed by the syllabus used in local schools.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are promoted very well. They have positive attitudes to learning and most behave well. Last year one pupil was excluded permanently from the school.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is good. Teaching and learning are good overall, though in lessons the quality of teaching varied from poor to very good. The school's procedures for assessment are good overall but very good in the Foundation Stage and in English and mathematics. A very wide range of after-school clubs and educational outings enrich the curriculum. The partnership with parents is very good and there are good links with the community and other schools. In addition, the very good care and guidance provided for pupils and the school's inclusive ethos plays a crucial part in promoting their positive attitudes.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are good overall. The headteacher leads and manages the school very well. The leadership and management of senior staff varies. It is very good in the Foundation Stage and in English and mathematics and satisfactory in other subjects. Governance has improved since the previous inspection and governors now do a good job on behalf of the school and ensure that all statutory requirements are met. The most significant barrier to raising the school's performance in national tests is the high proportion of pupils who have special educational needs but this is overcome by the school's good provision for this group of pupils.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Most parents value the school highly and are delighted with what it offers their children. They believe that the teaching is good and are happy with the progress that their children make, particularly with regard to their increasing independence and confidence. Pupils enjoy school and say that lessons are often fun and exciting and that other children are mostly friendly.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Increase the effectiveness of monitoring in science, information and communication technology and religious education by making it more rigorous and systematic.
- Ensure that marking is carried out consistently in all classes.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Pupils achieve very well overall. They achieve particularly well in personal and social development and this is one of the key reasons why most children are on course to reach the early goals by the ends of the reception and why standards are above those expected in reading, writing, mathematics and science by the end of Year 2.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Throughout the school, pupils make substantial gains in their personal, social and emotional development.
- Standards in reading, writing and mathematics are above those expected and have risen in each of the last two years.
- Though pupils know enough scientific facts to attain standards that are above those expected their knowledge of experimental and investigative science is not as good.
- Standards in information and communication technology have risen since the previous inspection and now match those expected by Year 2.
- The school's results are rising faster than the national trend.
- Pupils in the 'nurture class' achieve well and make significant gains in their personal development.

Commentary

1 When they start in the nursery, children's attainment varies considerably but many do not have the skills and knowledge expected for their age. This is most pronounced in their personal and social development but they also have some catching up to do in language, literacy and mathematics. As a result of teaching that is consistently good and often very good, children achieve very well in their personal, social and emotional development and well in other areas of learning. Consequently, most are on course to reach the early goals by the end of reception.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.4 (16.2)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	15.6 (14.9)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	16.8 (16.3)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 51 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2 In 2004, the results of national tests for pupils in Year 2 showed that standards in reading, writing and mathematics were above average. They had risen for the second year running and this meant that the school's results were rising at a faster rate than the national trend. Teachers also succeeded in reversing the trend of girls outperforming boys and for the first time in five years boys did better than girls in reading and writing. In writing and mathematics the proportion of pupils who achieved a higher level was above the national average, which meant that pupils performed far better than those in similar schools. This was also true in reading where almost all pupils, including those who had special educational needs reached the level expected for their age. Last year, teachers' assessments showed that standards in science were also above expectations.

3 Current inspection findings are that pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve very well in English and mathematics. Consequently, standards in reading, writing, and mathematics are above average with a significant number of pupils working at a higher level. In science, where pupils achieve well, they have a good knowledge of life and physical processes and material and their properties but their understanding of experimental and investigative science is not as comprehensive. Pupils who have special educational needs, including those in the 'nurture class' also achieve well and reach the levels of which they are capable. A small number of pupils are gifted academically or talented in music, sports or arts. The extra help they get from teachers ensures that they achieve as well as other groups. A very small number of children in the Foundation Stage speak English as an additional language and the extra help that they get ensures they also achieve well.

4 Throughout the school, pupils achieve very well in their personal, social and emotional development. In the Foundation Stage this is where the most marked improvement is evident and this underpins much of the progress that children make in Years 1 and 2. Pupils in the 'nurture class' make significant gains in their personal development though one or two struggle when away from the intense support that they get in the 'nurture class'.

5 Standards in information and communication technology have risen since the previous inspection and now match those expected in Year 2. However, a mix of good teaching and effective use of resources has led to a number of pupils in Year 1 working at levels that are beyond those expected for their age. This means that the school has the capacity to raise standards further. Standards in religious education have been maintained and continue to meet those prescribed by the syllabus used in local schools.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils gain substantially from the schools very good provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and for other aspects of their personal development. They respond by having positive attitudes to learning and behaving well. Last year attendance was well below average but this has improved considerably in the current year. Most pupils arrive on time for the start of school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Behaviour is usually good and most pupils are keen to achieve well.
- Sometimes a small minority of pupils misbehave in lessons and this has a negative impact on the quality of learning and achievement for themselves and others.
- Relationships between pupils and between adults and pupils are very good, so that pupils can work collaboratively when given shared tasks to complete.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development has improved since the previous inspection and is contributing significantly to pupils' personal development
- The school has excellent strategies for encouraging parents to bring their children to school regularly.

Commentary

6 Pupils behave well. They have good attitudes to their work and are keen to achieve well in their learning. Pupils become absorbed and interested in their tasks and talk enthusiastically about their experiences and achievements. Pupils in Year 2 recollected, with obvious pleasure and enthusiasm, their work on the history of the railways, their involvement in musical activities and the activities in the after school clubs. There is a very small minority of pupils who misbehave, and when this happens, it has a negative effect on the pace of the lesson, the quality of learning and

how well pupils achieve. Occasionally, pupils in some classes find it difficult to conform to the class rules of turn taking and listening quietly and attentively when the teacher is speaking. This too slows the pace of learning and sometimes leads to pupils being unclear about what is expected of them in their tasks. Pupils in the 'nurture class' are helped to consider the impact of their behaviour on others and they generally cope well in larger groups.

7 Pupils have a very good understanding of right and wrong and teachers regularly remind pupils of the school's moral code of behaviour. Class rules are on display and there are many displays in the school emphasising pupils' responsibilities to each other. Pupils respect their school environment and take care of resources and books. The school council, with pupil representatives from each class, provides a very good vehicle for showing respect for pupils' views about the school community and helping them to understand the nature of shared responsibility. Pupils have a very good understanding of their own and others' cultural traditions partly through religious education but particularly because of the school's rich provision in the arts.

8 A very strong feature of school life is the relationships between pupils and between adults and pupils. This contributes significantly to the positive ethos and cordiality in the school, and helps pupils to develop their self-esteem and confidence. Adults know the pupils very well and treat them seriously and as individuals, valuing what they have to say. This helps pupils to feel confident about making suggestions and expressing a viewpoint without fear of failure or being 'wrong', and this in turn, supports their achievement in lessons.

9 Since the previous inspection, the school has improved in the area of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. What was judged to be good provision is now very good overall with good spiritual development. The school fosters pupils' curiosity through a wide range of curriculum experiences, including religious education where they have the opportunity to consider other people's beliefs and values. Pupils reflect on their own and others' emotional response to the arts in music, art and design and drama. School assemblies also give some opportunities for reflection although some opportunities are missed on these occasions to foster the spiritual dimension.

Attendance

10 Last year, attendance was well below average but the school's outstanding efforts to improve this have paid dividends and this year it has risen considerably.

11 A detailed analysis of the causes of absence has identified links between poor attendance and pupils' standards of achievement. From this evaluation the school has produced a comprehensive attendance improvement plan. The procedures that have been subsequently put in place are outstanding. Procedures adopted include:

- The funding and allocation of time to a dedicated school attendance officer.
- Meticulous tracking of absence and rigorous follow up action.
- Stickers and certificates used to reward pupils for good attendance and punctuality.
- The school day restructured to promote punctuality.
- Class attendance rewarded with Carr Bear. Also used as a stimulus for work in school, for example, creative writing and the school opera.
- A programme of rigorous promotion of good attendance through newsletters and letters to families.
- Class attendance posters displayed prominently at all school entrances.
- Close liaison with education welfare services and supportive work with families who have attendance problems.
- Hard messages to families to discourage holidays being taken during term time.
- The introduction of Authorised Absence Passes for families removing children during the school day (linked to truancy watch).

12 Case studies on individuals and groups of pupils have proved that these procedures have had a very positive impact on attendance levels. Carr Bear, in particular, has proved very popular with the children and has been a great success. As a result there has been a significant overall improvement in attendance. This has also impacted positively on the standards achieved by pupils who would previously have missed more school.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (93.7%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	6.0	School data	0.3
National data	5.1	National data	0.4

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

13 **Exclusions.** One boy was excluded for three fixed periods before eventually being excluded permanently because of his unacceptable violence towards other children and staff.

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	216	3	1
White – any other White background	1	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	1	0	0
Any other ethnic group	1	0	0

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a good quality of education for pupils. Teaching is good overall and a very good curriculum is enriched further by several after-school clubs and many first-hand experiences planned for pupils. Pupils benefit from the school’s very good partnership with parents and good links with other schools and the community. In addition, the very good care and guidance provided for pupils and the schools inclusive ethos plays a crucial part in promoting their positive attitudes.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning are good overall. The school’s procedures for assessing and recording pupils’ attainment are also good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is consistently good or better in the Foundation Stage but more variable in Years 1 and 2.
- Teachers are very good at promoting pupils’ personal development.
- Marking is not carried out consistently and some teachers are better at this than others.
- Teachers have a thorough command of the areas of learning and subjects that they teach.

- Teaching assistants make a significant contribution to the quality of teaching.

Commentary

14 In the Foundation Stage, teaching is always good and often very good. Most of the activities are of a practical nature and children enjoy learning from these first-hand experiences. In the nursery, the day is a good balance of times when children work with adults and opportunities for them to choose their own activities. In addition to this, the nursery is organised to stimulate children's enthusiasm for learning; something it does very well. In reception classes, work is more formal when children are taught with pupils from Year 1 but at other times it is pitched at the right level to motivate and interest children. Staff in the Foundation Stage are good at teaching a number of areas of learning through each topic or activity and this is an effective strategy. In Years 1 and 2 the quality of teaching in lessons varied from poor to very good. In the poor lesson the behaviour of a very small number of pupils was unacceptable and not managed effectively enough to ensure that they did not prevent other pupils from learning. In the best lessons, teaching is exciting and challenging and consequently pupils behave well and try hard with their work. Though monitoring had not identified any poor teaching the headteacher was aware of the teaching being more variable in this key stage.

15 A key strength of the teaching throughout the school is the way that staff promote pupils' personal development. This starts in the Foundation Stage where the emphasis is very much on helping children develop social skills, self-esteem, confidence and independence. Staff constantly praise children for their successes and effort and children know that their efforts are valued. In the 'nurture class,' pupils who have social and emotional problems are given the support that they need to gain the best from their education. In this small group, pupils learn to co-operate with others and gain the skills they need to rejoin their classes and succeed in learning. In Years 1 and 2, teachers continue to devote a considerable amount of time to encouraging good behaviour and self-discipline. The combination of good teaching and attention to pupils' personal development is the main reason why pupils achieve very well over time.

16 Staff in the Foundation Stage have a very good knowledge of the areas of learning and use this to plan activities that are interesting and challenging. Children take full advantage of these and are often absorbed in their activities. They try hard with whatever they are doing and are pleased when they get things right. In Years 1 and 2, teachers have an equally good command of the subjects of the National Curriculum. They have been working with the National Literacy Strategy and National Numeracy Strategy for some years now and have a thorough understanding of how to teach the basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics. Their success is evident in the way that most pupils achieve well in these subjects. In addition to this one of the teachers in Year 2 is a 'leading mathematics teacher' within the authority and other teachers and pupils benefit from her expertise.

17 Though assessment is good overall there are variations to the quality of marking in Years 1 and 2 and these inconsistencies have not been picked up because the monitoring of teaching and learning is not rigorous enough. In some classes pupils' work is not always marked and because much of it is not dated it is difficult to measure their progress accurately. Teachers have recently agreed to use a system of marking that is aimed at helping pupils know what they have to do to improve. Some teachers are doing this well but in some classes pupils' work is not always marked and where work has no date or comments it is difficult to measure pupils' progress accurately.

18 Throughout the school, teachers make good use of the time and talents of teaching assistants, who often work with small groups of pupils. In the nursery, the teaching

assistants and nursery manager work extremely closely to plan activities and teach as a team. This level of teamwork is also evident in the 'nurture class' where teachers and other adults work together well. In Years 1 and 2, teaching assistants often work with groups of lower attaining pupils or those who have special educational needs. This involves encouraging pupils and motivating them to complete their work or try hard. In Years 1 and 2 standards in information and communication technology and literacy are rising as a result of the work that a 'higher level' teaching assistant does with small groups of pupils.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 24 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	5	14	4	0	1	0

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

The curriculum

The curriculum is very good and is substantially enriched by a very good range of extra-curricular activities. It generally meets the needs of pupils from all abilities and backgrounds. Good quality accommodation and resources promote learning and help raise standards.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has improved significantly in its curriculum provision since the previous inspection.
- Children in the Foundation Stage enjoy a rich and varied curriculum, which ensures they achieve well.
- The school achieves its key aim of ensuring that all aspects of pupils' development, including personal and social growth are integral to the curriculum and support pupils' development as confident individuals.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and helps them to achieve well.
- A highly enriched curriculum, especially in the arts, and complemented by a broad range of visits and visitors, contributes significantly to pupils' academic, personal and social development.

Commentary

19 Improvement in the curriculum since the previous inspection is good. The school has worked hard, and successfully to develop consistent and rigorous approaches to curriculum planning, which in most instances, take careful account of pupils needs and abilities. What was judged to be good provision for personal and social development is now very good and the school has maintained its good work on behalf of pupils who have special educational needs.

20 Children in the Foundation Stage benefit from a very rich and very well planned curriculum. Adults work together extremely effectively each day to plan, provide and review the curriculum experiences that children need in all the required areas of learning. The quality and range of the curriculum ensures that children succeed in all their early learning goals and have a secure basis for their future learning and achievement.

21 The school curriculum gives proper emphasis to all the required subjects, religious education and personal and social and health education. A strength of the school's curriculum is the way in which appropriate effective links are made between subjects to reinforce pupils learning, for example, the comparison between Christianity and Hinduism was the basis of 'reading for

information' in a very effective English lesson. Pupils' work on the history of the railways linked very effectively to pupils' geographical understanding of their local area.

22 The provision for pupils who have special educational needs is good. In the Foundation Stage the curriculum ensures that children who have special educational needs have equal access to all activities and to additional help from adults. As a result they are happy in school and achieve well. In the 'nurture class' pupils access the full statutory curriculum through a range of linked activities that also promote their emotional and social development. This works well and helps pupils when they go back to their classes. Throughout the school pupils benefit from the calm, orderly routines and very good relationships that are evident throughout the school. They have comprehensive individual education plans which are used daily and kept up to date. There is a strong team of well-qualified support staff. These colleagues work closely with class teachers to ensure that all pupils have full access to the curriculum. The school achieves its key aim of ensuring that all aspects of pupils' development, including personal and social growth are integral to the curriculum.

23 The schools' underlying values are based on a commitment to the development of pupils as well rounded individuals. Consequently, very strong features of the curriculum are the enrichment of the taught curriculum, an imaginative programme of extra curricular activity and the school's ongoing involvement with a wide range of visits and visitors, all of which broaden pupil's horizons. Pupils have worked with London's Royal Opera House to write and perform their own opera 'Carr Bear'. They enjoy many opportunities to work with artists, musicians, actors, and a wide range of people in their community and from other cultures. Pupils participate enthusiastically in the clubs for mathematics, art and design, music and writing organised by staff. The school ensures the involvement of all pupils in a range of musical activity by funding the learning of a musical instrument by all Year 2 pupils. These and many other activities contribute significantly to pupils' learning and motivation.

Care, guidance and support

All aspects of care, welfare, health and safety are very good. The support and guidance offered to all pupils, including the most vulnerable, is good. Pupils are involved in decisions that affect them to a very good extent.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff ensure that pupils are safe and secure in school.
- The school does a very good job in seeking the views of pupils.
- Pupils and staff are working hard to gain a Healthy School Award.
- Arrangements for children to start in the nursery are very good.
- Academic guidance is prevented from being better by the inconsistencies in marking.

Commentary

24 Staff take very good care of pupils. There is good management of child protection, with the designated person having received the appropriate training. All adults in school are up to date with procedures and are clear about their responsibilities. Procedures for accidents and emergencies are good, with many staff trained in the use of first aid. The headteacher, working closely with staff and governors, makes sure that the whole school community is safe from potential hazards. Pupils in the 'nurture class' are cared for well and as result they enjoy their time, do not feel that they are missing out and parents believe that they are getting a good deal. Two staff are trained in counselling techniques and are able to provide good quality help and support when it is needed.

25 Pupils know that their views matter to the adults connected with the school. Through the school council they are encouraged to think of way of improving school routines and the environment. They have been involved in planning the changes to the playground and are already considering what needs to be done next to site tables and make use of the shade provided by trees.

26 The school is working towards a Healthy School Award for being a healthy place for pupils and staff to learn and work in. Water is available throughout the day and there is always fruit and salad available at lunch times. All children are given fruit each day. In the 'nurture class' eating a healthy breakfast is part of the curriculum and pupils say that they enjoy this time when they can talk to adults and visitors. Throughout the school pupils are encouraged to bring healthy snacks to school and are well aware of which foods they should be eating. However, they do not always choose these. A healthy lifestyle is also promoted well through the comprehensive personal, social and health education curriculum.

27 A strong feature of the care given to pupils lies in the way that children are helped to settle into nursery when they first start school. Before they start nursery staff visit children and their families at home and following this the family and child are welcomed into school for a visit. This works well because it builds up a relationship with families and children know at least one of the adults they see on their first day. All of this ensures a smooth beginning to children's school career.

28 Pupils are given very good personal advice and guidance but the academic advice that they receive is satisfactory rather than good. This is largely because teachers' marking does not always tell them what they need to do to improve their work. In lessons this is less of an issue, when staff talk with pupils about their work and provide them with timely advice and support. It is in the marking of books that the problem exists.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Pupils benefit from the very effective partnership that the school has with parents and from good links with the community and other schools.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Links with the community and other schools widen pupils' horizons.
- The school works hard to involve parents in their children's learning.

Commentary

29 Teachers make use of the local community to enhance pupil's learning and understanding of the world in which they live. Local walks and visits to the shops and church help pupils get to know their community and gain a sense of belonging. Trips to the theatre and to local areas of educational interest enrich pupils' learning, which is then reinforced in the classroom by teachers. In addition to this, pupils have the chance to perform in public at events organised locally. For example, they have previously sung at a 'Little Sing' event and taken part in York 'Dance Week'. Pupils are encouraged to raise money for charity and all of this helps raise their self-esteem and promote confidence and independence. The school has a close working partnership with other local schools and this is particularly beneficial to children joining the nursery from playgroups. Equally, when they leave to start the next phase of their education the partnership between infant and junior schools ensures that they do this easily.

30 All staff share the belief that the school belongs to the pupils and their parents and, consequently, work hard to develop the very effective partnership between home and school. This begins when staff make their first contact with parents and continues throughout pupils' time in the school. Parents of pupils who have special educational needs

and those who attend the 'nurture class' are kept fully up to date with how their children are progressing. They play a full part in review meetings, help to set targets and work with the school to help their children at home. Parents are always welcome in school and a number help out on a regular basis. During the inspection they could be found listening to children read or working with small groups. All were well briefed and competent and said that staff value their contributions and that they help out because they enjoy the work. In general, parents are keen to lend their support to the school. They do so by attending open evenings, special events and by accompanying classes on school visits. The active parent association makes a useful contribution to the social life of the school and helps to raise much-needed funds that are used to provide extra resources for their children.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are good overall. The headteacher leads the school very well. Though leadership at other levels is good overall it varies from satisfactory to very good. The governance of the school is good. The school deals well with the main barrier to learning, which is the above average proportion of pupils who have special educational needs.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good leadership by the headteacher has helped the school improve at a very good rate since the previous inspection.
- Governors have made astute appointments in the nursery and the Foundation Stage is led very well by the deputy headteacher.
- Co-ordinators for English and mathematics lead their subjects very well.
- Staff are not monitoring provision systematically or rigorously enough in science, information and communication technology and religious education.
- Effective management of finances ensures that the school runs smoothly.
- Governors support and challenge the school well.

Commentary

31 The headteacher's leadership is self-critical and innovative and this has enabled the school to flourish in recent years. With firm guidance from the headteacher the school has tackled each of the key issues from the previous inspection successfully. Staff morale has remained high because the headteacher has ensured that everyone shares the workload and is working for the benefit of pupils and with the aim of raising standards and in particular improving pupils' personal development. The headteacher also has a clear vision of how the school needs to develop in response to its contextual background and the pupils and parents it serves. As a result, initiatives such as the 'nurture class' and 'family learning' groups are beginning to have a positive impact on pupils' personal development and on parents' involvement in their children's learning.

32 Governors have appointed a well-qualified manager for the nursery and the deputy headteacher leads staff in the Foundation Stage. This is already proving to be a great success and means that the school has the capacity to continue to improve provision in this key stage. Very good leadership has resulted in tremendous improvements to the Foundation Stage curriculum and to the quality of teaching and assessment. Parents said that they are delighted with the nursery and several spoke in particular about the portfolios that they are given showing their children's progress through nursery.

33 As co-ordinators for English and mathematics have gained a better understanding of their roles the leadership and management in these subjects has improved considerably. With guidance from the headteacher the co-ordinators now analyse the results of national tests in order to identify potential gaps in teaching and learning and are quick to do something about these. In these

subjects evaluation is embedded in the school's practice and co-ordinators monitor the quality of teaching and learning by observing other teachers and looking at books. Where teaching is not as effective as it should be co-ordinators take steps to improve it. For example, in looking to raise standards in number, staff recently introduced the concept of using an 'empty number line', which has worked well and helped pupils improve the accuracy of their calculating. In other subjects, the leadership and management are firm and committed but not as effective. In information and communication technology sound leadership has ensured that standards have risen but provision has not been monitored systematically or rigorously and the issue of computers not being used often enough has not yet been resolved. It is a similar situation in science and religious education where monitoring has not been focused enough to identify the fact that the most able pupils are not always being challenged by their work.

34 Governors are active in their support and work on behalf of the school. They work closely with teachers, ensuring that the school fulfils all its statutory requirements, such as having and implementing a racial equality policy. Governors keep a close eye on the quality of teaching and the breadth of the curriculum. They do this by going into the school to see for themselves, for example, by joining the 'nurture class' breakfast and by requesting regular reports and information from the headteacher and co-ordinators. As a result, they are well informed about every aspect of the school's work and have used this knowledge to help staff set relevant priorities for further development and improvement. When necessary they challenge the school's thinking and are properly involved in strategic planning and all major financial and policy decisions.

35 Staff and governors wish the school to be one where educational inclusion is of paramount importance and where every child has an equal opportunity to make progress and has equal access to the curriculum. They manage this well, through providing extra staffing to support pupils who have special educational needs or who speak English as an additional language. It is only in science and religious education where the needs of the most able pupils are not always met. Funding is used very effectively to ensure that pupils who speak little or no English settle in well and that those who have problems get the extra help they need to enjoy their time in school and achieve as well as they can.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2004 to March 2005

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	621,555	Balance from previous year	77,326
Total expenditure	642,981	Balance carried forward to the next	55,900
Expenditure per pupil	3,438		

36 Financial planning and control continue to be good. Governors and the headteacher work together to set and agree the budget and they ensure that all additional funding is used for its intended purpose. The school administration and finance officer exercises good control of day-to-day spending within the limits agreed by governors and action has been taken on all points raised for improvement in the most recent audit of the school's financial procedures. The larger than average carry over in the budget has been set aside to ensure that governors can maintain staffing levels as the number of pupils on roll continues to fall. The carry over also includes Early Years Partnership monies and funding for the 'nurture class'.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

37 The Foundation Stage provision has improved tremendously since the previous inspection. This is largely due to very good leadership and management, which have in turn resulted in teaching that is good overall and frequently very good. Children achieve well in most areas of learning and very well in personal development where teaching is always very good.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff are very good role models for children.
- Children learn about the importance of friendship and work and play well together.

Commentary

38 The nursery is often the first experience that most of the children have of mixing with children other than brothers or sisters. As a result, a significant number of children lack the confidence to play easily with others and they are unused to sharing or taking turns in games. However, they watch staff and take their example from what they do and how they behave towards one another and other children. Staff expect children to be polite and share equipment and by the end of the Foundation Stage most do this easily. For example, when being handed a piece of fruit all of the children in the group said 'thank you' without being prompted. In the nursery, children learn to take turns at playing games and wait patiently for their go. In the reception year teachers expect more self-control from children and most wait their turn to speak in class or group activities.

39 With good leadership from the nursery manager and deputy headteacher, adults working in the Foundation Stage expect children to work and play together in harmony. Through stories and example, children learn to treat one another kindly and be friendly. In the nursery, staff praise children for helping one another out with tidying away or when they get stuck. This encourages children to co-operate and leads to shared playing. By the time they are in reception year, children enjoy imaginative play and are keen to join in. For example, a small group of boys and girls took on the task of building a workman's hut in the playground. They used spirit levels to ensure that surfaces were flat and drew bricks on the side of the hut. A good time was had by all and they co-operated well. Teachers view this area of learning as being the most crucial to the success of children in Carr Infants. They succeed in promoting children's personal and social skills in everything they do and this is why the teaching is very good and why children are on course to reach the early goals by the end of reception.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers promote children's language and vocabulary in everything they do.
- Good teaching of the basic skills of reading and writing helps children achieve well.

Commentary

40 When they start in nursery, many children have limited skills in communication, language and literacy. In addition to this, a number have speech and communication difficulties and need a considerable amount of help and support, sometimes from outside the school. Good leadership and management ensures that this is provided and that staff promote the development of language in everything children do. The teaching of this area of learning is good and helps children achieve well. Adults never miss an opportunity to engage children in conversation about their work or themselves. They use technical language to widen children's vocabulary. For example, when a small group of children in the nursery were packing a suitcase to go on holiday the adult encouraged them to repeat the names of the items they were packing and consequently children used terms, such as 'sun cream' and 'passport'.

41 In the reception classes, teachers have successfully adapted the format of the National Literacy Strategy to suit the needs of children in the Foundation Stage. Each day, children are given opportunities to read books, listen to stories and write. Children enjoy reading and looking at books and they talk enthusiastically about their favourite stories and characters. By the end of the reception class, most children are likely to reach the early goals. They use their knowledge of letter sounds to help them read words they find difficult and write simple sentences about themselves and their work. This gives them a good start for their work on the National Curriculum.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are given many chances to develop mathematical language through games and everyday activities.
- Teachers plan good, practical activities and consequently children learn by finding out and doing.

Commentary

42 Many children are unfamiliar with numbers, shape and space when they start in the nursery. However, they achieve well in mathematical development because of the good teaching and daily opportunities that staff plan for counting and working with number and shape. Children are frequently asked to count, whether it is the number of animals in Noah's Ark or the pieces of fruit in a bowl; they are aware that number is all around them. In the reception year, they learn about addition and subtraction through number rhymes, which they enjoy tremendously, especially when it involves joining in with the action. Staff work hard to widen children's mathematical vocabulary. They use mathematical terms, such as 'more' and 'less' in their discussions and constantly ask children questions that require them to use words to describe the position of objects. For example, in a reception class children were asked to hide a bear and then say where they had placed it. Alongside this staff provide displays, pictures and activities that are aimed at widening children's vocabulary of number and shape.

43 Teachers ensure that children gain an understanding of number, pattern and shape through practical activities such as counting objects, playing games and sorting shapes into sets. For example, children in the nursery learned about colour and number as they sorted objects into sets. Older children learn about shape through stories and the many opportunities that staff provide for them to handle three-dimensional objects in mathematics and when they are making models from household objects. Most children are on course to reach the early goals by the end of reception.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff ensure that children learn through first-hand experiences.
- Children are encouraged to find things out for themselves.

Commentary

44 When they start nursery, children's experience beyond the home varies. Some have a wide knowledge of the area and have travelled with parents, others are less confident and have a more limited understanding of the world. Good leadership ensures that provision in this area of learning has improved substantially since the previous inspection. Effective teaching helps to widen their understanding of the world. Teachers plan activities that are based on first-hand experiences, such as looking at the area around the school or playing in the snow and watching it melt. Children enjoy these outings and record what they have seen as pictures. Many of the activities planned are of a practical nature. In this way children find out about the use of everyday technology. For example, they know how to turn the tape machine on and off and how to find their way around computer programs using a mouse to make things happen on screen.

45 Staff encourage children to ask questions and find things out for themselves. This was evident when children examined seeds and beans and discussed what they needed to do to make them grow. When asked, a number of children in the nursery knew that plants need water to grow and in reception classes they know that plants also need sun and soil. Through careful observation children are beginning to identify and describe the properties of various materials. They know that some materials are shiny and are aware of the textures of different fabrics. Children are interested in living things. Those in the nursery occasionally stopped to take a look at the tadpoles and knew that they were growing into frogs. Photographs show children in reception year seeking grubs and insects in the wild garden and they remembered the names of ladybirds, beetles and slugs. By the end of reception most children are likely to reach the early goals in this area of learning.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff ensure that children get daily opportunities to use small tools.
- Teachers make good use of the outdoor areas to promote children's physical development.

Commentary

46 On entry to the nursery, most children have the skills expected for their age with regard to running, playing and balancing but few have good control of small tools such as pencils and paintbrushes. Good teaching helps children gain a sense of co-ordination and balance in their play and movement and to master the skills of handling small tools such as paintbrushes, pencils and scissors in their work. A feature of the good teaching is the wide range of activities that require children to develop these skills and the way that staff show children how to handle them correctly. For example, children in the nursery were shown how to hold and carry scissors correctly and they use paintbrushes and spatulas when making models from household objects or pictures using a collage of materials.

47 Some time each day is spent out of doors and staff plan these activities well to promote children's physical development. The nursery outdoor area is unexciting but very good leadership and management has identified this as an area for improvement. The reception outdoor area has been greatly improved in recent weeks and is now the envy of all classes. Staff sensitively encourage children to try new activities, both to develop their physical skills and to gain increasing control over their bodies. For example, children in a reception class were shown how to balance an egg on a spoon and test their balance out in a race. One boy spent a long time practising and was thrilled when he got across the yard and back without dropping the egg. By the end of reception year most children are likely to reach the early goals; they are adept at using a range of small tools, though a significant number still hold a pencil incorrectly.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers plan many opportunities for children to engage in imaginative play.
- Children have very positive attitudes to painting because adults show them the techniques they need to create lively pictures.

Commentary

48 When they start in the nursery most children enjoy making pictures and music but lack the social and vocabulary skills to engage in imaginative play unless directed by an adult. Good teaching helps children to express themselves through art and design and music and in imaginative play.

49 Throughout the Foundation Stage, children are encouraged to take part in imaginative play with toys and dressing up clothes and props. They enjoy this tremendously. Staff initiate much of the language and direction in this play but also ensure that children have time to play with one another and decide what role they will take. Children in the nursery dressed up in sunglasses and hats before taking off on a 'summer holiday'. In the reception year, children regularly engage in role-play where they pretend to be characters and act out stories or events that they know.

50 Teachers are good at providing activities where children can explore colour, texture and shape. There are always painting activities available for children in the nursery and because children in the reception class are expected to look carefully at what they are drawing some of their pictures and portraits are very accurate. Good teaching of the techniques of painting means that children in the reception year mixed powder paints to create the plum colour they wanted to paint a picture of fruit. When asked they described how to make brown and purple. All of this means that children are on course to reach the early goals by the end of reception.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 1

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve very well in all aspects of the subject because of consistently good teaching and effective assessment practices.
- Teachers plan very effectively for English and take careful account of pupils' needs and abilities.
- The subject is very well managed by an experienced co-ordinator who is a very good role model for staff and pupils.

Commentary

51 Pupils in Years 1 and 2 benefit from consistently good teaching in English, which builds effectively on the very good start children receive in the Foundation Stage. As a result they achieve very well in speaking and listening, reading and writing, and they attain standards that are above average for their age.

52 In Year 2, pupils speak confidently and, with only occasional lapses, listen carefully to their teachers and to each other. The school is encouraging the development of 'talking partners' to encourage further improvements in this key aspect of English and pupils are responding positively to this initiative. Pupils talk enthusiastically about their work, for example, books they have read or their writing club activities. They are keen to answer questions and use a good range of vocabulary when explaining their ideas in English and other lessons. Pupils in a Year 1 literacy lesson could confidently provide sensible explanations of the terms 'glossary', 'index', 'contents', 'fiction' and 'non fiction'. Pupils' confidence and willingness to engage in class and group discussions derives from the very good, secure relationships that they enjoy with their teachers and other adults.

53 Teachers pay careful attention to providing pupils with very good opportunities to discuss their literacy preferences in terms of genre and structure. Consequently pupils of all abilities talk enthusiastically about the sorts of books and authors that they like and why they prefer some books to others. Pupils have been taught to use a range of strategies to read unknown words and when asked, they talk confidently about using these to help them make sense of the text. A pupil still struggling with the technicalities of reading was enthusiastic about his preference for a history information book rather than his reading book 'You just never know what it's going to tell you next...' A higher attaining pupil in Year 2 preferred 'longer adventure type stories with chapters because usually there is a better plot and more interesting characters...'

54 Teachers ensure in their planning, that there is a balance of writing tasks so that pupils develop their skills in punctuation, grammar, spelling and handwriting and apply these in their work. As a result pupils write very well in a variety of forms, including poetry, letters, imaginative stories and play scripts. Their work shows an enthusiasm for writing and pupils use a good range of vocabulary to create word pictures that reflect individual creativity. A Year 1 pupil described blossom as 'floating quietly and pinkly...' Another young pupil already showing an understanding of connectives and some individuality wrote 'In the blue sea there are sharks and goldfish as well as other fish too. The sea is blue or no I think I will call it water...' As a result of this consistently good teaching pupils read and write very well, and their work shows a good rate of improvement over the school year.

55 The quality of teachers' planning and recently implemented improvements in assessing and marking pupils' work are also significant factors in pupils' achievements. Teachers work very effectively together to plan lessons, and take into account the abilities and needs of pupils, for example, in the allocation of individual and group tasks. As a result all pupils usually achieve very well, including those who have special learning needs. On occasion, the writing books of lower attaining pupils contain a series of very short or unfinished pieces of work, which do not instil the self-confidence or pride in their work that they need, in order to improve. Increasingly, pupils understand how well they have achieved and what they need to do in order to improve, because of the school's very effective approach to marking pupils work by reference to the expected learning goals or to pupils' personal targets. The subject is very well managed by an experienced and enthusiastic co-ordinator who has a very good understanding of the subject, monitors teaching and learning and is a very good teaching role model for colleagues. This is a key feature in the quality of the school's provision in English.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

56 Pupils make good use of their language and literacy skills in all lessons and in their day-to-day interactions with other pupils. In many lessons, and for homework pupils read books and sometimes 'find things out' by reading. Pupils' books show that they write for many reasons. They talk about their work in many lessons and see the importance of reading and writing to their success in school and beyond.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers ensure that pupils use their mathematical knowledge to solve problems.
- The teaching of mental arithmetic is very good.
- Lessons are interesting and teachers make sure that pupils of different ages and abilities are involved and challenged.
- Assessment is used effectively to plan work that is challenging to pupils of all abilities.

Commentary

57 Teaching is very good overall and ensures that pupils achieve very well. A key strength is the way that teachers challenge pupils to apply their mathematical knowledge to solve problems. A key element in this is encouraging pupils to try a range of strategies for solving problems. For example, when adding numbers pupils in Year 1 are taught to start from the higher number and count on or to use number lines while pupils in Year 2 are expected to use their knowledge of digits and pattern to identify ways of solving problems. The most able pupils do this very quickly and are capable of working with large numbers and fractions.

58 The co-ordinator is also a 'leading mathematics teacher' and this has had a significant impact on the quality of teaching. Taking the lead from her fast paced mental mathematics sessions and good use of a wide range of props the teaching of mental arithmetic is very good. The mental starters are lively, and they help learning very well by getting the pupils very well motivated and 'warmed-up' for the remainder of the lesson. During these sessions, pupils are challenged to recall number bonds and answer questions

about pattern and relationship. Pupils say that they enjoy these activities because they are fast and they have to think quickly to keep up. However, it is in the repetition and practise of concepts such as multiples, doubles, halves and addition facts that pupils gain the foundations of mathematics that enable them to attain standards that are above average in Year 2.

59 Teachers have a very good command of the subject and make good use of the National Numeracy Strategy to plan lessons that are interesting and stimulating. They are generally good at matching work to the age and ability of each pupil. Pupils who have special educational needs are well catered for and are always given the help they need to achieve well. Last year, a number did so well that they overcame their barriers to learning and achieved the level expected for their age in national tests. This was a real success for them and the school. In the 'nurture class' teaching is pitched at the right level for pupils' abilities and this ensures that they achieve as well as other groups of pupils, even though their attainment is well below what is expected for their age.

60 Very good leadership and management means that the school's procedures for assessing and recording what pupils know and can do are good and used effectively. The co-ordinator analyses the results of national tests in order to identify potential gaps in teaching and learning and shares this information with teachers and governors. In classes, teachers are very good at asking questions to ascertain what pupils have remembered and know and this has a good effect on pupils' understanding. Strong leadership has also resulted in improved marking of pupils' work. In most classes teachers provide praise and comments that help pupils know what they need to do to improve, though some teachers do this better than others.

Mathematics across the curriculum

61 Mathematics is well integrated into a number of other subjects so pupils understand that what they learn is very useful in a wide range of practical situations. For example, they use counting in many daily activities, and create tallies and tables in science and geography.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers plan their work carefully and ensure a range of interesting activities and tasks to capture pupils' interest and enthusiasm.
- Pupils have good attitudes towards science.
- The curriculum is broad and includes all aspects of the subject with an increasing emphasis on investigative activity.
- Pupils of above average ability are not always challenged by the tasks they are given.
- The school's methods of marking and assessing pupils' progress do not always help pupils' sufficiently to build on their previous work and understand what they need to do to improve.

Commentary

62 Overall the school has maintained the quality of its provision since the previous inspection and pupils attain standards in science that are above average in relation to

knowledge and in line with what is expected in their understanding of investigative and experimental science. Within this positive picture, a key area of focus for improvement has been the quality of planning. Teachers have developed an effective system of planning using national guidelines. They work closely together using these guidelines to make careful medium term and weekly plans, which ensure that pupils in parallel classes enjoy similar curriculum experiences.

63 Teaching is good overall. A feature of the science lessons during inspection week was the range of motivating first hand experiences and resources used by teachers to enthuse pupils and keep their attention. For example, interest was added to a Year 1 lesson on 'pushing and pulling forces' by the teacher's use of a mountain bike to encourage pupils to test the effects of pushing and pulling. In Year 2, pupils were enthusiastic about their experiments on plant growth and the practical planting activities involved in this activity. Activities such as these were usually well managed and effectively organised by teachers, so that pupils made clear progress in their learning. Occasionally, where the teacher's explanations were not clear, where discipline was not so well maintained and the lesson not so well organised, pupils did not work so diligently and achieved less than might have been expected in the lesson.

64 The curriculum includes all the necessary aspects of the subject and there are many examples of work on living things, materials, forces and energy, as well as an increasing emphasis on investigative activity. The school organises whole school science activity weeks. Most recently this has involved the investigation of habitats and the link between science and the environment. Pupils talked enthusiastically about this and all their work in science.

65 Whilst the science curriculum is rich and motivating, the way it is implemented does not always meet the needs of all pupils. There is a tendency for much of the work in science to be based on commercial worksheets. These and other tasks, are often common to all the pupils in the class, and are rarely amended to meet the needs of pupils who have special educational needs or those of higher ability. Pupils with special education needs are well supported, so that they achieve well. For more able pupils, opportunities for more challenging work are infrequent so that their opportunities to sustain and consolidate their learning at the higher levels are limited.

66 The subject is managed satisfactorily. The co-ordinator also has responsibility for a second key aspect of the school's work, which has prevented the leadership from being more focused. The co-ordinator has carried out some, mainly informal, monitoring and has encouraged effective planning in science and the development of more investigative activity. She recognises that there is a need to monitor pupils' progress carefully in order to ensure that attainment is secure. The subject will benefit considerably as teachers begin to apply the school's very effective practice in English and mathematics whereby teachers mark pupils work carefully with learning objectives in mind and with useful comments to pupils about how to improve.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school's provision for information and communication technology has improved since the previous inspection.
- Standards have risen and now match those expected in Year 2.

- Teachers are good at teaching information and communication technology skills alongside other subjects.
- Computers are not used often enough to further raise standards.

Commentary

67 Sound leadership is focused convincingly on raising standards and has helped give direction to the school. As a result, the quality of provision has improved steadily since the previous inspection. The two key improvements have been to the quality of resources and teaching.

68 As a response to criticisms in the previous report, governors purchased a suite of computers and several interactive whiteboards and projectors. However, one of the key reasons why standards are not higher is that computers are not used often enough, particularly in the mornings, when the focus of lessons is literacy and numeracy. The exception to this is in the 'nurture class' where the computer is available for pupils to use at all times; though it also stands idle occasionally when no one wants to use it. This means that pupils do not get the practise they need to make faster progress and attain higher standards. The co-ordinator is tackling this by deploying a 'higher level teaching assistant' to work with small groups of pupils and this is paying dividends. In these small groups, pupils are taught well and quickly gain skills. For example, because the teaching assistant explained each step of the process and demonstrated what they had to do using an interactive whiteboard, pupils in Year 1 were able to put instructions in the right order to access a program.

69 Teachers have taken advantage of training and improved their command and use of information and communication technology. As a result, teaching is now satisfactory overall and some lessons are taught well. One of the strengths of the teaching is the way that information and communication technology is taught alongside other subjects. For example, pupils practise their mental arithmetic skills using computer programs and this has a marked impact on their progress in both subjects. In art and design, pupils have created colourful and lively pictures using computers. When asked, pupils are happy to talk about the programs they use in school and at home. These improvements have begun to raise standards and they now match those expected in Year 2. Pupils use computers to communicate information as text and graphics and they use familiar word processing programs confidently. They are less sure about how to share ideas as tables or sounds and say that this is not something they have done much of in lessons.

70 Though satisfactory, the management of the subject is not strong enough to raise standards. The co-ordinator has worked hard to raise standards and improve the quality of provision but is not yet monitoring the quality of teaching and learning systematically enough. As a result, teachers cannot have a clear enough view of standards and gaps in teachers' use of information and communication technology have largely gone unnoticed.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

71 Pupils make satisfactory use of their information and communication technology skills in other subjects. They use word processing to present their best work and create labels, stories and posters. In mathematics they use programs to develop arithmetical skills but teachers do not use computers often enough to create charts or tables in mathematics or science. Teachers are making increasing use of information and communication technology to teach other subjects but the interactive whiteboards are not used in all lessons.

HUMANITIES

72 In geography and history insufficient evidence was gathered to form overall judgements about provision. These subjects were sampled by observing a small number of lessons, talking with pupils about their work and looking at books and displays.

73 In **history**, work on display around the school and pupils' enthusiastic response in discussion indicates clearly that these subjects are strongly represented in the school curriculum and enjoyed by pupils. This was especially true of the more dramatic historical events such as 'The Great Fire of London,' which pupils could retell in dramatic detail. Pupils were extremely keen to explain their work on the development of the railways and the work of George Stephenson. The topic is another good example of how well the school makes curriculum links that are entirely appropriate, between subjects. This historical topic develops a sense of chronology and is enriched by the fact this is also local history through which pupils can be encouraged to make geographical links with locations they know and rail journeys to the Yorkshire coast. Pupils are taught about historical figures and events, and are encouraged to make comparison between 'then' and 'now' through ideas such as 'work' and 'schooling'.

74 In **geography**, pupils are introduced to map work at an early stage and work on display indicates that this is reinforced and extended as pupils move through the school. Overall the picture of humanities in the curriculum is positive, enhanced by a broad range of visits and visitors to the school.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have good attitudes and are enthusiastic about their work in religious education.
- Tasks given to pupils are identical regardless of pupils' needs or abilities.
- Marking and assessment are not having sufficient impact on pupils learning and achievement.
- The curriculum is enriched by a broad range of visits and visitors, and it contributes well to pupils spiritual moral social and cultural development.

Commentary

75 The school's satisfactory provision in religious education is broadly similar to that described at the time of the previous inspection. During the inspection only one lesson was observed, but this together with the scrutiny of pupils' work, displays in the school and extended discussions with pupils indicates clearly that in religious education pupils in Year 2 attain the standards prescribed by the syllabus used in local schools.

76 Pupils talk enthusiastically about what they have learned in religious education. They show increasing awareness of Christianity, Judaism and Hinduism. They can identify similarities in religious artefacts, for example, holy books such as the Torah and the Bible, and are genuinely interested in the subject. Pupils show an understanding of the place of religious belief in peoples' lives at a level appropriate to their age, explaining that 'understanding different religions is important in order to respect other people.' Pupils are very positive and interested in other people's beliefs and values and this comes through clearly in their discussions.

77 The school provides an enriched curriculum in religious education, not only in curriculum tasks but in the visits, visitors and resources employed by teachers to sustain their interest. The school uses its strong links with local places of worship and religious leaders to broaden pupils' horizons and deepen their understanding. This together with the school's emphasis on a broad range of cultural activities contributes significantly to pupils' personal development. Teachers also make very good curriculum links, for example, in a literacy lesson with Year 1 pupils in which they were comparing non-fiction texts, the 'big books' being used were about Christianity and Hinduism.

78 The considerable energy and commitment that teachers devote to ensuring the quality of the curriculum undoubtedly motivate pupils, but do not always extend their learning or achievements to the full. The activities and tasks set are usually common to all pupils with no extension or higher level work for more able pupils, and marking and assessment do not yet have the impact or rigour of the other core subjects of English and mathematics. The co-ordinator manages the subject satisfactorily and has provided support for colleagues in relation to resources and curriculum guidelines. Further work is needed in monitoring the quality of teaching, pupils' achievements and progress.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

79 In art and design, design and technology, music and physical education insufficient evidence was gathered to form firm judgements about provision. These subjects were sampled by observing a small number of lessons, talking with pupils about their work and looking at books and displays.

80 Teachers and pupils are proud of the Silver Artsmark that they have recently been awarded for their work in **art and design** (the arts). The school is alive with colourful displays of pupils' creative work and this makes it a vibrant and exciting place to learn. Teachers plan regular opportunities for pupils to work with artists or talented adults. From these adults, pupils learn and explore many techniques that help them create art of a high quality. For example, guided by a sculptor pupils experimented with shape and clay to achieve high quality sculptures of their own design. Other sources of inspiration for pupils have been stories from other cultures and periods. Pupils in Years 1 produced colourful and detailed plates in the Chinese Willow Pattern. In the art club, which is well attended and popular pupils were again using clay to create life size masks which they are to decorate and embellish. Pupils' positive attitudes to any work in art and design were clear from comments such as, 'you can just try what you want and it always works'.

81 Pupils said that they enjoy the making in **design and technology** better than the designing. In Year 2 pupils design and make musical instruments and carry out simple evaluations. Much of the designing and making stems from work that pupils do in other subjects.

82 The school provides many rich **musical** experiences for pupils and ensures, through school funding commitments that every child in Year 2 learns to play a musical instrument. There is a well attended music club and pupils' learning is considerably enhanced, far beyond what might be reasonably expected of a school, by other experiences. For example, pupils have worked with London's Royal Opera House and been involved in workshops led by musicians from different cultures. They have also had opportunities to perform their own compositions. Teachers with special expertise in music are involved in teaching the pupils, raising the quality of their experience. Taken together, these activities ensure that the school's music curriculum contributes effectively to pupil's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

83 **Physical education** is clearly an important part of the curriculum and pupils are taught, gymnastics, games and dance. Girls say that they get a fair deal from the school and can play football 'just the same as the boys'. Space indoors and outside is good and pupils have lots of opportunities to run about and play games.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

84 In citizenship insufficient evidence was gathered to form firm judgements about provision. Therefore this was sampled by talking to pupils.

85 Pupils expressed the view that the elected school council has a beneficial influence on school life, and helps many of them to gain **citizenship** skills through giving them experience of responsibility and decision making. Pupils are further encouraged to play an active role as citizens through the school's 'playground buddy' system and good links with the community. They know that they have a responsibility to the school and their community and older pupils spoke of vandalism spoiling the school and their area.

Personal, social and health education

Provision in personal, social and health education is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' personal development is a key feature in the school's work.
- The formal programme of work ensures that pupils have a good knowledge of health and safety issues.
- Pupils gain citizenship skills through the school's links with the community and its arrangements for their cultural development.

Commentary

86 Teachers promote pupils' personal development very well. From the nursery onwards, raising the self-esteem, confidence and independence of pupils is of paramount importance to staff. In the nursery and reception classes, activities are specifically aimed at promoting friendship and co-operation with others and in this way children build up constructive relationships with others children and adults. In Years 1 and 2, teachers continue to promote pupils' social development alongside their academic development. Most lessons involve discussions and through stories and circle time pupils are encouraged to think about themselves and their feelings and consider how their actions have an effect on others. In the 'nurture class' personal development is one of the key aims and is viewed by teachers as being crucial to pupils' being able to work with classmates and play a full part in lessons when they return to their classes.

87 Pupils in Years 1 and 2 follow a formal programme of lessons, which focus on being healthy, staying safe, making a positive contribution to the community and learning to manage money; all of which reflect the outcomes in *Every Child Matters*. In discussions pupils talked about healthy eating and exercise. Parents feel that their children gain confidence and maturity during their time in school.

88 The attention given to respecting the differences between people means that there is very little bullying in the school and most pupils think that other children behave well enough. They also know who to go to for help and are confident that adults will sort out any problems that they have.

89 When combined with good teaching this aspect of the school's work is a key element in why pupils achieve so well.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	2
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	2
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	2
Pupils' achievement	2
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	6
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	2
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	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	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	2
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).