

INSPECTION REPORT

CONISBROUGH STATION ROAD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Conisbrough

LEA area: Doncaster

Unique reference number: 106749

Headteacher: Mr Simon Martin

Lead inspector: Mr Declan McCarthy

Dates of inspection: 7-9 December 2004

Inspection number: 266660

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:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	194
School address:	Station Road Conisbrough Doncaster South Yorkshire
Postcode:	DN12 3DB
Telephone number:	01709 513010
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Neil Hoyland
Date of previous inspection:	July 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school is situated in a Victorian building on a main road near the castle in Conisbrough. It is attended by pupils from a wide catchment area around Conisbrough with some pupils travelling in to school by bus. Although there are significant factors of socio-economic deprivation, significant recent regeneration in the area has seen the proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals drop from 21 percent in 2004, to 14 percent, which is now below average. The school is smaller than most primary schools with 194 pupils on roll including 30 children in the reception year. Children enter the school having attended nurseries or playgroups and approximately a fifth of children have had no previous pre-school experience. Assessment information shows that children's overall attainment on entry is below average for their age. Pupils are almost exclusively of white British heritage with a few pupils from mixed backgrounds and no pupils who speak English as an additional language. Mobility varies from year to year. In 2004 mobility was high with 23 percent arriving or leaving the school. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs is broadly average, and the percentage with a statement of special educational needs is above average. Nearly all pupils' special educational needs arise from moderate learning difficulties and a few either have specific learning difficulties or emotional, social and behavioural difficulties. The school achieved the silver Artsmark award and Healthy

Schools status in 2003. It also achieved the Eco Schools bronze award in 2002 and is currently involved in the Leadership Development Strategy in Primary Schools. There are close links with the local comprehensive school for transition and the school is involved in the Doncaster Healthy Schools Programme. As a result of being in a challenging area, the school benefits from an Excellence in Cities Education Action Zone.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
23886	Declan McCarthy	Lead inspector	Special educational needs Science Music Physical Education Religious education Personal, social and health education
13462	Roberta Mothersdale	Lay inspector	
23319	Vincent Leary	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Art and design Design and technology
22359	Jean Havard	Team inspector	Foundation Stage English Geography History

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a **good** school. The headteacher provides very good leadership and the school is managed very effectively. Although standards are in line with national averages, pupils' achievements are good because teaching and learning are good. Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development are very good. There are very good links with parents and other schools. The school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is very good because the school provides very effectively for their needs.
- Pupils are very confident and have high self-esteem because they receive high quality support and guidance from staff.
- The strong leadership of the headteacher has led to very good teamwork and a shared commitment to school improvement.
- The school makes very good use of performance data and evaluates its work very effectively in order to raise standards of achievement and improve teaching and learning.
- Although assessment systems are good, assessment information is not always used by teachers to improve pupils' learning.
- Subject co-ordinators have not yet fully developed their monitoring role.
- There are very good outdoor play facilities for pupils in Years 1 to 6, although the lack of a dedicated outdoor play area for children in the reception class is holding back their progress.

Improvement over the last five years is satisfactory overall with recent good improvement since the appointment of the new headteacher. Since the school was last inspected, there has been almost a complete turnover of staff with many new and less experienced staff appointed. The very good leadership and management by the new headteacher have ensured good recent improvement in the quality of teaching, learning and pupils' achievements. The key issues identified at the last inspection have been effectively met. There has been good improvement in the curriculum with very good curricular development, particularly in ICT and its use to promote teaching and learning. The school is now in a very good position to improve further.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average

N.B. Caution is needed in interpreting this data as numbers are small. Similar schools are those with similar numbers of pupils entitled to free school meals

Pupils' **achievement** is **good**. In 2004, the school's test results in Year 2 were below average in reading and average in writing and mathematics, compared to schools nationally. In comparison with similar schools with similar numbers of pupils entitled to free school meals, the 2004 Year 2 tests results were average in reading, and above average in writing and mathematics. Results vary significantly from year to year because the numbers of pupils taking the tests is relatively small. For example, in 2003 Year 2 results were average in reading and above average in writing and mathematics. This year, standards are broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics. The low 2004 Year 6 test results were due to high pupil mobility and a high proportion of pupils with moderate learning difficulties in this year group. Again, results vary from year to year. For example, in 2003 standards were well above average overall compared to similar schools, as pupil mobility was much lower and there were fewer pupils with special educational needs in that Year 6 group. Currently, standards are in line with the national average in Years 2 and 6 in English, mathematics and science. Their achievement is good in English, mathematics, science, religious education and ICT. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is very good, because very good support for learning is provided by the school. By the end of the reception year the vast majority of children make good progress, reaching the Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning. In personal, social and emotional development they do particularly well, but their progress in physical development is limited by the lack of outdoor facilities.

Pupils' personal qualities and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are **very good**. They have very good attitudes to learning, very good relationships with others and their behaviour is very good. Attendance and punctuality are good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school is providing a **good quality of education**. **Teaching is good** and, as a result, pupils' learning is good. The headteacher and deputy head are providing effective support to less experienced teachers in order to improve the quality of teaching. Assessment systems are good, although teachers have yet to fully use assessment information to guide learning. There is a good range of clubs and educational visits to promote pupils' learning. The school cares for its pupils well. There are very good links with parents and other schools. Links with the community are good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **good**. The headteacher provides very good leadership and is very effectively supported by the deputy head. Subject leadership is satisfactory. The governing body has a good knowledge of the school's strengths and weaknesses and ensures that all statutory requirements are met. Governors support the school's work strongly. The school is managed very effectively and runs smoothly.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents support the school strongly, they are pleased with the progress their children are making and they feel very welcome in the school. They recognise good quality teaching and the high quality support and guidance provided for their children. Pupils have very positive attitudes, they enjoy being at school, they feel safe and secure, they find lessons interesting and fun and they believe teachers expect them to work hard.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Develop teachers' use of assessment to improve pupils' learning.
- Develop fully the monitoring role of co-ordinators in order to improve teaching and learning and raise pupils' achievement.
- Work closely with the LEA in providing dedicated outdoor play facilities for children in the reception year.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Standards are in line with the national average. Pupils' achievements are good with no significant differences in the achievements of boys and girls. Children's achievements in the reception year are also good. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children in the reception class achieve well overall, though in physical development the lack of suitable facilities restricts their achievement.
- Significant staff changes have contributed to a fall in standards in recent years.
- Pupils achieve well in English, mathematics, science, ICT and religious education.
- Pupils with special educational needs are achieving very well as a result of very good provision to accommodate their needs.

Commentary

1. By the end of the Foundation Stage the vast majority of children make good progress, reaching the Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning; in several areas some children will exceed these goals. Their attainment in personal, social and emotional development is well above expectations. Children begin the Foundation Stage with positive attitudes to school, which are developed rapidly through good teaching. They clearly enjoy the challenge of learning and take pride in their accomplishments. Achievement overall is good, including for those with special educational needs. However, the lack of suitable facilities for reception children, including separate outdoor facilities with appropriate resources, is limiting the development of physical skills.
2. In 2004, Year 2 test results were below average in reading and average in writing and mathematics, compared to schools nationally. However, compared to similar schools they were average in reading and above average in writing and mathematics. Results vary considerably from year to year because of the relatively small number of pupils who take the tests. For example, in 2003 they were average in reading and above average in writing and mathematics. Standards on entry to the school are below average in communication, language and literacy in English. However, significant staff changes over recent years, with less experienced teachers being appointed to the school, have contributed to a fall in standards over the last three years. Nevertheless, the new headteacher and acting deputy head are providing effective support to improve teaching and learning and raise standards further. As a result, this inspection shows that in Year 2, standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science are now average, indicative of good achievement against prior attainment on entry to school.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	14.9 (15.6)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	14.7 (15.4)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	16.1 (17.3)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 30 pupils in the year group (10 boys and 20 girls). Figures in brackets are for the previous year. Care should be taken when interpreting these results, as the year group is relatively small. Each pupil represents more than 3 percentage points.

3. In 2004, results in National Curriculum tests in Year 6, compared with other schools nationally, were below average in English and mathematics and above average in science. However, compared with similar schools, Year 6 results were average in mathematics and well above average in science, although remaining below average in English. Nevertheless, a high proportion of pupils were identified with moderate or specific learning difficulties and as a result they find learning particularly difficult. There was also high mobility within this particular year group, which had a negative impact on standards, resulting in the school's failure to meet its statutory targets in English and mathematics. However, the school's own analysis of value, added strongly supported by LEA data and the findings of this inspection, indicates good achievement. In Year 6, standards are currently average in English and mathematics and above average in science. The school is now well placed to meet its targets in 2005.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	24.3 (27.0)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	26.3 (28.5)	27.0 (26.8)
science	29.4 (30.6)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 27 pupils in the year group (17 boys and 10 girls). Figures in brackets are for the previous year. Care should be taken when interpreting these results as the Year group is small. Each pupil represents more than 3 percentage points

4. Currently, pupils of different attainment levels in Years 1 to 6 are achieving equally well because teachers set high expectations for learning and have secure subject knowledge as a result of effective training and support. As a result, pupils' achievements in English, mathematics, science, ICT and religious education are good.
5. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress towards the individual targets set for them because they are very effectively supported by teachers and teaching assistants in lessons. Pupils' targets are regularly evaluated and reviewed, and new targets are set to aid progress, when required. Target setting for these pupils has greatly improved and the SENCO monitors and reviews their progress together with these pupils and their parents. Good provision for gifted and talented pupils, through extension and enrichment of learning, also ensures they achieve as well as their peers.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and relationships are very good. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. Attendance and punctuality are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The strength of the school's belief in the worth and value of the pupils is reflected in their self-esteem and pride in their achievements.
- Exciting opportunities for multi-cultural development help pupils to be aware of the range of faiths and cultures in the wider community.
- Very good opportunities for personal development result in confident, happy pupils who get on very well with each other and staff.
- Pupils are punctual to school and lessons, and their attendance is good and improving.
- Most children in the Foundation Stage are on course to reach well above the Early Learning Goals in personal, social and emotional development.

Commentary

6. The school has great faith in the abilities of the pupils and works hard to bring out their very best qualities of personal development and academic achievement. A stunning photographic display of all the staff and pupils in the reception area of the school reflects the confident ethos of the school and the very good attitudes that pupils possess. The very high quality of work produced by all pupils during the Heads Together project, where pupils recorded photographically aspects of their own and their families' lives, demonstrates the responsible and mature approach that all pupils took to working independently, and is a result of the school's trust in the pupils to persevere and take the task seriously. Relationships are very strong and pupils want to work well for their teachers. As a result, in a very brief period of time, pupils in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2 have been able to learn the words and actions of a considerable range of songs for their Christmas production, and are word perfect for their roles. Ideas and suggestions, put forward by pupils who have been democratically elected onto the school or Eco council, are taken seriously. Pupils take ownership of their school and developments around the school because of the good response they receive for their ideas such as sports tournaments, plants in the playground, "livening up assemblies", and feedback on the quality of whiteboard pens. By providing very good social opportunities for pupils, such as the residential trip to Robin Hood's Bay for older pupils, pupils learn to get on with each other and a range of other people in a different social setting. Positive attitudes are further developed through extensive opportunities for group work, seen in nearly all lessons.
7. The school makes very good efforts to expose pupils to a wide range of cultures and faiths. The walls of the school are bright with displays and artefacts from African, Chinese, Sikh, Hindu, Jewish and Christian cultures and artists, actors, dancers, musicians and poets are regular visitors to the school. As a result, pupils are very aware of the rich diversity of ethnicity outside of their immediate community and learn to respect, celebrate and enjoy each of these cultures. Through visits to the miner's chapel in a local church and to the ruins of Conisbrough Castle, the school also provokes a pride in the culture and history of the immediate area.
8. Around the school, pupils behave very well and are considerate to each other. Lunchtime supervisors reward especially good behaviour by nominating a pupil who can then choose a circle of friends to share their lunchtime at a special table in the school hall. There are high expectations of how pupils should behave that are consistently emphasised in class time and assemblies. Pupils relate well to the school rules that they have helped to write, and as a result, respect them. At playtime the headteacher was able to demonstrate spectacularly how swiftly, and responsibly, pupils do respond to a disciplinary demand. In the midst of a busy playtime he gave three short blasts on his whistle, the accepted signal of an emergency situation, which could denote a dog or stranger in the playground vicinity, or, for example, a fire alert. Immediately and without question, all pupils stopped what they were doing and walked quietly to their allotted places in an emergency line up. There is zero tolerance of any sort of bullying and harassment in school, the anti-bullying policy is regularly revised and the school council has suggested different approaches to tackling any aspects of intimidation. There have been no exclusions in the last and current school year. Furthermore, pupils said they feel safe and secure in school and able to talk to a member of staff if they had worries. Most children leave the Foundation Stage with good personal, social and emotional skills, making very good progress within a very short space of time. Children learn how to co-operate and persevere in their tasks and they respond very well to the clear routines and settle with the minimum of fuss. By the time they leave the reception year they can share, take turns and work independently. The staff have high expectations of behaviour to which the children respond very well.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%) 2003/2004

Authorised absence	
School data	4.6
National data	5.1

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.3
National data	0.4

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

9. The school places a strong emphasis on the importance of regular attendance and punctuality. Very effective systems are in place to identify each pupil's pattern of attendance and there is a very effective partnership with the education welfare service. As a result the school can quickly follow up any pupil absences that are giving concern and celebrate those pupils who have a consistently good attendance. The school has clear guidelines for authorising any holiday that is taking pupils away from school during term time, and as a result, fewer parents are making these requests, and those that do, take work with them for their children to complete whilst away. Pupils are very punctual and nearly all are in their classrooms before the taking of attendance registers. This means that lesson can start on time without any interruptions for latecomers.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is good. Teaching and learning are good. There are good opportunities for enriching learning within the curriculum and very good inclusion of all pupils. Pupils are cared for well and there are very good links with parents and other schools. Links with the community are good.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are good. Assessment arrangements are satisfactory overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good throughout the school: high expectations for pupils' learning result in pupils' good achievement.
- Teaching support for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- Teachers promote literacy effectively across the curriculum and use ICT effectively to support teaching and learning.
- Teachers manage pupils' behaviour very well and maintain very good relationships with pupils.
- Although assessment systems are good, assessment information is not always used enough by teachers to support pupils' learning and achievement.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 25 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2	6	14	3	0	0	0

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

10. Overall the quality of teaching is good throughout the school. There has been a slight fall in quality of teaching since the last inspection, which at that time was judged to be very good, because within the last two years five newly qualified teachers were appointed when more experienced teachers left. In order to improve the quality of teaching, the new headteacher and the acting deputy head have worked tirelessly and very effectively in providing direct support in classrooms and ongoing training, which has resulted in stronger and more confident teaching. They both provide excellent role models for teaching and ensure continuity in pupils' learning by covering staff absences whenever possible, in preference to appointing supply teachers. This has led to good recent improvements in the quality of teaching and learning, as seen during this inspection. Good teaching was seen in all subjects throughout the school. Teachers set high expectations for learning and as a result, pupils' learning is good, pupils work hard, try their best and achieve well. Parents and pupils, in their questionnaires and in discussions, acknowledge good teaching in the school. Pupils say that lessons are fun and teachers expect them to work hard.
11. Support provided in lessons for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Staff carefully break down tasks into smaller steps, explain tasks clearly, focusing on individual pupils' level of language development, and clarify any misconceptions they may have with their learning. As a result, pupils with special educational needs learn effectively at their own pace in lessons. The special educational needs co-ordinator also provides very effective support for staff to ensure strong teamwork in lessons. Higher attaining pupils are provided with good opportunities to extend their learning in lessons and, consequently, achieve as well as other pupils.
12. The teaching of literacy skills within subjects is good and further promotes learning. Pupils develop a better understanding of subject specific vocabulary through discussion and teachers ensure that wherever possible pupils are given opportunities to extend their writing. This has impacted positively on learning and the good achievement of all pupils. In the best lessons, teachers set clear objectives and review pupils' progress at the end of lessons. They provide stimulating group activities to consolidate learning, and make good use of ICT to promote teaching and learning.
13. Pupils respond very well in lessons because teachers manage their behaviour very effectively and maintain very good relationships with pupils. As a result, pupils listen carefully and follow instructions.
14. Assessment for tracking of the progress of children in the reception class is developing well. However, staff do not always ensure that assessment information is used effectively enough to challenge the learning of higher attaining children. Good assessment procedures in other subjects have been developed recently with good strategies in place to analyse data and set whole school targets in English and mathematics. This information is used effectively for future planning, predicting attainment and setting individual targets in literacy, which is an improvement since the last inspection. However, individual targets are not currently set in mathematics and the school has rightly identified this as an area for further development. Furthermore, marking of pupils' work does not always inform pupils of how to improve their work. Despite these limitations, lessons are usually well planned to accommodate the needs

of different groups of pupils. As a result, pupils of all attainment levels are achieving well. Good assessments systems are in place to record children's achievements in the reception year. Annual reports to parents on pupils' achievements are informative, which parents confirmed in discussion. The school has rightly identified the use of assessment information by teachers to improve learning as an ongoing area for further development. Statutory requirements for the review of Statements are fully met and targets within individual education plans are clear, precise and measurable and are used very effectively to accommodate the particular needs of pupils with learning difficulties in lessons.

The curriculum

The curriculum is good, and particularly strong in its planned programme for the personal, social and health education of all its pupils. There are good opportunities for enriching learning within the curriculum. The accommodation and resources for learning are very good for Year 1 to Year 6 but there are relative weaknesses in outdoor provision for reception children.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides a broad and varied curriculum that is well suited to all its pupils.
- Planning has improved since the previous inspection, but the intellectual needs of the highest attaining pupils are not yet being met consistently in all lessons and classes.
- The ICT curriculum has significantly improved, and is developing well as a tool for learning in other subjects.
- The curriculum is effectively enriched by the use of visiting specialist providers, and by strong community and parental links.
- There is a very good programme of personal, social and health education, which fosters personal growth and self-esteem.
- The learning mentor is used effectively to support pupils' learning in a variety of contexts.
- The school provides very well for pupils with special educational needs.
- There is inadequate outdoor provision for reception children.

Commentary

15. The school has maintained all the features of the curriculum that were identified as good at the time of the previous inspection. This ensures that for most pupils, the school continues to meet its aim of providing a broadly based and challenging curriculum. A particular strength of the curriculum is the way in which it embraces all pupils, regardless of gender, ability or ethnicity. This integration is very successful, precisely because it does not highlight or focus on the differences between pupils. Instead, it offers the same curriculum, but takes great care to ensure that those pupils who need support receive it. However, despite revised planning, which now ensures teachers plan for three levels of difficulty, tasks planned and set for the most capable pupils are not always sufficiently demanding. Provision for ICT is now good, a significant improvement since the previous inspection. The subject has been strengthened by the introduction of interactive whiteboards and the increase in and more effective use of laptops and computers. This has given the pupils access to good quality, well-focused teaching of ICT skills. Good use is made of ICT across the curriculum. The curriculum for religious education is good. It is enabling pupils to

achieve well and makes a strong contribution to the pupils' spiritual development, which has also improved and is now good.

16. Recently introduced imaginative teaching and learning strategies, such as a greatly improved ICT teaching and resources and the parental reading scheme, are enhancing the curricular provision. The range of extra-curricular clubs has been extended to include art, drama, games and school website clubs. In addition, specialist providers such as sports coaches, theatre groups and other outside speakers are used effectively to enhance the curriculum with their expertise. Parents value the variety of activities offered, because they believe they result in interested children who want to learn. A recent innovation is the weekly parent-pupil reading sessions. Each week, parents and guardians are invited to share a reading session with their child supported by the teachers. It is too early to judge its effectiveness but it is an indicator of very strong parental links. The local community plays an important part in the life of the school, making a valuable contribution to the school's very good programme for personal social, health and citizenship education through, for example, the Heads Together project with very effective strategies for enhancing pupils' self-esteem.
17. The learning mentor's time is used creatively and to good effect. Her work in the school with small groups of pupils with a focus on developing their self-esteem has a positive impact upon all of the children's ability to settle to tasks without disturbance. Pupils with special educational needs have equally effective provision. School systems for identifying children with particular needs early in the Foundation Stage are efficient and effective. Provision for gifted and talented pupils is enhanced through very good community initiatives, such as the development of video productions and the use of storyboards.
18. A recent feature of the curriculum is the imaginative use of time to strengthen the links between subjects. Teachers are experimenting with blocking subjects together in order to teach basic skills, such as writing accounts of geographical events using ICT within a meaningful context. This positive change has the potential flexibility of approach to foster creativity and increase the level of challenge for all pupils.
19. The accommodation is judged to be good overall with an increase in the number of areas now available for group work. There is a good range of resources and a well-considered action plan in place to address the inadequacies in accommodation. However, there is limited outdoor provision for reception children and outside facilities are unsatisfactory due to the sloping playground. The children do not have access to a separate secure outside area and resources for outdoor activities are unsatisfactory. This limits children's opportunities to develop their physical skills. There is also limited space for storage of outdoor equipment for children in the reception class.
20. The school grounds are very attractive, interesting, well planted and contain well-designed conservation areas. Pupils have access to playground areas that provide an attractive and stimulating environment. Classrooms are attractive and clean areas for learning. Some classrooms, particularly the one used by the youngest children, are cramped.

Care, guidance and support

Provision for pupils' care, guidance, health and safety is good. Pupils have very good access to well-informed support, advice and guidance. Good systems are in place to consult and involve pupils on their views.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school gives very good support, advice and guidance to pupils because there are very good relationships between pupils and staff and the school has a lot of information about pupils.
- The involvement of pupils through seeking and acting on their views in class and through the school councils is good.
- Good induction programmes are well organised.
- Whole school health and safety procedures are in place but child protection training needs extending to all staff.

Commentary

21. Although a number of the teaching staff are only recently in post, overall, staff know pupils very well and pupils feel that there is always an adult they can go to if they have any worries. Pupils are encouraged to express their feelings and opinions through circle time, when they sit together to talk through social and moral issues, and when putting forward ideas for the class/school and Eco councils. This gives a very good opportunity for staff to strengthen relationships, find out what is close to the heart of pupils and be in a good position to influence, guide and support them. The headteacher has recently adapted the approach to his office and to the administration office so that pupils do not feel intimidated if they wish to come and talk to him and, as a result, there is always a stream of pupils waiting outside his door. The school's ability to track pupil's personal and social development is very well supported by good assessment procedures. Access to the learning mentor is very beneficial for pupils with a range of emotional and behavioural difficulties and has a very positive impact on the school's relationship with parents and on pupils' achievements.
22. Individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs are regularly reviewed with parents and pupils. Their views are taken into account in the review process. There are good systems in place to monitor and track pupils' academic progress, although target setting in mathematics and marking is in need of further development.
23. Induction arrangements for new pupils in the single form entry are good, but complicated by the fact that a number of pupils have not had any pre-school experience. The school counteracts this with a well-organised programme that ensures that pupils are well supported by staff and older pupils.
24. Procedures for health and safety are very good and provision to assess risks to pupils, either when they are out on trips or on the school premises, is well organised. Personal care, emergency evacuation procedures and first aid arrangements are also very well organised. The school has achieved Healthy School status and pupils are all encouraged to take part in healthy exercise, think about how to stay safe and to eat healthy food. Pupils can get a healthy snack from the "Green Machine" at break times

and avail themselves of a fruit snack. As a result, parents are very confident about the care that the school offers to their children. All staff are aware of the arrangements for child protection, but only the headteacher, who is the designated person, has received any formal training in the most recent child protection procedures. The school recognises the need to act swiftly on this issue.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents are very good. Links with the community are good and links with other schools in the area are very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Links with parents support a trusting and improving relationship.
- The school's open door policy makes a very important contribution to the very good home and school partnership.
- The school's partnership with the Education Action Zone enhances the pupils' education.

Commentary

25. A very strong partnership exists with parents. Notice boards and regular newsletters inform parents of school activities and staff are available and accessible to parents to talk through any matters that may concern them. Following feedback from parental questionnaires, information to parents has increased through the provision of mid-year reports. Space for parents to include their own three-monthly targets for their children boosts their involvement in their children's learning. Annual written reports to parents are personal and informative and very detailed on how pupils can be encouraged to direct their future learning. Parents support pupils' learning and homework well and also lend their support to activities organised by the school to benefit resources and opportunities for the pupils. For example, a recent sponsored skipping event raised a large sum of money to provide educational visitors to the school, fund outings and provide new playground and outdoor equipment. A substantial number of parents and grandparents regularly help in the school and accompany school outings. Additionally, the school's belief in the talent of its parents and grandparents in school has led to it supporting the training of three parents as teachers' assistants.
26. The school receives good support from parents whose children have special educational needs. Parents regularly attend review meetings to contribute to their children's learning and are generally happy with the level of support that the school provides. Parents and pupils are effectively involved in the reviews of individual education plans and annual reviews of Statements. Their views are taken into account in setting new targets to improve learning.
27. The school has forged effective community links for pupils, especially for therapeutic and professional support, through its participation in the Education Action Zone. This benefits pupils who may need a swift intervention strategy that does not require them to go out of school for specialist support, such as for time with a speech and language therapist. A Christian ethos is maintained by very close links with the local churches

and pupils are proud to promote the school's image through a website that they produce and manage themselves.

28. Links with the local schools are very strong. They are supported through visits by staff and a transition programme that is sustained by the learning mentor and which provides a continuity of work from Year 6 to Year 7. The headteacher initiates exchanges and develops strategies through attendance at meetings with other schools within the same area. This supports joint training days and adds to the smooth transition for pupils from the junior to secondary stage of their education.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher provides very good leadership and ensures the school is managed very effectively. Key staff provide good support for the headteacher. School management is very good. School governance is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Strong leadership of the new headteacher and very effective management have ensured good recent improvement.
- The headteacher and acting deputy headteacher provide excellent role models for teaching, learning and the development of the curriculum.
- Performance management is used very effectively to improve the quality of teaching and raise pupils' achievements.
- Co-ordinators have yet to develop fully their monitoring role.
- The governing body provides effective support and challenges the work of the school.

Commentary

29. The new headteacher, who has been in post since September 2004, inspires the trust and confidence of staff and has worked very effectively in developing strong teamwork and improving the quality of teaching and learning in a short space of time. He is dynamic and is rigorous in driving standards upwards by successfully establishing a very good ethos for learning and achievement. He has continued to develop a number of initiatives to raise pupils' self-esteem and set high expectations for teaching and learning; for example, through the Heads Together project and the development of ICT to support teaching and learning.
30. Both the headteacher and acting deputy headteacher are providing excellent role models for all staff, particularly those who are less experienced, through ongoing support and advice for less experienced staff and team teaching. They combine their teaching and leadership and management roles very effectively for the benefit of all staff and pupils. The acting deputy head provides particularly good support for the new Foundation Stage teacher and fulfils her special educational needs co-ordinator role very effectively. Both the headteacher and the acting deputy share the same drive for school improvement and have organised and led very effective training and induction for new staff. As a result, the quality of teaching has improved significantly in a short space of time and teachers are more confident in their teaching.

31. The headteacher and acting deputy have made very good use of performance management arrangements to improve the quality of teaching and raise pupils' achievements. All staff have been given clear targets, not only to raise standards but also to develop their teaching and co-ordination roles. Performance targets have arisen out of rigorous yet supportive monitoring of teaching and learning through lesson observation using an inspection model. These have been translated into areas for development and school priorities for improvements.
32. Teachers have not yet fully developed their co-ordination roles, as nearly all of them are fairly new to teaching. However, the headteacher and acting deputy headteacher are providing continued support to co-ordinators new to their roles by sharing responsibility with them for the development of their subjects. As a result, co-ordinators have made a good start in auditing their subjects and identifying areas for further development. As yet, they do not formally monitor teaching and learning within their subjects. Consequently they do not have a full enough understanding of how to improve teaching and learning and raise pupils' achievements within their subjects. The headteacher is very aware of the need to develop this area.
33. The governing body has a good knowledge of the school's strengths and weaknesses, and individual governors visit the school regularly, helping out wherever possible on school trips and functions. They also visit classrooms on an informal basis and school performances. The governing body ensures that statutory requirements are met and they provide good support for the headteacher and staff. They challenge the work of the school through the governing body committees and they plan to develop closer links with subject co-ordinators in order to review and monitor provision within subjects more formally in the future. However this cannot take place until the subject co-ordinators have fully developed their roles.
34. The school runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis and the very good analysis of performance data by the headteacher and acting deputy headteacher has led to improvements in teaching, learning and pupils' achievements. School self-evaluation is both accurate and extremely effective in bringing about improvements. The budget is managed effectively with good support from the finance officer, who prepares regular budget statements for the governing body's finance committee to scrutinise. The proportion of the budget carried forward to the current financial year is high but reducing. Much of this has been set aside for capital expenditure for improving the school's accommodation and resources with small proportion set aside for contingency. The school effectively achieves best value in its spending decisions.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	579,841
Total expenditure	589,880
Expenditure per pupil	3,040

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	84,400
Balance carried forward to the next	74,361

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

35. Provision in the Foundation Stage is good and has improved well since the last inspection. The children enter the reception year in the September before their fifth birthday. The standard of attainment on entry is below average although there are variations in the natural abilities of each group. Some of the children enter the reception class with no pre-school experience but most of the children enter with nursery experience.
36. By the end of the Foundation Stage the vast majority of children make good progress, reaching the Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning; in several areas some children will exceed these goals. Their attainment in personal and social development is well above expectations. Children begin the Foundation Stage with positive attitudes to school, which are developed rapidly through good teaching. They clearly enjoy the challenge of learning and take pride in their accomplishments. Achievement overall is good, including for those with special educational needs.
37. The standards observed at the time of the last inspection have been maintained with significant improvement in some areas. The Foundation Stage curriculum has been fully established with the staff introducing a more child centred approach to learning. Assessment is being properly undertaken in accordance with the Foundation Stage Profile and is complemented by baseline assessment on entry and ongoing assessment. Tracking of the children's progress is also developing well.
38. The quality of teaching is good overall with some very good teaching observed during the inspection. The new reception teacher, ably supported by the deputy headteacher and teaching assistant, has introduced a wide range of strategies to improve standards, particularly in literacy, including the introduction of a new reading scheme. This in turn is enabling them to make good progress in other areas of learning. However, staff need to ensure there are high expectations and challenge for the more able children.
39. Good relationships are established with parents and they are kept well informed of their children's progress through reports and parents' meetings. The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are very good. All adults set excellent role models for the children and manage them well. The accommodation inside is satisfactory but outside facilities are unsatisfactory due to the sloping playground. The children do not have access to a separate secure outside area and resources for outdoor activities are unsatisfactory. There is also limited space for storage of outdoor equipment.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children achieve very well and are happy in school because of the good induction programme and the support, care and respect shown for each child.
- Children have positive attitudes towards learning.
- Routines are established quickly and are understood by children.

- Staff provide a wide range of structured activities to enhance personal development, enabling the children to develop confidence and independence and to work very well co-operatively.

Commentary

40. When the children start in the reception class their personal, emotional and social skills are below average, with a small but significant minority well below average. Most leave the Foundation Stage with good personal, social and emotional skills, making very good progress. A small but significant minority of the new entrants display a lack of confidence when leaving their carers; they also lack confidence in using resources independently and playing with other children co-operatively. The staff place great emphasis on the development of independent skills, as a result of this effective intervention the children achieve very well in this area of learning within a very short space of time.
41. Through role play and activities the children learn how to co-operate and persevere in their tasks. The children respond very well to the clear routines and settle with the minimum of fuss. Priority is given in allowing the children to develop their social skills through structured play. By the time they leave the reception year they can share, take turns and work independently. Teaching and learning are very good. The staff have high expectations of behaviour to which the children respond very well. Children show a pride in their work and they are rewarded in their efforts by praise.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teachers and support staff plan a wide range of activities to develop children's language and communication skills.
- The children demonstrate good speaking skills and very good listening skills.
- Opportunities to challenge the more able children in both reading and writing need to be developed.

Commentary

42. Although attainment on entry is below average, with a small but significant minority well below, especially in speaking and listening, good teaching enables the children to achieve well. When the children start school a small number have speech and language problems and many are not confident in articulating their thoughts. The development of communication skills is a high priority in the reception class, with every opportunity taken to encourage the children to talk and listen. This is having a very positive impact. Early indications are that the majority of children are on course to meet the expectations in this area of learning. Already children are making good progress as a result of the many opportunities to talk and listen; the majority can speak with more confidence. The reception children display very good listening skills, especially when the teachers give lively and interesting presentations, inspiring the children into wanting to learn more. Staff take every opportunity during activities to develop the children's vocabulary. For example, when the children were looking at different toys the teacher continually chatted to the children, asking them questions so they could think and describe toys their parents enjoyed.
43. On entry to the reception class, many children have a wide experience of reading books for enjoyment. However, the majority have reading skills that are below those expected for this age group, with some well below. Development of reading skills is a high priority and as a result the children make good progress. For example, all the children enjoy reading activities every day. The new reading scheme has yet to have a significant impact on learning. The majority are developing their knowledge of letters sounds and words when reading text. The teaching of reading is ably supported by support staff, voluntary helpers and parents. Children

enjoy books and listen very well, genuinely interested and attentive when a story is read to them. For example, when the teacher read the Hungry Caterpillar story the children were hanging onto every word.

44. The children in the reception class are developing satisfactory pencil control and early letter formation. The practice of early writing skills is included in many activities, with many children encouraged to write lists, letters and stories. For example, when writing a letter to Father Christmas the children completed the letters with confidence and good early writing skills. The motivation to write provides a good foundation for the next stages of learning. The majority of the children are achieving well in communication, language and literacy. However, there is a lack of challenge for the more able children, especially in reading and writing.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children achieve well compared to prior attainment as they start school with under-developed mathematical knowledge and understanding.
- A range of teaching strategies is used to encourage mathematical development.

Commentary

45. Initial assessments show that the children's mathematical development is below that expected for this age on entry to school. From the work seen the children are achieving well in response to the wide range of practical activities to develop mathematical skills and understanding.
46. Teaching and learning are good. The children are developing a secure knowledge of numbers to ten. However, their mathematical development in calculating is less secure. The teacher has high expectations and well-planned work provides challenge for the majority of the children. By the end of the Foundation Stage the majority of children should reach the Early Learning Goals.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is very good, with staff providing a wide range of activities and experiences to develop curiosity and learning in this area.
- Good opportunities for imaginative play help children's learning.
- Opportunities for scientific investigations need developing further.

Commentary

47. Although attainment on entry is below that expected for this age group the children are achieving well and are set to reach the Early Learning Goals by the end of the reception year. Teaching and learning are very good overall with some very good group work seen. Staff provide a wide range of exciting, well-structured activities to widen the children's experience and develop their knowledge and understanding. They develop a good sense of time and place. For example, the children were able to describe the toys their parents and grandparents played with when they were children. The teacher uses every day objects to develop observation skills. However, early investigative work needs developing further, especially making use of the outdoor facilities to investigate living things. The children are developing

very good computer skills using the mouse and keyboard very well. They are able to use a paint program with confidence and accuracy to draw pictures and patterns.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children achieve well in the development of their manipulative skills.
- The children make limited progress in the development of their physical co-ordination skills.
- The lack of suitable facilities, including separate outdoor facilities with appropriate resources, is limiting the development of physical skills.

Commentary

48. On entry to the reception class, children's physical development is below that expected for this age group. Teaching and learning of manipulative skills are good. Children are developing their hand co-ordination skills well by handling pencils, brushes, scissors and glue sticks. They can also manipulate small construction equipment, beads and pegs with dexterity. However, during the inspection a small but significant number of pupils demonstrated a lack of co-ordination and control, finding it difficult to balance, crawl and climb during a lesson in the hall.
49. Due to the lack of level outdoor play facilities and resources, including wheeled toys, the children do not have many opportunities to develop their skills in travelling and spatial awareness. Although the teacher uses the hall every day to develop movement and co-ordination skills and they have acquired new resources, provision is unsatisfactory.
50. The school is aware that the development of accommodation and resources for physical development for the reception children is a high priority for the future. With improved opportunities for development of large physical skills in using large apparatus, the children should reach the Early Learning Goals by the end of the reception year.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching is good in this area, the staff providing a rich environment within the classroom with a wide range of activities to develop learning. As a result the children achieve well.
- The lack of outdoor facilities restricts opportunities for imaginative play.

Commentary

51. Children achieve well, most attaining the standards required by the time they finish the Foundation Stage. The quality of teaching and learning is never less than good. The children make good progress as a result of a good range of planned activities. Although the reception classroom is small there is a good space for imaginative play. The nativity stable, for example, offered role play to enable the children to develop their imagination as well as language and social skills, children using their imagination to assign characters and work out events. Very good links are made with writing development. For example, following a construction activity to create the nativity scene the children responded very well when encouraged to re-create the story in written form. Children have good opportunities to work with a wide range of artistic media, for example, crayons, paint, collage and modelling.

52. The lack of outdoor facilities restricts the development of imaginative play and the dedicated area for painting, water play and construction activities needs developing further.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching throughout the school enables pupils to achieve well and reach standards in line with those expected by the end of Year 6.
- Improved arrangements for teaching reading and writing are having a strong impact on raising standards.
- Literacy skills are very well developed in other curricular subjects.
- English is very well led and managed by the headteacher, who is ably supporting the new co-ordinator.
- Pupils' listening skills are very good.
- Teachers use ICT to very good effect.
- Marking does not always give pupils a clear picture of how well they are doing or what they have to do to improve.
- The use of the library needs to be developed further to support learning.

Commentary

53. In 2004, Year 2 pupils reached standards that were below average in reading and average in writing compared to schools nationally. However, compared to similar schools, standards for Year 2 pupils were average in reading and above average in writing. The 2004 English national tests results were below average for Year 6 pupils compared to other schools nationally and similar schools. However, a high proportion of pupils, who find learning difficult, were identified with moderate or specific learning difficulties. There was also high mobility within this particular year group, which had a negative impact on standards. Standards on entry to the school are below average in communication, language and literacy. The children achieve well and standards for many of the pupils are average in Years 1 and 2. Currently, standards rise as pupils get older and gain more confidence and are broadly average by Year 6. Basic skills are taught well throughout the school and pupils achieve well overall. Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well overall, making very good progress towards the specific targets in their individual education plans. This is mainly due to the good arrangements for specific support and high expectations. The more able, gifted and talented pupils achieve well, demonstrating an ability to write articles and stories of a high standard.
54. Standards of speaking and listening are above average. On entry to the school a significant number find it difficult to articulate their thoughts or speak clearly. Over time a growing number of pupils become confident speakers who are able to articulate their ideas and feelings well. By Year 2, a significant number can express themselves with clarity, confidence and elaboration. By the time they reach Year 6, the majority

are articulate and use language well. They are confident in speaking before an audience and are encouraged by all adults to express themselves and talk about what they have learned. Teachers make extensive and highly effective use of drama in many lessons. A wide range of good resources has been developed to support this area of learning, including character boxes and an auditorium in the playground. Pupils throughout the school demonstrate very good listening skills as the majority listen well to adults and other children during lessons. A good example of this was seen in a class council discussion when all the pupils listened respectfully to the others' ideas.

55. Standards are below average in reading when the children start school. However, from starting school the pupils make good progress in reading, achieving standards in line with national expectations by Year 6. Pupils achieve very well, with the development of their knowledge and enjoyment going hand in hand with the development of their reading skills. Staff are working hard and successfully to drive up standards in reading. New strategies, including the introduction of a new reading scheme and the involvement of parents, are having a positive impact on standards. By Year 2, pupils have acquired the appropriate strategies for reading new words and many are beginning to understand the deeper meaning of text. Year 6 pupils are competent, accurate readers who cope equally well with fiction or non-fiction text across the curriculum. There are very good opportunities during the school day for pupils to engage in group, paired and silent reading. The school has recently adapted the school day to enable all pupils to take part in extra reading activities as they arrive in school. This includes the well-supported parents' reading morning. The recent developments, including high investment in resources, are already having a significant impact on reading standards.
56. The school makes good use of the local library, with pupils from Years 1 and 2 making visits during the year. However, access to the school library is restricted. The location of the non-fiction books restricts access and the opportunities for pupils to borrow books and develop their reference skills are limited. The school is aware of this and it is an area for future development.
57. The quality of pupils' writing is satisfactory overall. However, some very good work was seen during the inspection. On entry a significant group of children are demonstrating writing skills below expectations. By Year 2, many pupils write in sentences with spelling and punctuation that is generally accurate. As they progress through the school they make good progress in learning to punctuate, spell and use grammar correctly. Most pupils apply these consistently in their writing in English and in other subjects. Handwriting and presentation of written work are consistently good, with some very good work seen throughout the school. ICT is used very well to support learning, the pupils demonstrating good word processing and research skills. By Year 6, pupils write very well in a range of formats such as reports, stories and poems. They produce interesting, evocative and moving biographies, recognise journalistic bias and produce poems that can be humorous, sensitive and empathetic. The school encourages all pupils to see themselves as creative authors and celebrates their achievements by having some very good examples of writing displayed around the school. Throughout the school, writing skills are taught well. Pupils write naturally for a variety of purposes and this range is very effectively extended through different subjects. This is an improvement since the last inspection.

58. Overall the teaching of English is good and sometimes very good. As a consequence, many pupils make good progress and achieve well over time. The variety and pace of lessons, very good use of resources and the constant challenge being offered to pupils ensure a productive learning environment. Reading, writing and speaking skills are well developed by good teaching that provides frequent opportunities for pupils to collaborate in their learning. Pupils concentrate well in lessons and work hard. The depth and range of provision would not be possible without valuable support from the teaching assistants.
59. Throughout the school there is a clear emphasis on developing and using a wide vocabulary and on writing accurately. Teachers specifically teach the skills needed to write in different styles for a variety of audiences and purposes. For example, in a very good Year 4 lesson pupils could analyse two poems with a similar theme, comparing and contrasting the different styles of writing with confidence.
60. Assessment procedures have been developed recently with good strategies in place to analyse data and set targets for pupils. The information is used effectively for future planning, predicting attainment and setting individual targets, an improvement since the last inspection. However, marking needs to be developed further to ensure the pupils are fully aware of how they can improve their work.
61. The subject leaders have a clear understanding of what needs to be done to improve provision and standards. They have worked very well with staff to put improvement strategies into place which are already having a positive impact on standards throughout the school.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

62. All teachers seize every available opportunity to extend pupils' language and literacy skills in every curricular area. These include carefully planned and structured activities and in situations that occur naturally. Staff skilfully extend spoken language in drama and discussion activities and provide a wealth of purposeful writing activities in subjects such as science, history, ICT and religious education. Pupils can write accurate reports, imaginative accounts and detailed explanatory texts. The school is striving to provide a rich literary environment and pupils use every opportunity provided for them well.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good and, as a result, achievement is good.
- There is a positive learning atmosphere in lessons.
- There are not enough opportunities are provided for pupils to apply their number skills in solving mathematical problems.
- The subject is well monitored and pupil performance data analysed but information is not always used effectively to raise pupils' standards.

Commentary

63. Pupils begin school with below average mathematical development. All pupils make good progress from entry to school and achieve well. Standards in Years 2 and 6 are average. Pupils have good number skills because teachers are clear in their explanations, rigorous in ensuring that pupils have plenty of practice with good use of ICT programs to consolidate learning. Pupils in Year 1, for instance, swiftly reinforced their knowledge of 'tens' and 'units' numbers by using an ICT mathematics program. Good number skills enable pupils to deal efficiently with other areas such as constructing graphs or calculating angles. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well, due to the effective support of the teaching assistants.
64. Pupils are keen to learn because they have a good rapport with their teachers. Pupils know that their contributions are valued and that teachers want them to succeed. As a result, behaviour is very good and pupils listen well in lessons. Teachers prepare lessons thoroughly and usually start with a lively activity, which gets pupils going. Building on a brisk practice of counting on or back in ones, starting from two-digit numbers, a teacher in the Year 2 class extended the scope to quickly counting on in fives and tens. Consequently, all pupils were kept on their toes and enjoyed the mental challenge. Teachers make it clear what they expect pupils to learn, so pupils feel comfortable about what they have to do to achieve it. Teachers use resources adeptly to reinforce learning. Interactive whiteboards are well used to motivate pupils and support learning.
65. The quality of teaching is good overall. Teachers plan lessons to cater for a wide range of age groups in the classes. The day-to-day planning is detailed and most pupils are presented with an appropriate level of challenge, whilst making sure that less able pupils have the maximum support. However, the intellectual needs of the highest attaining pupils are not yet being met consistently in all classes. Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the subject and question sharply to encourage pupils to think through their answers. In the best lessons, teachers are highly skilled in targeting questions at specific pupils in order to challenge all levels of attainment. For instance, the teacher involved pupils in Year 6 in examining detailed number sequences to explain the pattern and continue the sequence. The higher attaining pupils were developing an awareness of a number formula. The school has recognised that more emphasis should be given to involving pupils in using their numeracy skills to solve problems. However, the strategies put in place are still fairly new and a survey of previous work showed that insufficient emphasis has been given to this aspect of mathematics. Teachers use assessment well in lessons to check pupils' understanding. However, there are few comments in marking to assist pupils in improving their work.
66. Mathematics has not been a school focus. There are good systems in place to assess how well pupils are progressing, with recent results being analysed to inform teachers' future planning, but no targets have been set. The school has identified this and there is an action plan in place to use assessment information more effectively to support and guide pupils' learning. The co-ordinator provides sound leadership and management. He keeps an eye on the quality of teaching in his support role but needs more opportunity to monitor and evaluate formally.

Mathematics across the curriculum

67. The development of mathematics through other subjects is satisfactory overall. Pupils' everyday work is sometimes planned to link in with other subjects. Good practice is evident and can be very effective. In a Year 1 lesson, pupils produced graphs of pupils' eye colour linked to their science and ICT work. In Year 6 there is use of ICT numeracy programs to support learning in number and fractions.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' achievements are good because teaching and learning are good.
- A strong emphasis on practical investigations develops pupils' skills of scientific enquiry very effectively.
- Good use is made of ICT to promote teaching and learning.
- The curriculum is enriched well.
- Pupils are very enthusiastic about science.
- Good leadership and management have resulted in good improvements since the previous inspection.

Commentary

68. Teacher assessments in 2004 show that standards for pupils in Year 2 were below those compared to schools nationally and in comparison with similar schools. This represents satisfactory achievement, given pupils' attainment on entry to the school. However, standards for Year 6 pupils were above those in schools nationally and well above those of similar schools, representing very good achievement. Standards are currently average in Year 2 and above average in Year 6, representing good achievement overall, with no significant differences in the achievements of boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs and higher attaining pupils achieve as well as their peers. Pupils are achieving well because teachers have high expectations for pupils' learning and set clear learning objectives so that pupils try hard in lessons and are aware of what is expected of them. Pupils also have a clear understanding of how each new topic relates to their previous learning. There is a strong emphasis on the development of scientific vocabulary with very good opportunities to promote pupils' literacy skills in lessons through the use of writing frames. As a result, pupils learn how to write up their investigations in a scientific way.
69. Pupils are developing their investigative skills well as a result of the very good emphasis on practical experimentation. This is particularly evident in Years 3 to 6. They make accurate predictions and develop good observational skills. For example, pupils in Year 1 investigate pushing and pulling forces and classify living and non-living things, making accurate predictions. In Year 6, pupils carry out fair testing on the reaction of yeast in water under various conditions and they understand the importance of keeping variables constant. They predict accurately that yeast reacts with sugar and water to produce carbon dioxide and alcohol. Higher attainers understand that bread rises as yeast reacts with sugars in producing carbon dioxide.
70. Teachers make good use of ICT to promote pupils' learning. For example, in a good Year 5 lesson, pupils used data logging to record and display temperature changes of ice melting under different conditions on a graph and there were many examples of the use of ICT seen to record results of investigations in pupils' written work.
71. High quality interactive displays and a wide range of visits, to such locations as the Earth Centre and Rockware Glass, greatly enhance pupils' learning. Pupils also engage in pond dipping activities to explore habitats, life cycles and adaptation, and older pupils investigate seashore habitats during their residential visits to Robin Hood's Bay. Year 5 pupils have developed a healthy menu project with strong cross-curricular links with food technology. As a result, pupils' personal development is well promoted through science.

72. Pupils thoroughly enjoy science and speak enthusiastically about their investigations. They are very well behaved in lessons and collaborate very well together in investigative work in small groups.
73. Leadership and management are good and have resulted in good improvement since the previous inspection, particularly in the development of more practical approaches to teaching and learning. The co-ordinator has also ensured good curricular development with a sharper focus on learning through investigations and greater use of ICT to support teaching and learning. Pupils' progress is monitored through tracking and new assessment systems have been purchased, which have yet to have a full impact, particularly in Years 1 and 2.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are improving, and pupils are achieving well.
- The highly effective co-ordinator has been pro-active in ensuring that the school raises its attainment in ICT.
- Basics skills are well taught and pupils are given ample opportunities to learn for themselves.
- The school has made a good start in using ICT to support learning in every subject.

Commentary

74. Standards of work of the pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 are firmly in line with those in most other schools, which is good improvement since the previous inspection. An analysis of work and discussions with pupils indicate that they are likely to be above average by the end of the year for pupils in Year 2. Given the rapid rise in ICT standards nationally, this represents good achievement for all pupils, including those with special educational needs.
75. Several factors account for this improvement:
- Improved ICT resources have assisted teachers in ensuring that the focused teaching of skills is regular and thorough;
 - the co-ordinator is monitoring and influencing teaching very effectively because of his technical support role;
 - staff confidence and expertise have risen significantly so that teachers teach the core skills with confidence;
 - the ICT curriculum has benefited from the subject co-ordinator's involvement with the local cluster group of schools, particularly in the area of assessment and through receiving up-to-date information about new programs and schemes.
76. Year 1 pupils quickly gain confidence with basic computer skills. In a Year 1 lesson, they could open up the program, although some required help or reassurance. They used the mouse capably and some were able to successfully visit a new part of the program independently. During a short Year 2 lesson, pupils using an Intel microscope produced an enlarged picture of a feather. They then prepared a short modified text demonstrating ICT skills in saving, deleting letters and changing capitals to lower case letters. Work on display and on stored pupil portfolios shows that, by the end of Year 2, most pupils were proficient in all the required aspects of ICT, often to a higher level than expected for seven year olds.
77. Pupils in Year 6 confidently discuss their ICT experiences in plotting graphs and looking for errors in databases. Their skills in using data handling programs are less well developed

although they can use spreadsheets to produce graphs. Their PowerPoint presentations are good. They are able to download information, such as pictures and import sound effects. For instance, pupils in Year 5 demonstrated how they had produced a website to complement their work on a Roman topic. Opportunities are available for pupils, in all classes, to use digital cameras and Intel microscopes to enhance their learning.

78. Teachers are confident in ICT and teach it well. They demonstrate techniques clearly and effectively, using the interactive whiteboards skilfully to support learning. They encourage pupils to investigate what the computers can do and this helps pupils to learn from their mistakes and explore new ideas. Therefore, pupils have a zest for the subject and approach it enthusiastically. The scheme of work gives good support to teachers in planning for the fine detail of lessons, so that pupils succeed in small, regular learning steps. A simple assessment procedure is in place so pupils are able to monitor their own achievements.
79. The very effective co-ordinator is active, committed, very efficient, and up to date through involvement with local initiatives. A lot has been done to improve standards and resources in ICT in a short time. He monitors and evaluates the quality of teaching in ICT effectively in his support role and through regular reviews of progress. His very good leadership and management skills are having a significant impact on teaching and learning.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

80. Good use is made of ICT across the curriculum. Word-processing is prominent in writing, poster production and displays. Specialist software helps pupils improve their skills in reading and grammar. Data-handling and the development of number skills are supported in mathematics and teachers are making effective use of interactive whiteboards in the introductory phase of their lessons. In a Year 5 science lesson pupils use ICT sensors to record changes in temperature. Pupils undertake effective research using CD-ROM and the Internet for subjects such as history and geography. For example, they have explored websites and learnt more about the Romans and Tudors. Software is available to help pupils create artwork and to enhance their music lessons.

HUMANITIES

Religious education is reported in full below. History and geography were sampled.

81. In **geography**, discussion with Year 6 pupils demonstrated a lack of the geographical skills and knowledge expected for this age. For example, they had a limited knowledge of the water cycle and river formations, they were also unsure of geographical information on their immediate locality. However, they described with enthusiasm the exciting work undertaken during their residential visit to Robin Hood's Bay.
82. In the one lesson seen in **history** in Year 4, good questioning techniques and good use of resources allowed pupils to demonstrate a secure knowledge of the Tudor period appropriate for their age. Pupils were well behaved and keen to learn. Work seen in the portfolios indicates that standards are at broadly expected levels at Year 6. However, the more able pupils are achieving standards beyond expectations. During a discussion with a group of Year 6 pupils they demonstrated a secure knowledge of historical facts and a deep awareness of the impact historical events had on their immediate locality. The pupils displayed enthusiasm for history, especially when they gave a detailed description of the battles around Conisbrough. The curriculum covers a suitable range of topics and in Year 6 coverage appears thorough. Good use is made of the subject to help the pupils develop literacy skills. For example, when writing an

account of the Trojan Horse the writing was very descriptive. Visits are used well to support learning. For example, Year 4 visit The Bishop's House, a local Tudor mansion, when studying the Tudors.

Religious Education

Provision for religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils across the school achieve well because teaching and learning are good.
- Literacy and ICT skills are well promoted in lessons.
- Personal development is very well promoted as pupils learn to respect and value different beliefs.
- Good quality leadership and management have ensured good improvement since the last inspection.

Commentary

83. Standards are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus for pupils by Years 2 and 6, and pupils throughout the school are achieving well. Teachers have good subject knowledge and work very effectively with support staff in setting high standards for learning and behaviour. Consequently, pupils listen carefully, follow instructions, remain focused on their learning and achieve well. By Year 2, pupils have developed a good knowledge of Judaism and Christianity, for example, in learning about places of worship and holy books. Teachers build effectively on pupils' earlier experiences as they move through the school so that by Year 6 pupils deepen their knowledge of world religions. By Year 6, pupils compare and contrast the similarities and differences in world religions, for example, in comparing the creation stories from a Christian perspective and that of the ancient Greeks.
84. Teachers use every opportunity to promote literacy in lessons. Speaking and listening are developed through discussion and there are very good opportunities for extending pupils' writing as seen in many examples of pupils' written work and display. Computer skills are effectively promoted through good opportunities for using the Internet. For example, pupils in Year 4 saw inside a synagogue and learned how Jewish people live and celebrate their faith by observing and listening to Jewish children talking about their religion on the computer. The good use of ICT to promote teaching and learning effectively motivates pupils, generating their enjoyment and enthusiasm for learning about other religions. This further promotes good achievement.
85. There are very good opportunities for promoting pupils' personal development through small group work and occasional time set aside for quiet reflection within a particular religious education topic. Pupils also consider ethical issues that affect peoples' lives. Whole school and class assemblies very effectively develop pupils' awareness of and respect for different beliefs. They provide very good opportunities for personal reflection through the celebration of a variety of festivals from different faiths, such as Diwali, Chinese New Year, Eid and Hannukah.

86. The subject is well led and managed by an enthusiastic co-ordinator who has overseen good improvements since the previous inspection. Resources have been greatly improved with a wide range of multi-faith artefacts and extended use of ICT to promote teaching and learning. This enables pupils, who cannot easily access local places of worship for different faiths, to have a virtual experience of these through ICT. Planning is monitored regularly and staff have received appropriate training in teaching the subject. Pupils' progress is carefully recorded and assessment information is used to plan the next stage of learning and further develop the subject.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art and design, design and technology, music and physical education were sampled.

87. In **art and design** standards are average throughout the school. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 develop satisfactory skills in painting, as well as appreciating how different colours and textures can be used for effect. They make drawings from observations. For example, pupils in Year 2 have painted vibrant pictures of figures to complement their winter poems showing skills in observing visual clues. In other year groups there are strengths in painting, using watercolours, colour washes and over-painting to depict their feelings about landscape and good examples of pupils now using a range of art forms such as drawing and sculpture. For instance, pupils in Year 5 designed Aztec masks using mod-rock, making good links to their work in history. Pupils in Year 6 produced high quality detailed sketches of evergreen plants demonstrating good skills in creating tone and shade. There are bright and striking displays of pupils' work around the school, producing a stimulating backdrop to learning. ICT is now used more effectively to support art teaching and learning. For instance, pupils in Year 2, experimenting with mixing paints, produced patterns after examining materials using an Intel microscope and digital camera.
88. Most pupils have good skills in making a variety of items in **design and technology**. They assemble shelters, ensuring rigidity through well-made brackets. Some designs, such as the pizzas and pencil cases, are imaginative and individual. Pupils evaluate their work upon completion so that they can learn from any mistakes. This is good practice and an improvement since the previous inspection. For instance, pupils in Year 5 produced a wide variety of opinions on the pizzas they created. They wrote about the design aspect being attractive to the eye but also the importance of using healthy ingredients, thereby skilfully cross-referencing to their work in science. Overall, satisfactory links are made to other subjects.
89. **Music** is promoted very effectively throughout the school, through, for example, whole school performances where pupils sing and play for parents and visitors, and through whole school singing practice. In an excellent singing practice for pupils in Years 3 to 6, the headteacher set extremely high expectations for learning, constantly checking pupils' intonation, timing and musical expression. As a result, pupils sang a variety of songs confidently and extremely well. Literacy was promoted exceptionally well as Year 6 pupils read a play script as an introduction to a song and gifted and talented pupils were provided with excellent opportunities to extend their learning by singing a solo part while other pupils joined in with the chorus. Pupils' personal development was greatly enhanced as they explored the meaning of choosing presents with thought before singing a song about giving. Pupils also benefit greatly

from the expertise of a visiting specialist teacher of music who provides not only instrumental tuition but also high quality singing practice for school performances. There are very good opportunities for pupils to develop musicality through dance, to play a variety of instruments and to appraise a variety of musical styles.

90. Staff are enthusiastic in teaching all areas of **physical education** and have benefited from training in teaching athletics, dance and gymnastics. In a very good dance lesson, the teacher set high expectations for pupils' learning, insisting on pupils co-ordinating their dance movements with expression. As a result, pupils composed a variety of interesting dance movements in small groups, making good use of space, while maintaining good balance and control. The teacher promoted literacy very effectively through exploring the meaning of *synchronised*, so that pupils clearly demonstrated synchronised dance movements. Good opportunities are provided to develop pupils' learning in physical education. The school has worked closely with the LEA in producing a new scheme of work for dance and gymnastics and has developed strong links with other schools and the local leisure centre. Termly whole school tournaments are held in bowling, curling and box hockey to develop pupils' skills of sportsmanship and they also benefit from a lunchtime football club. Pupils keenly participate in community projects such as the Conisbrough and Mexborough Scarecrow Festival and a residential visit in Year 5 provides good opportunities for pupils' participation in outdoor and adventurous activities. Playground facilities and resources have greatly improved so that a variety of equipment is made available to pupils during break times to enhance team games and develop their co-ordination skills.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Personal, social and health education and citizenship (PSHCE) was sampled.

91. Provision for PSHCE is very well planned and very good opportunities are provided across the curriculum for pupils to contribute to whole school community life, for example, through local partnerships. An excellent feature of this provision is the promotion of pupils' self-esteem through the Heads Together project. Pupils and staff worked with a professional photographer in order to produce material for a book, to reflect their personal identities. The Youth Inclusion Day also provided a very good opportunity to build pupils' confidence through the promotion of teamwork. As pupils move through the school, they are encouraged to make choices by considering moral dilemmas in PSHCE lessons. For example, Year 5 considered which person they should tell if they saw someone doing something wrong, and they developed a good understanding of fairness through role play of King Solomon's justice. In Year 6, pupils considered a range of ethical questions, such as 'Should we be allowed to experiment on animals?' or 'Should people who kill be locked away for life?' in order to determine whether they could be answered in a definitive way or not. Through the Healthy Schools initiative pupils have developed an understanding of how to take responsibility for their own well-being, through, for example, using a healthy foods vending machine to select healthier snacks. Pupils are also given very good opportunities to relate to one another and develop strong relationships through group work, opportunities to help younger pupils and various charitable fund-raising activities. Assemblies also contribute positively to a greater understanding of the needs of others and promote tolerance and celebration of diverse cultural traditions. An active school council and

class councils provide very good opportunities to empower pupils and develop their maturity in decision-making, for example, in formulating clear rules for games during wet playtimes. Pupils learn to respect the values and feelings of others through the daily experiences of school life. For example, older pupils act as monitors and lunchtime helpers.

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)	2
Attendance	3
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
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	2
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	2

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