

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **Scawthorpe Castle Hills Primary School**

Scawthorpe, Doncaster

LEA area: Doncaster

Unique reference number: 106693

Headteacher: Mrs V Ford

Lead inspector: Mrs E Linley

Dates of inspection: 31 January 2005

Inspection number: 267633

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

© Crown copyright 2005

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

|                              |   |
|------------------------------|---|
| Type of school:              | Primary   |
| School category:             | Community   |
| Age range of pupils:         | 3 – 11 years  |
| Gender of pupils:            | Mixed   |
| Number on roll:              | 359   |
| School address:              | Jossey Lane<br>Scawthorpe<br>Doncaster<br>South Yorkshire |
| Postcode:                    | DN5 9ED   |
| Telephone number:            | 01302 780246  |
| Fax number:                  | 01302 783830  |
| Appropriate authority:       | Governing body  |
| Name of chair of governors:  | Mr Maurice Young  |
| Date of previous inspection: | 21 June 1999  |

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

Scawthorpe Castle Hills Primary School is situated in Scawthorpe, Doncaster. The school serves an area that is characterised by a mixture of private and public housing. Children enter the reception class in the September prior to their fifth birthday, and most children have attended the school's nursery before starting school. When children start nursery, their attainment on entry is generally below what might be expected nationally. However, a large percentage of pupils have joined the school at a later time than in their reception year, and this affects attainment in the different year groups, particularly in Years 3 - 6. There are 330 girls and boys who attend Scawthorpe Castle Hills Primary School plus 29 part time nursery children. One per cent of pupils who attend the school have a first language that is believed not to be English, however, none are at the early stages of language acquisition. Eighteen per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals and this is broadly in line with the national average. Ten per cent of pupils are on the school's list of special educational need, of whom seven have a formal statement of Special Educational Need and this is generally in line with what is expected nationally. Scawthorpe Castle Hills Primary School gained the Healthy Schools award in 2003 and is currently involved in the National Strategy Primary Leadership Programme.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Members of the inspection team |                          |                | Subject responsibilities                                       |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------|--|
| 27281                          | Mrs E Linley             | Lead inspector | Religious education and English as an additional language      |
| 19431                          | Mr J Holmes              | Lay inspector  |  |
| 21585                          | Mr A Kingston            | Team inspector | English, history and physical education.                       |
| 30781                          | Mrs W Stenton-Richardson | Team inspector | Foundation Stage, art and design, design technology and music. |
| 32618                          | Mrs E Elvidge            | Team inspector | Mathematics, geography and special educational needs.          |
| 33544                          | Mrs G Burrow             | Team inspector | Science and information and communication technology.          |

The inspection contractor was:

Focus Education (UK) Limited  
113 – 115 High Street  
Uppermill  
Saddleworth  
OL3 6BD

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be made initially to the inspection contractor. The procedures are set out in the leaflet '*Complaining about Ofsted Inspections*', which is available from Ofsted Publications Centre (telephone 07002 637833) or Ofsted's website ([www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

## **REPORT CONTENTS**

|  | Page      |
|--|-----------|
| <b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>   | <b>6</b>  |
| <b>PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS</b>                              |           |
| <b>STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS</b>  | <b>9</b>  |
| Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses                          |           |
| Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities                                 |           |
| <b>QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL</b>                                     |           |
| Teaching and learning  |           |
| The curriculum   |           |
| Care, guidance and support   |           |
| Partnership with parents, other schools and the community                              |           |
| <b>LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT</b>   | <b>15</b> |
| <b>PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING,<br/>SUBJECTS AND COURSES</b> | <b>18</b> |
| <b>AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE</b>                                       |           |
| <b>SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2</b>  |           |
| <b>PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS</b>                               | <b>31</b> |

## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**In terms of effectiveness this is a satisfactory school** with some good features. As a result of the good leadership of the headteacher and good teaching overall, although pupils' achievement is uneven, over time they achieve well. Management and governance of the school is satisfactory; the school provides satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Good progress has been made in information and communication technology (ICT) in both provision and standards achieved.
- Standards in writing and mathematics are below average by the age of seven and they are below average in science throughout school.
- Although satisfactory, assessment is not used consistently to meet the needs of all pupils.
- The work of key staff has yet to impact on the raising of standards throughout school.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- The curriculum is enriched with good opportunities for learning.
- Provision for moral and social development is very good.

The school has made satisfactory progress overall, since its last inspection. The leadership of the headteacher is now good. Good progress has been made in ICT in terms of resources, teaching and standards achieved throughout school. Standards attained by the age of 11 have improved in mathematics and English and the quality of teaching and learning has improved in Years 5 and 6. Insufficient progress, however, has been made in raising standards in science and in the work of the leadership team and subject leaders. Standards by the age of seven in writing and mathematics have declined and they are now below average.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

#### Year 6 results

| 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    | E               |
| mathematics   | C           | D    | C    | E               |
| science   | E           | E    | E    | E*              |

*Key: A - well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average  
Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.*

**Pupils' achievement is good over time.** When children start nursery, their skills are below what might be expected nationally across all the areas of learning. They make a very good start in nursery and this is satisfactorily maintained in reception. As a result, children achieve well over time as they progress through the Foundation Stage. By the end of reception, the majority are likely to achieve standards that meet the nationally expected levels in their communication, language and literacy skills, mathematical development, personal, social and emotional development, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development and physical development. Pupils make uneven progress in Years 1 and 2 and standards are below average in writing, mathematics and science by the age of seven. This is because of the inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and the lack of challenge for higher attaining pupils. Pupils' achievement begins to improve in Years 3 to 6, although higher attaining pupils do not consistently achieve as well as they should. Overall, however, pupils achieve well and as a result, when pupils leave school, the majority attain average standards in English and mathematics. Throughout school, the majority of pupils attain below average standards in science and pupils do not attain as well as they should in investigational work

and scientific enquiry. This lack of achievement was reflected in the national tests for pupils aged 11 in 2004, when in comparison to similar schools and to those pupils who attained similarly at the end of Year 2, pupils scored in the lowest 5% nationally. The school had, therefore, rightly identified science as a priority for development. Throughout school, standards in ICT meet expectations and this represents good progress since the time of the last inspection. In religious education, pupils achieve well and attain standards that are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils achieve well over time in art and design and history.

**Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, overall;** it is very good for moral and social development. Pupils have positive attitudes towards school and their behaviour is good. Attendance and punctuality are satisfactory.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education is satisfactory overall. The quality of teaching and learning is good,** however, it varies throughout the school. A scrutiny of work and lesson observations shows that it is satisfactory overall from reception to Year 2. Unsatisfactory teaching was observed during the inspection and this contributes to younger pupils' limited achievement. Unsatisfactory teaching was not attributed to permanent members of staff. Assessment is satisfactory overall and has rightly been identified by the school as a priority for action. Teachers now use an effective range of assessment strategies to track pupils' progress. However, the information gathered is not used sufficiently well to ensure that the needs of all pupils are met, particularly those who are more able. The school provides a satisfactory curriculum to develop pupils' learning both academically and socially. It is enriched with good opportunities for learning. The school's accommodation and resources are satisfactory overall. The school provides well for the welfare, health and safety of its pupils. Pupils' relationships with adults in school are very good. Links with the community are satisfactory and are good with parents who are supportive of the school. Links and partnerships with other schools are good.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory overall.** The leadership of the headteacher is good and she is supported satisfactorily by her key staff. All leaders demonstrate a good commitment to inclusion. The overall management of the school is satisfactory. School improvement planning is good and financial management is effective. However, information gathered from monitoring is not used effectively in order to make a difference to the quality of teaching and learning and the raising of standards throughout school. The governance of the school is satisfactory; many governors are new to their role. Nonetheless, governors are beginning to develop an effective understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They are fully committed to the school and ensure that all statutory requirements are met.

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

Parents expressed positive views about school. However, a minority expressed concerns about inconsistencies in the quality of teaching where supply teachers are used and inconsistencies in the use of homework. The inspection team concurs with both concerns raised by parents. Pupils enjoy coming to school and shared many positive views about school life. However, many of them were concerned about the lack of blinds at the windows in classrooms and the effect that unfiltered sunlight has on their learning. The inspection team agrees with pupils and the concerns they raised.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Raise standards in writing and mathematics by the age of seven.
- Raise standards in science throughout school, particularly in relation to investigational work.

- Ensure that information gathered from assessments is used effectively to meet the needs of all pupils, including those who are more able.
- Ensure that all leaders and managers develop their role so that monitoring and information gathered is used effectively to raise the quality of teaching, learning and standards throughout school.



## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

#### Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Standards achieved are good over time. Children achieve well overall in the Foundation Stage, though better in nursery than in reception. Their progress is uneven in Years 1 and 2. Pupils' achievement picks up again in Years 3 to 6, and as a result, pupils attain average standards in English and mathematics by the age of 11.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards attained by pupils aged seven are below average in writing and mathematics.
- Standards in science are below average throughout school.
- Good progress has been made in ICT and standards meet expectations throughout school.
- Children make a very good start in nursery and this secures their good achievement in the Foundation Stage.
- Pupils who have special educational needs achieve well.
- Pupils who are more able do not always achieve as well as they should.

#### Commentary

1. The table below shows that in the 2004 national tests for seven year olds, pupils attained standards that were average in reading and mathematics and were above average in writing. In comparison with similar schools, standards were average in reading and mathematics and well above average in writing.

#### Key Stage 1

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

| Standards in: | School results | National results |
|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| Reading       | 15.9 (15.2)    | 15.8 (15.7)      |
| Writing       | 15.8 (14.7)    | 14.6 (14.6)      |
| Mathematics   | 16.3 (16.6)    | 16.2 (16.3)      |

*There were 47 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

#### Key Stage 2

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

| Standards in: | School results | National results |
|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| English       | 26.2 (16.6)    | 26.9 (26.8)      |
| Mathematics   | 26.7 (26.1)    | 27.0 (26.8)      |
| Science       | 27.3 (27.3)    | 28.6 (28.6)      |

*There were 47 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

2. The table above shows that in the 2004 national tests for 11 year olds, pupils attained standards in English that were below average. In mathematics, standards attained were average and in science they were well below average. In comparison with similar schools, and in relation to pupils' prior attainment, standards were well below average in English and mathematics and very low in science.

3. Inspection evidence shows that pupils aged 11 are currently achieving better in English, mathematics and science than the results for similar schools in the 2004 national tests would indicate. An important reason for this is the improvement in the quality of teaching and learning in Years 5 and 6. Also, attainment of different years groups of pupils is affected by a larger than average percentage of pupils who join the school at different times during their schooling. This has an impact on results, which may vary year on year.
4. When children start school in nursery many have difficulties with their communication, language and literacy skills and overall their skills across all the areas of learning are below what might be expected nationally at this age. Children make a very good start to school in the nursery and they achieve well overall during their time in the Foundation Stage. This is as a result of good teaching overall and the high quality of provision that is in place for their needs in the nursery. Provision and teaching and learning in reception is varied in quality, and children's achievement, whilst satisfactory, is not always as good as it could be. Nonetheless, when children leave reception the majority are likely to meet the nationally expected standards across all the six areas of learning.
5. In Years 1 and 2, pupils make uneven progress. This is because there are inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and a lack of challenge for higher attaining pupils who do not achieve as well as they should. As a result, by the age of seven, pupils are currently attaining standards that are below average in writing, mathematics and science. Standards in reading are average.
6. Pupils' achievement begins to improve as they move through Years 3 to 6. Although, as in Years 1 and 2, pupils who are more able do not always achieve as well as they should. This is because work is not consistently matched to their individual needs in lessons. This is also an issue in one Year 3 and 4 class where pupils in Year 4 are not challenged as well as other Year 4 pupils in mixed age groups in mathematics. Pupils who have special educational needs, however, achieve well throughout school, and this is because of the quality of provision that is in place to aid their learning. The exception to this is in science, where as all pupils, they do not achieve as well as they might. However, where it is good, support staff play a significant role in supporting and meeting the needs of individual pupils and enabling them to achieve well in relation to their abilities.
7. By the age of 11, the majority of pupils are attaining average standards in English and mathematics and this represents good achievement over time and good progress since the last inspection.
8. Insufficient progress has been made in science, however, since the time of the last inspection when it was identified as a key issue for improvement. Pupils throughout school attain standards that are below average and their inexperience with investigational work is having a significant impact on their achievement in this subject. The improvement of science remains an identified priority for action by the school.
9. Good progress has been made in ICT. Standards now meet expectations for pupils' ages and this represents good improvement since the time of the last inspection when standards were judged to be unsatisfactory. In religious education, pupils achieve well and in line with the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus by the age of seven and 11. Pupils also achieve well over time in art and design and history. Insufficient evidence was available during the time of the inspection to make secure judgements on standards in design and technology, music, geography and physical education, and so these subjects have been sampled.

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

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. The school is successful at developing good attitudes and values in pupils and the behaviour of the pupils is good. Attendance is in line with the national average and punctuality is satisfactory.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have positive attitudes towards school and they enjoy their work.
- Relationships are good throughout the school and pupils behave well.
- Pupils' moral and social development is very good.

### Commentary

10. Pupils really enjoy school and they have good attitudes towards learning. They generally work well together and have a very good level of trust in the adults in the school. Pupils feel that they can discuss problems with members of staff and that problems are dealt with promptly. Relationships are good. Pupils' behaviour in class and around the school is good and the staff manage any problems that arise well. Pupils report that any bullying that takes place is dealt with quickly and effectively. Pupils are supportive of fellow pupils who have special needs and ensure that they are included in the life of the school. Pupils with special educational needs are valued and included in the life of the school so they share the same positive attitudes to the school as their peers. Parents recognise and value their children's positive outlook on school life.
11. Pupils are given very good opportunities to develop their moral and social awareness in many areas of the curriculum. Whole school assemblies effectively raise moral issues and moral messages are given in many lessons. The recent tsunami was used to raise awareness of the effects of environmental disasters on people's lives and was supported with fund raising and displays. Pupils know what is right and wrong and that they have choices to make. Pupils are keen to participate in the school council and take their role very seriously. The pupils are enthusiastic about the school council, seeing this as an opportunity to be involved in the school's work. The council discusses ways that they can impact on the life of the school and are currently raising funds to help make their school more secure with external fencing. They participate in many fund-raising activities to raise funds for those less fortunate such as 'Children in Need'. Through the school council, pupils have also raised their concerns about the lack of blinds at classroom windows and the effect that this has on their learning.
12. Attendance is satisfactory. The level of unauthorised absence is broadly in line with the national average. Parents are generally good at notifying the school when their children are not able to attend and the school has good procedures in place to promote attendance and monitor patterns in pupils' absences. The school discourages parents from taking their children on holiday in term time and is working closely with the Local Education Authority to improve such absence.

### Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (94.9%)

| Authorised absence |     | Unauthorised absence |     |
|--------------------|-----|----------------------|-----|
| School data:       | 4.9 | School data:         | 0.2 |
| National data:     | 5.1 | National data:       | 0.4 |

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

### Exclusions

There have been no exclusions.

### QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided is satisfactory overall. Strengths include teaching with weaknesses identified in the use of assessment to support pupils' learning. The curriculum is satisfactory and provides good opportunities for enrichment.

## Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. Assessment is satisfactory.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning is of a high quality in nursery, but variable in reception.
- Teaching in Years 5 and 6 is much improved since the last inspection.
- Support assistants are well directed to aid teaching and learning of pupils who have special educational needs.
- Assessment is not used consistently to ensure that more able pupils are challenged to always achieve as well as they can in lessons.

## Commentary

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 41 lessons

| Excellent | Very good | Good    | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor   | Very Poor |
|-----------|-----------|---------|--------------|----------------|--------|-----------|
| 0 (0%)    | 4 (10%)   | 21(51%) | 13 (32%)     | 3 (7%)         | 0 (0%) | 0 (0%)    |

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

- Teaching in the nursery is frequently very good. This has a very positive impact on children's learning and their achievement. The teacher and support staff in nursery are always very well prepared and meet the needs of individual children effectively; they work together well as a team. Good relationships and high expectations of children's behaviour and effort are rewarded by their good achievement. This quality of teaching does not run throughout the Foundation Stage. Unsatisfactory teaching was observed where inexperience was largely the reason for difficulties with planning, time and behaviour management and during these lessons children's learning was unsatisfactory. However, all staff in Foundation Stage work hard to ensure that children learn in a safe and interesting environment.
- At the time of the last inspection, teaching and learning in Years 5 and 6 were unsatisfactory. This is not now the case and lessons observed, plus pupils' work, show that overall, teaching and learning are now good. The improved quality of teaching and learning has made a difference to the standards achieved by pupils and as a result, standards in English and mathematics in Year 6 are no longer unsatisfactory as they were at the time of the last inspection.
- Teaching throughout the school is good overall. Where teaching is very good, lessons are exciting, imaginative and move at great pace. For example, mathematics and English lessons in Years 5 and 6 were characterised by very effective questioning to promote thinking. In the English lesson, the teacher modelled the best way to produce a synopsis, an advert and a précis. In the mathematics lesson very good use was made of ICT to aid a child who had special educational needs in their learning. In these lessons there was clear evidence of challenge for more able pupils. However, this is not the case in all classes and is particularly an issue for Year 1 and 2. A scrutiny of pupils' work in these classes shows that teaching is satisfactory overall, although unsatisfactory teaching was observed during the inspection. Overall pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve satisfactorily but their achievement is not consistent, particularly in relation to those pupils who are more able. This is because work is not

consistently matched to the needs of and, as a result, has an impact on standards achieved in English, mathematics and science by the age of seven. Also, the use of homework to support pupils' learning is inconsistent through school and this was a concern raised by parents.

16. The quality of teaching and learning for pupils with special educational needs is good. Pupils receive effective help from teachers and support assistants in most lessons. Overall, they are well directed and know what they are expected to do to ensure that specific targets for individual pupils are met. Support staff use good questioning techniques to enable pupils' full participation in lessons. The impact of good teaching is evident in the interest that the pupils show in their work and as a result, their good achievement.
17. Assessment is satisfactory overall. Under the leadership of the headteacher, good progress has been made with the implementation of effective procedures for assessing pupils' achievement through the collation of data and tracking of pupils' progress. However, the use of information gathered from assessments, particularly to ensure that teachers plan work to challenge all more able pupils to achieve their best, is not effective. Monitoring of teaching and learning and the evaluation of action needed to raise standards has not been rigorous enough and so standards overall in Year 2 have declined. However, this is now a priority for action.

### **The curriculum**

The curriculum provided by the school is satisfactory. Opportunities for enrichment are good. The quality of the accommodation and resources is satisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good improvement has been made to the ICT curriculum and resources to support provision.
- The focus on healthy schools and citizenship helps pupils effectively in their personal development.
- Provision in nursery is of a consistently high quality, however, this is not consistent through the Foundation Stage.
- Provision for pupils who have special educational needs is good.
- Planned visits and visitors to school contribute effectively to the quality of the curriculum.
- Although satisfactory, the accommodation does not support transition between Year 2 and Year 3 well, and reception children do not have sufficient access to outdoor provision.

### **Commentary**

18. The school meets the statutory requirements for both the National Curriculum and for the teaching of religious education. The school has fully implemented the National Strategies for literacy and numeracy. The curriculum is organised to ensure that an appropriate amount of time is spent on each subject. Good improvement has been made in the provision for ICT. This is seen specifically in the curriculum and new resources to aid its delivery, for example with the new ICT suite and through the strategic deployment of a teaching assistant to support the teaching and learning of ICT. This has contributed greatly to the raising of standards.
19. The school provides effectively for a well-planned programme for personal, social and health education. The teaching of sex and relationship education, the dangers of drugs and smoking and the importance of healthy eating feature strongly and pupils learn equally the importance of becoming a good citizen. The school's hard work was rewarded with the Healthy Schools' Award in 2003.
20. Provision for the Foundation Stage is good overall. However, there are inconsistencies between provision in nursery and that provided in reception. This is mainly seen in opportunities for children to develop independence and curiosity as many activities in reception have an emphasis on adult direction. In addition, lack of experience of staff in the

Foundation Stage means that some teaching and learning experiences in reception are not effectively planned to consistently meet children's needs.

21. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and pupils have full access to the National Curriculum. Parents recognise the quality of support that their children receive. Teachers in Year 6 make particular efforts to plan and resource learning opportunities taking into account the learning requirements of pupils with specific needs. The school has begun to identify gifted and talented pupils but, as yet, has not clearly defined the strategies to extend learning for these pupils throughout school.
22. The location of classrooms and the deployment of staff across the school create a distinct separation between the two key stages. This does not help the transfer of information about pupils and the cross-checking of assessments across year groups for seven and eight year old pupils. The leadership team is aware of this issue and has also identified correctly the need to improve access to outdoor provision for reception children and to improve books to support the English curriculum.
23. The school makes good use of visits and visitors to support learning and this contributes to the curriculum's enrichment effectively. Pupils aged seven and over have been given the opportunity to visit a variety of locations, which have supported learning in history and geography. However, as the cost of visits has risen there is an increased focus on bringing visitors into school. Examples are the recent visits of a member of the Sikh community and a Rabbi that have enhanced learning in religious education very well.

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

The procedures for ensuring the welfare, health and safety of pupils are good overall. The support, advice and guidance given to pupils are satisfactory. The pupils are effectively involved in the life of the school.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school takes good care of its pupils and this is evident in all aspect of its work.
- Monitoring of pupils' academic progress is in place but assessments are not currently used well enough to ensure that all pupils' needs are met effectively.
- Effective support and guidance are in place for those pupils who have special educational needs.
- Pupils settle well into school because of the good procedures in place for their induction.
- The school council plays an important part in helping pupils contribute to school life.

### **Commentary**

24. The headteacher and her staff have the best interests of all pupils. Each child in the school is well cared for. Child protection procedures are effective and the head teacher, governors and staff work together well to ensure that the school buildings are safe and that pupils are secure. As a result, pupils develop very effective and trusting relationships with the adults who they work with. Pupils are proud of their school and feel totally involved in its life and work. Parents appreciate the quality of care that their children receive.
25. Through the school's involvement with the Healthy Schools programme, pupils are well supported in their personal development. In relation to monitoring pupils' academic development, the school is working hard to check pupils' progress. However, currently the information gathered from this process is not used well enough to ensure that more able pupils are sufficiently challenged and this is impacting on their achievement. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported. The special educational needs' coordinator monitors the individual education plans effectively and they provide clear targets to meet the needs of those pupils. Good contact with a variety of support agencies ensures that the

school is well placed to access the skills and information needed to support the needs of special educational needs children.

26. The induction procedures for new starters are good with home visits and close cooperation between the nursery and parents playing an important factor. As a result, when children start school, they settle well into the new routines of the nursery and staff get to know them very well. The school helps pupils to become confident by the time they leave school. This is because of a good programme of personal, social and health education and a strong emphasis on pupils taking responsibilities. Pupils act as “Befrienders” to look after those pupils who do not have friends to play with, as well as carrying out duties around the school.
27. Pupils are encouraged to think for themselves and to give their views and this is fundamental to their work as school council members. The school council has representatives from each class and the pupils take their responsibilities very seriously. An executive made up of the chair, secretary and treasurer are interviewed and appointed by the council. The council discuss and suggest improvements for the school. The council is currently raising funds for school fencing and is also keen to have blinds at the windows to prevent the glare on the interactive white boards when the sun shines.

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

The schools’ links with parents are good and satisfactory with the community. Links with other schools and colleges are good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school has very good arrangements for the transfer of pupils to the local secondary school.
- The working party of parents is an effective group.
- School takes seriously and deals effectively with concerns that are raised by parents.

### **Commentary**

28. The school’s partnership with parents is good and is demonstrated by a recently formed parents’ working party that is helping to raise funds for school. It also sees its role beyond that of fund raising and is very keen to work collaboratively with the school council to involve pupils in their activities. The working party is proving to be very successful and has been formed as a direct result of the approach by the headteacher in leading the school forward in its relationship with parents.
29. Parents are encouraged to come into school and some do to help with reading and with other tasks around the school. Parents are supportive of school; however, they have concerns that the use of homework is inconsistent and that the quality of ‘supply’ teachers is variable. Inspection evidence concurs with their views. The school takes seriously any issues of concern from parents and the headteacher and staff are available to discuss concerns with parents and this is appreciated by parents.
30. The links with schools and colleges are good overall; however, they are very good with the secondary school that most pupils move on to. Transfer arrangements for pupils are of high quality. For example, pupils visit the school for a day in the summer term and do team building exercises. They experience sample lessons and parents are able to attend during the evening. In addition, teachers from the secondary school visit the Scawthorpe Castle Hills Primary School to teach some lessons so pupils know a few teachers when they move on. All such procedures help to promote a smooth transition between Year 6 and Year 7 at the pupils’ new school and so minimise disruption to the pupils’ education.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management of the school are satisfactory overall. Governance is satisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The leadership of the headteacher is good.
- Leadership and management of the school by key staff are inconsistent.
- The management of special educational needs is good.
- Financial management is good. The school improvement plan is central to guiding school improvement and is accurately costed.

### **Commentary**

31. The leadership of the headteacher is good. She provides a good role model and has a clear vision of the school's place in the local community. The headteacher is also clear about the barrier to learning that pupils' often have in respect to their language skills when they start school. As a result, the school focuses on pupils' speaking and listening through a range of planned activities to aid achievement. School development planning is thorough and the headteacher has accurately identified the school's priorities for improvement. One outcome is the headteacher's implementation of an effective system for tracking pupils' progress, so that there is accurate information to help teachers know about their levels of attainment. This information is regularly updated and identifies what each pupil's target is on a termly basis. This is much improved from the position reported at the time of the previous inspection. However, the information is not being used as well as it should. It is working much better with older pupils than those in Years 1 and 2.
32. Special educational needs' provision is a high priority in the school. The co-ordinator leads and manages this area well. She works well with staff and external agencies to identify the needs of pupils and then conscientiously and effectively manages the support programme that is put in place to support pupils in their learning.
33. A leadership team has been created to support school improvement. Along with the headteacher, key staff have developed systematic processes and procedures to collect and collate valuable information with which they can monitor the progress and attainment of each pupil as they move through the school. The use of this information is, however, not being used sufficiently well by key staff to inform themselves of the action they must take to bring about improvement in the quality of teaching and learning and in the raising of standards. This situation is similar to that found at the time of the last inspection. As a result, insufficient progress has been made in writing and mathematics by seven-year-olds and in science throughout school.
34. Many governors are new to their roles; however, they are beginning to play a crucial role in the running of the school. Carefully organised committees, which take a full part in decision making, are led by well informed chairs and governors are beginning to develop an effective understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. There are regular monitoring procedures in place for governors to check the effectiveness of the school's priorities and as a result, they are well placed to ensure that best value is achieved. Governors fulfil their statutory duties, have implemented the race relations' policy and monitored its implementation satisfactorily.

### **Financial Information**

#### ***Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004***

|                            |              |
|----------------------------|--------------|
| Income and expenditure (£) | Balances (£) |
|----------------------------|--------------|



|                       |         |
|-----------------------|---------|
| Total income          | 817750  |
| Total expenditure     | 826 054 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 2301    |

|                                     |        |
|-------------------------------------|--------|
| Balance from previous year          | 72 812 |
| Balance carried forward to the next | 64 508 |

35. Finances are managed carefully and monitored regularly. The headteacher and governors have a good understanding of the principles of best value and good use is made of the funds that are available. There is currently a significant planned under-spend. This is set to act as a barrier against the forecasted fall in numbers on the school role and is also planned to support the school in tackling significant issues, such as the monitoring of teaching and learning. The administrative staff provide good support on a day to day basis and aid the work of the school effectively. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

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

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

36. Provision in the Foundation Stage is good overall. Children are taught in the nursery on a part time basis and in two reception classes. Good induction procedures and information for parents ensure that children settle quickly into school routines. Curriculum planning in nursery is very good with an appropriate balance between teaching and structured play opportunities that enable children to choose for themselves. The wide range of exciting practical activities in nursery make learning purposeful and fun. All staff work well together, forming good relationships with the children in their care. Assessment procedures are good; work in all six areas of learning for the Foundation stage is assessed and records carefully kept. However these records are not always used sufficiently well to target next steps in learning. This is one of the main causes for the small amount of unsatisfactory teaching and learning that was observed in reception. Planning is inconsistent between nursery and reception classes leading to unequal learning opportunities. Reception teachers do not always ensure for example with the 'High Scope' activities such as sand, water or Lego that children's play is structured sufficiently well to provide a purpose for their learning. In addition, activities are often over directed by adults, thus limiting opportunities for independent learning and creativity.

## **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

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

### **Main Strengths and weaknesses**

- Personal, social and emotional development is particularly well promoted in nursery.
- Children generally work and play well together because relationships are good.
- The lack of opportunities to promote independence and creativity in some reception class lessons restricts children's development.

### **Commentary**

37. As a result of careful planning and structured opportunities in all areas of learning in the nursery class, achievement in this area is very good. Teaching is good overall, however inconsistencies in planning and teaching mean that behaviour is not as good for some of the older children in the Foundation stage. Children are happy to come to school and are cared for in a safe and secure learning environment. They generally work and play well together because of the good relationships they form with each other and with adults. Both nursery and reception children put on coats and aprons confidently, and when given the opportunity, work independently of adults and help to tidy up after activities. Most children take turns, share resources and handle equipment with care. Stories, pictures and toys encourage nursery children to discuss feelings such as happy, sad or frightened. Where teaching and planning is at its best, there are ample opportunities for children to choose tasks, which are carefully planned to foster their independence, thinking skills and creativity. Most children show very good attitudes in lessons, listen attentively, follow instructions and concentrate. Where tasks are over-directed by teachers or lack structure in some reception class lessons, the development of children's personal and social skills is not as good as it could be. However, overall, children achieve well and are likely to meet the expected levels by the time they move to Year 1.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- In nursery there is very good support for language development
- The majority of children are achieving well in their basic reading skills
- There are some inconsistencies in the quality of planning and subject knowledge.

### Commentary

38. Teaching and learning is good overall. Many children start nursery with communication and language skills below the level expected for their age. Their vocabulary is limited and some lack confidence when speaking to adults. However, very good emphasis is placed on promoting children's speaking and listening skills at every opportunity in the nursery. For example well planned role play opportunities such as the 'Antarctica' corner and dentists surgery effectively extend children's vocabulary as they work as weather presenters, dentists, dental nurses or patients. The planned intervention of adults to introduce new vocabulary is very effective in developing children's speech. Language development in nursery permeates every area of learning, as a result children achieve well in this area of learning. Opportunities for role play continue into reception which focus on the importance of developing children's speaking and listening skills. There are some inconsistencies between the reception classes in how children are taught to use the letters they have learnt and to 'sound out' unfamiliar words. However, achievement in reception class is satisfactory overall. By the time children are ready to move to Year 1 the majority of children know their alphabet sounds, have a bank of familiar key words that they can recognise and some are beginning to spell and read simple texts with support from an adult. Higher ability children in reception can complete a short sentence independently when writing. Writing skills and letter formation are becoming more controlled, and the majority are likely to be at the expected levels in their language and literacy skills by the end of their reception year.

## MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Effective questioning by teachers helps promote thinking skills.
- Support staff make a very positive contribution to the children's learning.
- There are limited opportunities for children to consolidate their learning by using mathematical knowledge to problem solve in reception.

### Commentary

39. Children in nursery achieve well because of the good range of practical activities planned to cover mathematics. Some nursery children can identify the missing number in a line of numbers to ten. Effective questioning by the teacher helps to promote thinking and they can explain for example, that 2 comes between 3 and 4. They sing rhymes about number and days of the week. Some children can already help to identify the day for the weather chart. Children in reception are learning about two and three-dimensional shapes and play games directed by the teacher or classroom assistant. They enjoy these games and maintain their concentration. However, insufficient opportunities are available for them to solve problems on their own so that they can consolidate their learning. Similarly, time spent on directed tasks is too long. Nonetheless, all children show good attitudes to their work and generally behave well in Foundation Stage because tasks in mathematics are interesting. Overall, teaching is good in Foundation Stage; support staff are well briefed and competent which makes a positive impact on children's learning and their good achievement. As a result, the majority of children are likely to meet national expectations for their age when they leave reception.

## KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Investigative displays and role-play in the nursery celebrate well this area of learning.
- The use of visitors to enhance the curriculum is good.
- The use of computers has improved since the last inspection.

## **Commentary**

40. Children achieve well in their development of knowledge and understanding of the world; this is because teaching and learning overall is good. It is particularly good in nursery. Children learn about the weather by keeping weather charts and recording their results. The use of visitors is a strength, for example a visit by the dental nurse which helps to stimulate children's curiosity and develop their knowledge of the world outside school. Nursery children were excited about the child-sized dental chair, giant teeth, dental mirror and torch she brought to show them and were eager to take part in role play in the 'dentists' that was set up by the staff to enhance further learning. The planned intervention of staff to promote the correct dental vocabulary is a particular strength. Opportunities to explore water droplets and investigation tables with resources such as water, torches and magnifying glasses all make a very positive contribution to overall achievement. Most children in the Foundation Stage use the computer mouse satisfactorily; the more able can drag and drop buttons on a teddy and their learning is supported by carefully chosen programs in other areas. By the time children leave reception, the majority are likely to achieve the levels they are expected to reach in this area of learning.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children are aware of safety issues in the hall and outdoors.
- Outdoor play opportunities are limited especially for reception aged children.

### **Commentary**

41. The outdoor play area in the nursery is used for both nursery and reception aged children at separate times to aid children's physical development. They enjoy going outdoors. Although the hard surface is small, painted tracks help to direct children safely when using wheeled toys. However, the space restricts pedalling for anything other than very short distances and although children are aware of each other's safety, the space impacts on the quality of physical play. There is a lack of opportunity to develop large-scale physical play such as climbing, rolling, sliding and crawling. Reception aged children have classroom doors that open immediately on to a large hard surface area but this area is not securely fenced and so is not used. Children in reception have the opportunity to use the hall, and although teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, it was unsatisfactory when the management of time and of children's behaviour were ineffective. In the classrooms, children have many opportunities to develop their manipulative skills appropriately through their regular access to play dough, jigsaws, construction materials, writing, painting, cutting and sticking equipment. Overall, children achieve well and by the time they leave reception, the majority are likely to meet the expected levels for their age in their physical development.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in creative development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The quality of children's art work is good.
- Creative development is often promoted across other areas of learning.
- A lack of consistent focussed adult support in role play in reception has an impact on the quality of learning.

### **Commentary**

42. Teaching and learning is good. Effective teaching and planning of art activities ensure that the children have opportunities to draw paint and make models from a variety of media and so they achieve well. Children's work is often linked to other areas of learning, as for example when they blow paint with straws to make pictures, paint leaves or weather pictures. Pictures are carefully mounted and displayed. Well-planned role-play activities effectively develop the nursery children's imaginations and communication skills as they work in the 'dentists' or the Antarctica corner. Similar opportunities for the reception children are available but limited in content for example to a role play area in the 'Puppets of Penzance' theatre. The lack of consistently available adult intervention and support, to raise the quality of focussed play, impacts on learning. Many children in a joint reception class music session were able to follow a simple notation they had written with the teacher and kept a steady beat. However, the large numbers of children involved limited opportunities for them to develop their creative skills in music by composing and performing in smaller groups. Nonetheless, all children enjoy singing simple rhymes and action songs and by the time they leave reception, they are likely to meet the expected levels for their age in their creative development.

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

### **ENGLISH**

Provision for English is **satisfactory**

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

- Standards in writing are below average in Year 2.
- The school places a good emphasis on developing pupils' speaking and listening skills

- There are good opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills through other subjects.
- The more able pupils are not sufficiently challenged.
- Where teaching is good, it is lively and engages pupils' interest well, but it is inconsistent throughout the school.
- The standard of handwriting is inconsistent throughout school.
- The range of books available to aid pupils' reading is limited.

### **Commentary**

43. Standards in speaking and listening have fallen since the time of the last inspection and are below average by the time pupils reach the age of seven. However, pupils now enter school with low standards in speaking and listening and teachers plan well to encourage pupils to speak confidently amongst themselves and provide many opportunities for them to talk and discuss in small and larger groups. Emphasis is placed on developing vocabulary through which pupils can express themselves more clearly. During the inspection, in Years 1 and 2, pupils were helped to gain confidence in speaking by being encouraged to talk in pairs and small groups. The teachers' use of new and unfamiliar words excited pupils and so they used them enthusiastically. By the time pupils reach the age of 11, they meet the expected standards in speaking and listening and so demonstrate good achievement over time.
44. National test data in 2004 indicated that standards in writing were above the national average by age seven. This was the case at the time of the last inspection. However, inspection evidence indicates that currently, by this age, the standard of pupils' writing is below average. This is because of the lack of planning and organisation in developing pupils' skills. Teachers have low expectations of pupils because the assessment information, whilst providing accurate detail of what children can and cannot do, is not used effectively enough to plan the next stages of learning.
45. Inspection evidence, however, indicates that by the age of 11, pupils' work is of a satisfactory standard. This is an improvement since the time of the last inspection and reflects pupils' good achievement over time. Pupils enjoy a wide variety of interesting writing tasks. Teachers often look for real contexts and this motivates pupils effectively. For example, pupils write authentic, hard-hitting and well-argued letters about the effects on people's lives by the council's decision to change the use of a church into that of a night club. There are good links with other subjects, for example in history, pupils create factual, imaginative and fascinating interviews with famous historical characters, such as Lord Shaftsbury. In these pieces of work they demonstrate a high level of skill in the weaving of fact and imagination together. This enables pupils to create, through the use of well-chosen vocabulary, pieces of writing characterising the life and events of the times. Teachers use a very good range of literature to develop pupils' understanding of style and techniques. This works well, particularly when pupils are actively involved and their work and ideas are shown to be valued. For example, pupils are able to write their own lengthy and accurately structured plays based on Shakespeare's 'Hamlet' and create poems based on love and betrayal in which emotive and powerful descriptive vocabulary is used to great effect. Within the context of the active learning in which pupils' contributions are valued, and activities are often practical and interesting, the learning needs of boys are being particularly well met. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because of the support given to them by well trained learning support assistants.
46. The standard of handwriting is not of a consistently high enough standard. Good examples of presentation are evident but the inconsistency in the quality of letter formation detracts from the presentation of pupils' work. This is a result of an inconsistent approach to the teaching of handwriting throughout the school and in some cases, low teacher expectation.
47. Although there are inconsistencies in standards achieved in writing throughout school, standards in reading are average by the age of seven and 11. This is the same as at the time of the last inspection. Teachers teach pupils the skills to tackle unfamiliar words and more

difficult books which helps their confidence and enthusiasm. However, many of the books in the school's reading scheme are old and unattractive. The scheme is used rigidly and, while appropriate for younger pupils, does not include sufficiently challenging texts for older or more able pupils. Many can use the small library well. They are familiar with non-fiction books and can use content pages and indices to locate information.

48. Teachers encourage pupils to ask and answer questions. This encourages pupils to become interested in their work so they listen attentively to adults and to each other. Consequently, pupils' attitudes to learning and their work are good. They behave well, are attentive and keen to take part in lessons. Most shoot their hands in the air to answer questions. During group activity sessions, the vast majority of pupils show a high level of co-operation and collaboration and a willingness to share ideas. The quality of teaching is satisfactory in the Years 1 and 2 overall and good in Years 3 to 6. Where teaching is good, it is lively and pupils respond with interest. However, because of the insufficient use of the increasing amount of accurate data that is being collected, the level of work offered to pupils, particularly to those who are more able, lacks sufficient challenge. This means that teachers do not match learning tasks to the needs of pupils sufficiently well for them to achieve to their full capability. Consequently, and particularly in Year 2 and currently in one mixed Year 3 and Year 4 class, teachers' expectations are not consistently high enough, resulting in an underestimation of pupils' abilities. This was also of significant concern where teaching was observed to be unsatisfactory in a Year 1 class. This is an issue that the co-ordinator's work has yet to impact upon. In this respect, leadership and management of the subject is satisfactory.

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

49. The use of language and literacy across the curriculum is good overall. Most teachers plan effectively to extend their pupils' language and literacy skills in every curriculum area. These include planned and structured activities and in situations which occur naturally. Staff extend spoken language in role play, drama and discussion and, especially in the Year 5 and 6 classes, provide a wealth of purposeful writing activities in subjects such as science, history, geography, ICT and religious education. However, the lack of a rich and stimulating literary focus such as that provided by a library or attractively displayed books, especially in the infant department, provides very few opportunities for pupils to become excited by books.

### **MATHEMATICS**

Provision for mathematics is **satisfactory**.

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

- Standards are below average by the age of seven.
- Good teaching and learning in Years 5 and 6 aids pupils' achievement.
- Standards attained by the age of 11 have improved since the last inspection.
- More able pupils are not consistently challenged to do their best.
- Monitoring and evaluation of provision, teaching and learning are not, as yet, making a difference to raising standards throughout school.
- The use of mathematics across the curriculum is underdeveloped.

#### **Commentary**

50. Good improvement has been made since the last inspection in the standards pupils achieve by the age of 11. Standards attained are now average and given that pupils start school with skills that are below what might be expected for their age, this shows that over time pupils' achievement is good. One of the key reasons for this is the improved quality of teaching and learning in Years 5 and 6. For example, during the inspection, very good teaching in this year group engaged pupils effectively in their learning when they converted fractions to decimals.

The teacher's lively interaction with the pupils and her use of very clear explanations and appropriate mathematical terminology, motivated the pupils to learn.

51. This good achievement is not evident throughout school. In Year 1, standards in mathematics are average, however, by the age of seven, standards in mathematics are below average. Whilst there is an issue of pupils starting school at different times of their school life that impacts on attainment in different year groups, there are also other reasons for pupils' limited achievement. The main reason is the lack of challenge presented to pupils to achieve their best and this is particularly an issue for more able pupils. Evidence also shows that there are some differences in expectations for Year 4 pupils in a mixed-age Year 3 and 4 class when compared to other Year 4 pupils in other mixed-age year groups. The reason is because the teacher is not using the information gathered from assessments well enough to ensure that pupils' needs are met effectively in lessons; as a result, pupils do not always achieve as well as they should.
52. Management of the subject is currently satisfactory. Monitoring and evaluation of provision, teaching and learning are not sufficiently rigorous to ensure that priorities for improvement are clearly stated and followed through with action to raise standards throughout school. The school recognises that this is an area for development for the leadership team and the subject co-ordinator.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

The use of mathematics across the curriculum throughout the school is currently underdeveloped. Evidence shows that there are some links with other subjects, for example, in Years 5 and 6, where pupils use numeracy skills in science. Similarly there are links with ICT that is used to aid pupils' learning. However, this is not a feature that is evident across the whole curriculum and in all classes.

### **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **unsatisfactory**.

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

- Standards achieved by pupils in science are below average.
- Insufficient focus on the development of pupils' skills in scientific enquiry throughout the school limits achievement.
- More able pupils are not appropriately challenged to achieve their best, however, the less able are not always given enough support.
- Assessment information is not used well enough to help pupils understand how to improve their work.
- Monitoring of the subject is underdeveloped.

#### **Commentary**

53. Standards in science have declined since the time of the last inspection, even though it was identified as a subject for improvement. Currently, pupils achieve standards that are below average. This low achievement has been reflected in national tests results that have remained consistently well below average over the last three years when compared both with schools nationally and with similar schools.
54. One of the reasons for lower than expected achievement is that pupils have limited opportunities for experimental and investigative work. In the lessons seen, investigations were often teacher directed, limiting opportunities for pupils to organise their own experiments. As a result, by the time pupils reach Year 6 their skills of scientific enquiry are not good enough to tackle Year 6 programmes of work.. For example, in one Year 6 lesson, pupils



were given an investigation to consider variables but did not have appropriate prior knowledge to work at expected levels. An analysis of pupils' work showed little evidence of experimentation and investigation, except for tasks related to exercise linked to work on health topics, for example in Years 2 and 4. In Year 5 and 6 there are more opportunities for experimentation. In one lesson observed, pupils were able to predict and draw conclusions effectively and clearly understood the meanings of scientific words such as filtering, dissolving, soluble and insoluble from their experimentation. Inconsistencies were found, however, in opportunities for investigative work in parallel classes.

55. Teaching of science is satisfactory overall, with some good teaching seen during the inspection. In a Year 3 and 4 lesson, well led discussions encouraged pupils to consolidate their learning about fair testing as they experimented with which liquid would decay teeth most. Pupils understood the importance of only changing one variable at a time and could explain reasons why. What was to be learnt was also communicated clearly to pupils and appropriate resources were used as an aid. However, in other lessons the activities were often too teacher directed and there were too few opportunities provided for pupils to organise their own learning. When support staff are available for science lessons, they are used effectively; however, in other practical lessons, lack of support staff inhibited progress, especially for pupils who have special educational needs and who are less able. For example, in a Year 5 and 6 lesson where pupils had to create their own investigations about flyers and launchers, special needs and less able pupils lacked appropriate support due to the many demands on the class teacher. Similarly, in lessons seen and from scrutiny of work, there is a lack of challenge for high attaining pupils in most classes. This means that these pupils are not achieving their full potential in science. The exception to this is for pupils in Year 6, where pupils' work showed that some of them clearly had suitably challenging tasks matched to their ability.
56. Teachers in some classes do not have secure subject knowledge and therefore, occasionally, instructions and questions are confusing. As a result, for example, in a Year 2 lesson, pupils did not have the basic understanding of making circuits and therefore became frustrated or confused by the task set. Whilst, in a Year 3 and 4 lesson, where pupils were experimenting with the effects of different liquids on tooth decay, there was uncertainty about what lemon juice contained that would affect tooth decay. Nonetheless, good relationships within classes result in pupils behaving well and concentrating on their task. As a result, they co-operate well in pairs or small groups when given the opportunity to work together.
57. The subject leader is very well aware that science is a high priority for action and so has produced a clear action plan to improve standards in science. The plan recognises that opportunities for experimental and investigative work need to be developed across the school. Work on this has already begun by enlisting the support of an 'Advanced Skills Teacher' from another school. The role of subject leader, however, is still underdeveloped, particularly in the form of monitoring and evaluation of provision against which future action and its progress can be measured. Progress is being made in assessing pupils' progress; assessment units have been introduced recently. Similarly, pupils' self-assessment against targets has also recently been put in place in Years 3 to 6.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

Provision in Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils' ICT skills have improved and they now meet national expectations.
- Good support from a knowledgeable teaching assistant is improving staff's confidence in the teaching of ICT skills.

- Leadership and management of ICT are good, and these have aided the school's improvement in provision throughout the school; however, monitoring and evaluation of the subject are, as yet, underdeveloped.

### **Commentary**

58. The quality of provision for ICT has improved since the last inspection. This is seen in terms of resources and staff expertise. As a result, standards that pupils achieve match those expected for their ages and this represents good achievement over time.
59. The school has improved resources for the subject through the recent creation of a well-equipped computer suite with interactive whiteboard. Laptops and classroom computers enable pupils to reinforce their skills and use ICT in other curriculum areas. Two classes have interactive whiteboards which are used well by teachers for cross curricular work and the school plans to increase these resources with appropriate staff training into other classrooms.
60. A knowledgeable teaching assistant has recently begun to work alongside teachers of all classes from Year 1 to Year 6 in the new computer suite. This support is increasing staff's confidence and as a result of the regular access to many computers, pupils' skills are improving at a more rapid rate.
61. Pupils benefit from teaching that is good overall. In one Year 4 lesson, very clear explanations by the teacher and specialist teaching assistant enabled pupils to create 'fields' for a database about their favourite fruits. The pace of the lesson was good and pupils made good progress. In a Year 1 lesson, pupils demonstrated good mouse control when dragging and dropping light source items from a menu board onto the screen. This linked well to work being covered in science on light and dark. Provision for pupils who have special educational needs is good with appropriate levels of teaching assistant support in place to aid their learning. Confidence levels are high amongst most pupils and they enjoy the subject. A group of Year 6 pupils enthusiastically shared their skills and independence by accessing and using the Internet and a range of programs.
62. The subject is well managed by an enthusiastic subject leader. She is aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the subject and there are plans to develop the subject further. Individual targets for pupils have recently been introduced, a comprehensive two-year action plan written and a new scheme of work is being developed. The subject leader has carried out a skills audit of staff and has plans for future training with the local education authority; however, she recognises that currently, monitoring and evaluation of the subject are underdeveloped and an area for further development.

### **Information and Communication Technology across the curriculum**

63. The use of ICT across the curriculum is satisfactory overall and developing. Interactive whiteboards that are in two classes are used effectively to teach other subjects. For example, in an English lesson, the interactive whiteboard was used to scan text and locate key words as part of research work. These opportunities, however, are not available for other classes. Good use is made of ICT to deliver individualised learning in English and mathematics for pupils in Year 2 to Year 6. Staff identify cross-curricular opportunities for ICT on a half termly basis and the subject manager supports this by listing appropriate web sites available to develop these links.

### **HUMANITIES**

64. Insufficient evidence was available during the time of the inspection to make secure judgements on the provision for geography. Therefore this subject has been sampled.

65. In **geography** no lessons were seen during the inspection. However, evidence from pupils work indicates that an appropriate curriculum is available for pupils, and for example, use is made of the local area to study geographical features and environmental issues.

## History

Provision in history is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good improvement has been made in the standards achieved by age 11.
- The use of artefacts to aid teaching and learning is effective.

### Commentary

66. Pupils throughout the school achieve consistently well, reaching average standards by the age of seven and 11. This demonstrates good improvement since the time of the previous inspection in Years 3 to 6. The work undertaken in Years 1 and 2 provides a balance of the development of skills, experiences and the gaining of historical knowledge. Pupils achieve well because teaching and learning is good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and use the range of very good artefacts effectively; as a result, pupils make meaningful comparisons between life in the past and that of today.
67. As pupils progress through Years 3 – 6, they develop a vocabulary that is relevant to the work they are undertaking and they are provided with good opportunities to develop their historical research skills. For example, using photographs, pupils in Year 5 and 6 were asked to identify and consider changes in the buildings and road systems of Victorian Doncaster with those of today. Through very good questioning by the teacher, the pupils then used this evidence to make assumptions about life in Victorian times and how over time the changes in people's lives, values and beliefs impact on the environment. In their writing, pupils empathised well with poor Victorian children and major events that influenced their lives. This work was of a good standard.

## Religious education

Provision in religious education is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers provide a range of interesting experiences in their lessons that aid pupils' achievement
- The very good use of visitors to school aids pupils understanding well of other religions.
- Good leadership and management contribute well to the subject's good provision.

### Commentary

68. Pupils achieve well in religious education because teaching is good. Teachers make learning interesting and fun. In Year 2 a visiting teacher takes religious education lessons and, when observed during the inspection, had pupils mesmerised with a Bible story from the moment the lesson started. The teacher's good subject knowledge was evident and she engaged pupils well as they took on the role of characters in the story through a technique known as 'hot seating'. Teaching in Year 6 was observed to be equally effective. Here the teacher built well on a visit to school by Roop Singh that had taken place during the previous month. Working well with the teacher, pupils identified particular aspects of Sikhism that demonstrated a Sikh's commitment to his faith. In both lessons, clear links were evident to promote and develop pupils' speaking and listening skills. In addition, no time was lost at any time during the lessons and pupils were well motivated to work well and with enthusiasm.

69. A strength of provision is the use of visitors to school to promote and develop a good understanding of different religions and faiths and this contributes very well to the enrichment of the curriculum overall. During the inspection, pupils in Years 3 – 5 listened intently to a visiting Rabbi who spoke about Judaism. Pupils were very interested in what they heard. Teachers, also, joined in with the session and their involvement in this way helps to increase their own expertise.
70. A key feature to the success of the subject is the good leadership and management demonstrated by the co-ordinator for religious education. He is knowledgeable and far thinking in his vision for the subject and has recognised the need to ensure pupils in Year 1 and 2 have the same opportunity to enjoy the work of visitors into school as those in other year groups. The co-ordinator is committed to the subject and ensures that the religious education curriculum meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus and that pupils meet its expectations for their age.

### **CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS**

71. During the time of the inspection, there was insufficient evidence to make secure judgements on provision in design and technology, music and physical education and so these subjects have been sampled.
72. No lessons were seen in **music** during the course of the inspection. However, a musical celebration highlighted the opportunities available to pupils, either through lessons with visiting teachers or through extra curricular opportunities, such as the choir and recorder groups. A range of brass and woodwind instrumental players entertained in small groups, playing melodies and some simple harmonies. An enthusiastic choir sang with clear diction and rhythm to their recorded accompaniment. From this experience, it was clear that the expertise of musicians on the staff, and of those who visit the school, is having an impact on the music curriculum that is provided for pupils.
73. In **design and technology** one lesson was observed during the inspection. Teachers use planned opportunities from national guidelines to ensure that aspects of design are taught. Some examples of pupils' work available included Saxon purses made by Year 5, and these demonstrated good attention to detail and were constructed well enough to hold money. There are also good examples of links to other areas in the curriculum. In the lesson seen, teaching was good. Pupils had prepared plans called 'mind maps' of what they needed and how to set about making torches. The lesson linked well to their studies of electrical circuits in science. Evidence from the subject leader's portfolio shows that a range of work is undertaken including food technology when, for example, pupils in Years 1 and 2, make fruit salad.
74. Only one lesson was observed in **physical education**. However, evidence gained from teachers' planning and discussion with pupils, staff and governors indicates that the curriculum is broad and balanced. It includes dance, gymnastics, games and swimming. There are also many extra-curricular activities that provide frequent opportunities for pupils to participate in team games, BMX biking and skateboarding. The enthusiasm of the subject leader for physical education and that of the Chair of Governors is infectious and encourages many pupils to become involved in the activities organised for them.

### **Art and design**

Provision for art and design is **good**

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils' observational work in art and design shows good attention to detail and they experience a good range of different media
- A good range of work in two-dimensions is on display throughout the school
- Opportunities to use the work of famous artists to promote spiritual and cultural development are limited
- There are good links to pupils' work in ICT

### **Commentary**

75. Pupils from Year 1 onwards have access to a wide range of media; painting, drawing, observational work, printing, collage, pastels, chalk, charcoal and pen or pencil sketching. Their attention to detail is encouraged and this aids their good achievement. For example, in a Year 1 lesson, pupils were shown how to use drawing pencils to achieve line and tone. Over time in school, these skills are developed so that pupils can achieve high quality drawings as seen in Years 5 and 6 sketches of St George's Church and the Mansion House on the Doncaster town trail. Some of the pencil drawings in Years 5 and 6 are above the level that would be expected for pupils of this age and demonstrate the good quality of teaching and learning in school.
76. Work seen on display is mainly two-dimensional. Three-dimensional art and design is less evident across the school, other than in the modelling with 'junk' materials by younger pupils. However, Year 6 clay work shows attention to detail and sensitively represents body movement. There is insufficient use of the work of famous artists to enhance spiritual and cultural development. This means that opportunities for pupils to admire beauty and evaluate fine technique in order to raise standards are limited. However, national guidelines have now been adopted which systematically develops pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding throughout school.
77. Effective links have been made between art and design and the ICT curriculum. Good examples of pictures were seen, for example, that were made using computer graphics as in the Year 2 pictures that were produced in the style of the artist Mondrian. Assessment procedures are in place, though the use of these is not yet sufficiently well established to plan next steps in learning in art and design. In addition, there is currently no monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning.

### **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP**

78. No full lessons in personal, social and health education were observed and so the subject has been sampled. However, a scrutiny of information available and discussion with the co-ordinator and her team reveal that the school has a clear focus on the development of PSHE and citizenship in school. The school is also rightly very proud of its involvement in the Healthy School project and governors and parents work well with the co-ordinator to ensure that it is effectively run. All are very proud of their achievements, particularly in relation to their award in 2004.
79. The school's focus on pupils becoming good citizens is clearly demonstrated in the running of the school council. It is run efficiently and pupils are prepared for later life when, for example, they interview their peers to ensure that they have the best people in positions of responsibility. The council's effective organisation ensures that all pupils' views can be heard through their class representative. Pupils are proud of their school and clearly feel involved. PSHCE is well led and managed and the subject contributes well to pupils' personal development.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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