

# INSPECTION REPORT

**SESSAY CE VC PRIMARY SCHOOL**

THIRSK

LEA area: NORTH YORKSHIRE

Unique reference number: 121514

Headteacher: MRS J MACKLE

Lead inspector: Mike Warman

Dates of inspection: 11 to 13 April 2005

Inspection number: 267643

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:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	66
School address:	Sessay Thirsk North Yorkshire
Postcode:	YO7 3NA
Telephone number:	01845 501239
Fax number:	01845 501239
Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr J Hollins
Date of previous inspection:	25 <sup>th</sup> January 1999

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

This is a small primary school. There are 69 pupils on roll organised into three classes, catering for pupils in Reception and Year 1, Years 2 and 3 and for Years 4,5 and 6. The oldest class has most pupils (30) whilst youngest one has the smallest number (19). There are seven children currently in their Reception year. There are 3.5 full time teachers including the headteacher. The school serves the village of Sessay, which is not far from Thirsk, and nearby villages, although a very high proportion (75%) live outside the immediate area. Only one pupil is entitled to free school meals and none speak English as an additional language. The attainment of children on entry to Reception fluctuates from year to year and within years but overall is average with language skills often lower than other areas. Only a few children have had nursery school experience before coming to school. An average proportion of pupils (12) are identified as having special educational needs and one has a statement, a proportion which is average. From 2000 to 2004 the school had well above the national average for statements of special educational need, for example, in 2004 the proportion was 5.5%, nearly all in Year 6. The current Year 2 has a high proportion of pupils with identified special educational needs. In the last few years the school has gained many awards including, Achievement Award from the Department of Education and Skills 2002, the Basic Skills Quality Mark 2002, Healthy Schools Award 2004, North Yorkshire Excellence Award for Special Educational Needs 2004 and Investor in People 2005

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
1516	Mike Warman	Lead inspector	Mathematics, information and communication technology, art and design, history, geography, music, religious education, special educational needs.
9798	Vivienne Ashworth	Lay inspector	
1718	Kay Charlton	Team inspector	English, science, design and technology, physical education, citizenship, Foundation Stage curriculum, English as an additional language

The inspection contractor was:

Focus Education  
113/115 High Street  
Uppermill  
Saddleworth  
OI3 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>8</b>
Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
<b>QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL</b>	<b>10</b>
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
<b>LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>OTHER SPECIFIED FEATURES</b>	
<b>PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS</b>	<b>16</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>26</b>

## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**This is a very good school** that provides a very good standard of education. By the end of Year 6 standards are well above average. The headteacher provides excellent leadership that motivates everyone to give of their best. Very good teaching and a very good curriculum ensure that pupils achieve very well. The school provides good value for money.

#### The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards in English, mathematics and science are well above average by the end of Year 6.
- Pupils' writing in the current Year 2 is below average.
- The headteacher is providing a very clear educational direction to the work of the school.
- The school provides very well for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils.
- The school has a welcoming and very caring ethos. Relationships are excellent.
- The very good curriculum is enriched very well through sporting, musical and creative experiences.
- There are very good links with parents and very good involvement of them in their children's education.

The school has made good improvements since the previous inspection. Key issues have been tackled very well. The excellent leadership of the headteacher has resulted in a rich, stimulating learning environment. Teaching and learning are now very good as is the quality of the curriculum. Standards in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT) have improved significantly due to the school's effective strategies and very good teaching.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	All schools			Similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
English	A*	A	D	C
Mathematics	A*	A*	B	A
Science	A*	A	C	C

*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. Caution is needed in interpreting this data as numbers of pupils in each of the year groups are small*

**Pupils' achievement is very good.** Standards in the current Year 6 are well above average in English, mathematics and science. Test results for several years for pupils at the end of Year 6 have been very good indeed, often being in the top five per cent of the country. The results obtained in 2004 were not as good because there was a very high proportion of pupils in that year group with a statement of special educational need. However, these pupils achieved very well in relation to their previous levels. The evidence from the inspection indicates that the results in 2005 will be back to their previous high levels. Standards in the current Year 2 are average overall but below average in writing. The children who started in Reception in September 2004 have made very good progress, and most are on course to achieve the goals expected by the time they enter Year 1 with a significant number expected to exceed them. Current standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are well above the expected levels by the end of Year 6. Standards in religious education are well above the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus by

the end of year 6. Challenging targets have been set for the pupils currently in Year 6 for the test results in 2005 which, evidence indicates, they are on track to reach.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

The quality of education provided by the school is **very good**. Teaching is very good in the Foundation Stage and throughout the school. Learning is very effective because of the high quality of teaching. Pupils are keen to do their best and respect their teachers. Pupils work independently and collaboratively and take increasing responsibility for their own work. The use of assessment is very good, particularly in English, mathematics and science. The curriculum is very good and is greatly enriched by sporting, musical, creative experiences and a wide variety of trips and visits. Provision for the care and welfare of all pupils is very good. There is a very strong partnership with parents, who support the school's work very effectively, and with the community.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Overall, leadership, management and governance are **very good**. The headteacher provides a very clear vision and focus to the school's work. Teamwork is very good and support staff are used very well to support the curriculum. The school is very well organised so that best use is made of the resources available. Governors are very supportive of the school's work. They have a very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and conscientiously fulfil all their statutory duties.

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

Parents have very positive views of the school. They are very happy with their children's achievements, the quality of teaching and the expectations of staff. Pupils like the school and are proud to be part of it.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

The most important things the school should do to maintain the high standards are:

- improve pupils' achievement in writing by the end of Year 2.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS**

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

#### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS**

Pupils' achievement is very good in relation to their prior attainment.

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

- Children receive a very good start to their education and pupils make very good progress as they move through the school.
- Pupils achieve very well because of the very good teaching in the school
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well.

#### **Commentary**

1. This year children have entered school with average skills and understanding in most areas of learning but many had below average language skills. As most have not had the benefit of nursery education, they are making very good progress and achieving very well because of the very good teaching and a very good range of practical experiences available to them. Almost all are likely to reach the Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning inspected and a significant number should exceed these. In personal, social and emotional development most children will exceed the Goals.
2. Overall, standards have risen through the school since the previous inspection, especially in English, mathematics and science where standards were above average in Year 6 and now they are well above average. When pupils leave the school, their achievement is very good in the main subjects in relation to prior attainment. Information and communication technology (ICT) has been a priority since the last inspection when progress was described as unsatisfactory. Standards have improved significantly and are currently well above average because of the good structure for developing pupils' skills.
3. The results of the mathematics tests for pupils in Year 2 in the summer of 2004 were well above average but those for reading and writing were below and well below average. There were only eight pupils in that group and with very small numbers of pupils in year groups, it is to be expected that results will fluctuate from year to year as can be seen in the school's results. The standards seen in the current Year 2 are average for reading and mathematics but below average for writing.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.5 [29.7]	26.9 [26.8]
Mathematics	28.0 [30.8]	27.0 [26.8]
Science	28.5 [31.4]	28.6 [28.6]

*There were 12 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

4. The school has set challenging targets for pupils in the current Year 6 to reach by the summer of 2005. The evidence suggests that pupils are well on course to achieve them.
5. The well above average standards in English, mathematics, science and ICT by Year 6 are due to high quality teaching and very effective use made of assessment. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and the higher attaining pupils, are making very good progress and achieving very well in relation to their ability. This is illustrated by the fact that in 2004 even though the overall results were not as good as in previous years, the proportion of



pupils achieving the higher Level 5 was well above the national average. All of the pupils with statements of special educational need achieved at least a Level 3 with some achieving the expected Level 4.

6. Standards are very good in Year 6 in religious education, due to very good teaching and a very good, well-planned and interesting curriculum.
7. Individual targets are used successfully to boost standards and improve achievement across the main subjects. Pupils' progress and achievement are carefully tracked and recorded. This enables teachers to set specific targets for pupils of all capabilities. Teachers use assessment information well and effective teaching styles are created that enhance learning.

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

This area continues to be a strong feature of the school as at the time of the last inspection. Pupils' attitudes to their school and their learning are very good. Behaviour is very good in and around the school. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are very good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils are proud of their school.
- Pupils enjoy excellent relationships within the school's Christian ethos.
- Pupils develop very good levels of maturity.
- Pupils have high levels of self-confidence and self-esteem.

### **Commentary**

8. Pupils enjoy coming to school. Their very positive attitudes are reflected in their enthusiasm for learning. There is a happy and positive 'family' atmosphere and pupils are polite and friendly. They say that they really appreciate the wide range of enrichment activities provided. In lessons they listen attentively, show enthusiasm for their work and sustain concentration. In particular, they indicate that they enjoy discussions and practical work.
9. Behaviour is very good at all times. Pupils play together sensibly in the playground. Incidents of bullying or racism are very rare, and if any do occur the school handles them very effectively. Pupils respond very well to the rules that are agreed by all. The use of rewards and initiatives, such as that of 'play leaders' and the 'friendship bench', is very effective. The small number of pupils with identified behaviour needs are very well supported and consequently make very good progress in managing their own behaviour.
10. Relationships are excellent. There is a high expectation of all and pupils and staff work together very effectively to create a strong sense of a community that shares Christian values. All show a high degree of respect for each other and everyone's views are listened to. Pupils enjoy the many opportunities where they learn to co-operate with each other and in turn they develop high levels of self-confidence, maturity and self-esteem. Pupils respond very well to opportunities to take responsibility and help others both in class and around the school; for example, by helping to set up the equipment for assemblies, helping at lunchtime and taking part in decision-making about future developments in the school, notably through the Eco Group.
11. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are very good. Assemblies, religious education, personal, social and health lessons and the very wide range of extra-curricular opportunities make a strong contribution to pupils' development. Spiritual development is excellent. Pupils show high levels of respect for moments of silence and prayer, for example when they make spontaneous contributions to the pre-lunchtime prayer. They respond very well indeed to assemblies, such as 'the sharing assembly' when they present some of their work to the whole school. At these times they delight at the achievements of others, particularly those of the very youngest children in the school. The school's close links with the

parish church support pupils' spiritual development very well. Pupils develop a clear understanding about what is right and what is wrong. They learn to consider the feelings and values of others, and to respect individual and cultural differences, recognising that, on some occasions, differences have to be resolved. They learn to work collaboratively, to take responsibility for daily tasks and to participate in the democratic processes of the school. Educational outings, including residential visits, are an important part of school life and contribute significantly to pupils' social development. The school places a strong emphasis on pupils learning about global issues and events, and this has a particularly positive impact on their social and cultural development. These are also enhanced very well by the wide range of activities associated with the arts and sports. Pupils learn about different cultures and beliefs very effectively. The resources used in the school, such as those for art and design, dance and music reflect the school's commitment to ensuring pupils' horizons are widened by learning about different people and places.

## Attendance

Attendance is well above the national average and there is no unauthorised absence. Pupils are very eager to come to school and arrive punctually which ensures that lessons begin promptly. There were no exclusions during the last reporting year.

### *Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (2003/4)*

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.1	School data	0.0
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a very good education. Pupils learn very well because the teaching is very good, close attention is given to meeting the needs of individuals and the curriculum is broad, rich and stimulating.

### Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are very good overall. A high proportion of it is very good and some of it is excellent, particularly in Years 4 to 6.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- All staff are committed to ensuring every pupil succeeds.
- Pupils are very willing and conscientious learners and achieve very well.
- Teachers make very good use of their expertise to make learning interesting, relevant and successful.
- Most lessons are characterised by high expectations and excellent relationships which create a very good climate for learning.
- Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school.
- Lessons are planned carefully to ensure pupils with special educational needs are given strong support and are included in all activities and that more able pupils' learning is extended.

## Commentary

12. Throughout the school lessons are carefully and thoroughly planned and are usually lively and interesting. Teachers take trouble to plan enjoyable activities, often based on first-hand experience. Teachers, across the school, build on previous work, making sure they explain what the lesson is about and keeping it moving so pupils maintain their interest. Pupils are expected to behave very well and they do. Teachers give pertinent praise, encouragement and reassurance, thus motivating the pupils to concentrate hard; work productively and not be afraid to make mistakes. In Years 4 to 6 in particular, the pupils are very good at working together fruitfully without direct supervision by an adult.
13. The headteacher provides a very strong lead through the excellence of her own teaching and there is much very good teaching throughout the school. The most successful lessons are characterised by high quality questioning, the teacher's very good subject knowledge and very effective use of day-to-day assessment. Pupils are given time to experiment, investigate, practise and evaluate. For example, in a very good lesson on evaporation, pupils experimented with different liquids in different locations after first suggesting what might happen. In a few lessons, which were good rather than being very good, there was not always sufficient adult intervention to ensure quality in pupils' writing and opportunities were missed to extend pupils' writing skills in other subjects. The school is very committed to meeting the learning needs of every pupil which they do very successfully. The very good partnership between teachers and teaching assistants helps pupils with special educational needs make very good progress. This support has a significant impact on their concentration and productivity. The flexible groupings within classes for literacy and mathematics ensure that the work for more able pupils is suitably challenging.
14. Homework is set on a regular basis, and in accordance with the school's published policy. Parents at the meeting felt that homework played an important part in their child's learning and high standards. The level is similar to that found in many schools, and many of the tasks are opportunities for research or individual investigation, and play an important part in consolidating class learning and giving pupils opportunities to extend their knowledge.

### **Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 14 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2	8	4	0	0	0	0

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

## The curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is very good and a wide range of activities enrich it very well. The accommodation is good and the school is well resourced.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is interesting and relevant and takes very good account of the small school situation.
- A very good programme of enrichment activities enhances pupils' learning.
- There is a strong focus on ensuring equality of access and opportunity and all pupils are included very well in school life.
- Very good provision is made for pupils with special educational needs.

## **Commentary**

15. The curriculum has significantly improved since the last inspection. Planning now ensures good continuity through the school and ICT is used very well to support learning across subjects. The curriculum is broad and balanced, and ensures that 'learning is fun'. The Foundation Stage curriculum for the youngest children is well established and makes very effective use of play to support learning. The curriculum is very well organised to suit the needs of a small school so that the wide range of pupils' needs in each class are effectively met. Curriculum policies and schemes of work are in place for all subjects and very good advice about health education is well integrated into the study of personal, social and health education and citizenship. Reading, numeracy and ICT are used very well to enhance the curriculum, but there are occasions, in the younger classes, where writing could be used more effectively and more emphasis placed on the quality of pupils writing.
16. The curriculum is enriched very well. A strong focus is placed on pupils learning about global issues and this adds real interest, for example when they communicate with pupils in a school in Gambia. A wide range of visits out-of-school and visitors to the school, together with clubs, is organised. Pupils enjoy these activities since they bring learning to life. This was very evident when pupils discussed elements of the Second World War, like The Blitz and the black market, after their recent visit to Eden Camp. Residential visits make a significant contribution to the provision. The school has received awards which recognise the quality of its enrichment, for example the Healthy Schools Award. Extra-curricular clubs include football, netball, basketball, cricket and French. Many pupils attend these.
17. Pupils of different abilities are included very well. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and a strong feature of the school. Their learning is very well supported by high quality individual education plans and a curriculum that is very well organised to suit their needs. Pupils are included very well because appropriate work and support is planned by the teachers. All pupils enjoy equality of access and opportunity and teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to the inclusion of pupils. Gifted and talented pupils are identified by the school and very good provision is made for them so that they achieve very well in line with their abilities.
18. There is a good ratio of teaching staff to pupils. Staff are well qualified to meet the demands of the curriculum with a good balance of experience overall. Accommodation has significantly improved since the last inspection and is now good. Staff work hard to provide the pupils with a stimulating environment and there are many attractive displays that celebrate achievement and promote further learning. Overall, the school is well resourced. Resources for ICT are much improved since the last inspection and are now good.

## **Care, guidance and support**

The provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is very good. The school pays very good attention to the care, safety and well being of all its pupils. They are very well guided, advised and supported throughout their time in school. The school involves pupils very effectively in its continued development.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The induction arrangements for children starting school are very effective in helping them to settle in quickly
- All staff support pupils very well so that they are able to learn quickly and do their best
- Pupils are provided with many opportunities to say what they think about their school.

## Commentary

19. The school has very good procedures to ensure the safety and well being of all its pupils. Child protection procedures meet requirements fully. Very close attention is paid to health and safety both in lessons and through regular checks. Pupils feel safe in school and particularly value the fact that there is always an adult to turn to in time of need. They say they like being part of a small school because *'We all look after each other'*.
20. Induction arrangements for young children starting school are very good. Children have the opportunity to visit the school several times before they start in their Reception Year. This helps them to develop very good, trusting relationships with staff and to feel secure. Arrangements for pupils joining at other times are also very good and great efforts are made to help them settle quickly.
21. Pupils' personal and academic development are well monitored. All staff know the pupils very well as individuals. Staff are skilled at analysing the outcomes of tests and use the results to set challenging individual targets. Teachers use marking and discussion successfully to help pupils to understand how well they are doing and how to achieve their targets and improve their work. Individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs have a tight focus so that pupils are able to learn effectively in small steps. The pupils and their parents are fully included in setting new targets and reviewing progress towards those previously agreed. Pupils are willing to seek support and guidance when they have concerns, confident that they will be readily available.
22. Although there is not a formal school council, the pupils are very well involved in the running of the school. They take a real pride in their school because they know their views matter. In discussion they expressed their views confidently and indicated that they contribute to positive changes in school life.

## Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's links with parents, other schools and the community are very good. This shows a good improvement since the last inspection.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents have a very high regard for the school.
- There are very good links with the secondary schools.

## Commentary

23. The parents who answered the pre-inspection questionnaire together with those who attended a meeting have very positive views of the school. They like the open door policy which works very well and are appreciative of how well their children are cared for. Parents feel that they are listened to and that overall their children achieve very well. They appreciate the hard work of the staff, their involvement in extra-curricular activities, and in particular the sports links which the school has promoted. The governors' annual report to parents provides very good, helpful information as does the prospectus. Pupils' annual reports are good overall and particularly helpful with pastoral information. The school is aware that more information on progress, targets and areas for development may be helpful to some parents, but prefers to deal with these issues on an individual basis. There are three parents' evenings each year and opportunities for other discussions as the need arises. There are regular class newsletters, which include a good level of curriculum information, and four school newsletters each term.

24. Parents' views are sought formally on important issues like transport and the school is anxious to include parents when determining strategies. The less formal feedback from parents is continuous and taken seriously. Parents are very involved in their children's learning both at home and at school. Some volunteer to assist in school and many help on school visits. The school is very appreciative of this assistance. Because of the very close links with parents, concerns and complaints are all dealt with quickly and efficiently. The parent-teacher association works very hard to raise substantial funds for the school which are used to provide extra equipment and facilities such as the adventure trail for the great benefit of the pupils.
25. There are very good links with Thirsk High School which continue to grow. There are developing links with Easingwold and Boroughbridge and the very good transfer arrangements with all three schools ensure a smooth transition for the pupils. The Thirsk cluster group of schools is extremely active. Links with the local community have developed very well, for example, the pupils use the village hall for physical education and were involved in the village pantomime last year. Links with the church and the adjacent Church Farm are very good.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The overall leadership, management and governance of the school are very good. The leadership of the headteacher is excellent.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher has very clear vision and aspirations for all aspects of the school's development which are reflected in the very good achievements of all pupils.
- The leadership by key staff is very good.
- The governance of the school is very strong.
- All aspects of strategic planning are very good and have contributed to the improvements in standards and other aspects of provision since the last inspection.
- The financial planning based on principles of best value is very effective.

### **Commentary**

26. The headteacher provides excellent leadership. There is a shared commitment to raising standards and providing a very good education for all pupils. Staff have worked hard to implement the school's vision of providing an inclusive and wide-ranging curriculum with tremendous success.
27. The overall leadership of the school is very good. The headteacher provides excellent educational direction. She combines her leadership and teaching roles very well indeed and in the classroom leads by very strong example. The clear commitment of the headteacher to the principles that drive the school forward is shared by the staff and the governing body. The headteacher and staff support and motivate one another very successfully. The use made of the skilled support staff is effective. This contributes strongly to the very good achievement made by the pupils. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is led very well by the co-ordinator. There is a very good supportive network throughout the school where everyone is valued and is given as much help as possible.
28. The school is managed well. Clear goals are set for everyone. They are shared with teachers and pupils. The headteacher has high expectations of herself, the staff and the pupils. Subject leaders share the responsibility for developing their subjects and this is done very well. There are consistent and detailed curriculum plans. Teachers ensure that the skills of each subject are acquired within the context of creative application and enjoyment. Assessment data is currently being used effectively to improve pupils' performance throughout the school.
29. The school is very well governed. Governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities very well. Their understanding of which aspects are good and where there needs to be additional work is

accurate. They have a very clear awareness of their role in supporting and assisting the headteacher in her work. Performance management is securely rooted in the governance and management of the school. While recognising the importance of high academic standards, they place an equally strong emphasis on pupils' personal development. Members of the governing body have a very wide range of experiences that they use to ensure very effective provision in all aspects. There is a positive and productive relationship between the governing body and the school. Governors ask searching questions and have a very good understanding of the strengths of the school. Through the reports from the headteacher and the subject leaders' and through visiting lessons, governors have a very good understanding of the quality of the teaching and learning in the school. They monitor standards and are actively involved in the evaluation of how well the school is performing. Governors check that spending decisions lead to measurable improvements in standards and overall provision. Governors seek good value for money, not only in cost, but also quality

30. Systems of self-evaluation are in place. All members of the school community, including parents and pupils, are consulted regularly. All comments are welcomed and considered. The governors and the headteacher are not afraid to make bold decisions in the best interests of the school, such as the decision to reduce from four to three classes for the current year due to a falling roll and significantly reduced budget. Administrative support in the school is very efficient. The administrator provides a very detailed analysis of income and expenditure and the headteacher and governors are very well informed. Reserves are minimal and every penny has to be spent prudently. Although in 2003/4 the school had a carry-over of £20,578, for the year 2004/5 it is in the region of £4,000. Being a very small school, costs are high but the quality of education and standards achieved ensure the school provides good value for money.

## Financial information

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

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	268,947
Total expenditure	260,614
Expenditure per pupil	3,948

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year (2002/2003)	12,245
Balance carried forward to the next year	20,578

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

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

31. Overall, the provision is **very good**.
32. Children start in Reception at the beginning of the year in which they reach the age of five. On entry, their skills and knowledge are generally in line with those expected although in the area of communication, language and literacy children's skills they are often below the levels expected for their age. Because most have weak language skills and only a few have had nursery experience before starting school, overall, children's achievements are very good. Almost all are on course to attain the expected goals by the time they start in Year 1 and a significant number are likely to attain beyond this. In personal, social and emotional development most children are likely to exceed the expected goals. Children with special educational needs are very well supported so that they make very good progress in the same way as others.
33. The school has maintained the positive picture noted at the last inspection; teaching overall is very good and staff work closely as a team. Planning is detailed and very effective links are made between the areas of learning through the use of different themes. The progress made by all children is very carefully monitored and assessed. The leadership of the Foundation Stage is very good and an excellent partnership is established with parents.

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

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

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

- Children achieve very well.
- Relationships between children and adults are excellent.
- Children work together well in groups and show good co-operation.
- All adults promote learning consistently in all activities.

#### **Commentary**

34. As a result of very good teaching children achieve very well. Most children are on course to exceed the expected standards. Relationships are excellent and children enjoy coming to school. The adults work very well as a team. They provide good role models and they work consistently to develop children's understanding, encouraging them to take turns in activities, play together and share resources. Children behave very well, encouraged by the consistent and fair management of behaviour. Praise and encouragement are used very well, raising children's confidence and self-esteem. Routines are well organised and children have good opportunities to make choices and work independently through a range of interesting activities. Children develop independence in their personal hygiene very well. The school provides very good opportunities for the children to develop an understanding that people have different needs, views and beliefs that should be respected. The children benefit from taking part in whole school activities, such as the assemblies, where they show very good respect for events/activities such as prayer-time.



## COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are very good.
- Children develop their skills very well.

### Commentary

35. Achievement is very good as from a low starting point almost all children are on course to achieve the expected standards and a significant number are likely to exceed them. Staff have a secure knowledge of teaching children of this age and there is a suitably high focus on this area of learning. Activities are carefully planned and adults guide children through them ensuring that their progress is monitored systematically and provision builds on the children's previous learning. The careful and consistent way in which children are encouraged to develop their speaking and listening skills is a feature of the teaching. When staff read books to the whole class they engage children's interest in books very well, for example, the exciting way the teacher read one entitled '*Whatever Next?*' held children's attention very well. In a range of situations children are introduced to good quality books and texts and the opportunities for them to handle and enjoy books independently are well developed. Early reading and also writing skills are developed very well both through activities that adults direct and also through those that the children initiate. There are well thought out opportunities to extend children's skills through play, such as when they re-enact stories they have heard. Occasionally, opportunities are missed to extend children's writing during outdoor activities.

## MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a strong focus on numbers and children achieve particularly well in this aspect of mathematics.
- There is a very good pace to children's learning and they enjoy mathematics.
- Children learn very well in all aspects of mathematical development.

### Commentary

36. Teaching is very good and children of different abilities achieve very well. Effective planning ensures that there is a structured and systematic approach to the teaching of all aspects of mathematics. Staff ensure that there is a good sense of purpose and pace to children's learning, for example when they learnt about the features of two-dimensional shapes. As a result, children talk with good understanding about the properties of different shapes, using the correct mathematical language. There is a particularly good emphasis on number work and as a result many children count confidently and reliably. They learn to carry out simple calculations, such as when adding 'one' or taking away 'one', when they join in songs such as 'five men in a flying saucer'. Many recognise numerals and use their correct name. All learn to record their thinking in a variety of ways and classroom displays effectively reinforce children's knowledge of and familiarity with numbers. Almost all of the children are on track to reach the early learning goals in mathematics by the end of the school year, and a significant number are likely to attain beyond this.

37. In the short time available for the inspection it was not possible to observe three areas of learning, namely knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development. Teachers' planning and a consideration of pupils' work shows that a suitable programme is in place for each area.

## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

### ENGLISH

Provision in English is **very good**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Speaking and listening are given a strong focus and pupils achieve very well.
- Staff use very consistent approaches to the teaching of reading and pupils achieve very well.
- The teaching of writing is very good overall but practice is not as consistent as in the teaching of reading.
- Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported and achieve very well overall.
- Co-ordination is very good.

#### Commentary

38. Standards are well above average by Year 6 and average by Year 2 in speaking and listening and in reading. In writing, they are well above average by Year 6 but in Year 2 they are below average. Overall, pupils' achievements are very good by the time they leave the school but they can do better in writing by the end of Year 2.
39. Across the school pupils' skills in speaking and listening are developed very well. The school puts emphasis on pupils using speech as a way of clarifying their thinking and in most lessons there is a high level of good quality discussion. Pupils show respect for each other's ideas and are prepared to accept advice about improving the ways in which they communicate, for example when staff ask them to speak in full sentences. Pupils of all ages listen carefully to staff in lessons and contribute ideas with confidence in whole class discussions. Older pupils are prepared to express their opinions and ideas openly, and use 'key words' effectively as a basis for a presentation, for example, when relating information about the Second World War to the whole school they were very careful to use the correct vocabulary of the time. School productions, such as Alice in Wonderland, make a notable contribution to the development of pupils' oral skills.
40. A strong emphasis is given to reading throughout the school and pupils develop a good sense of enjoyment in reading. They learn to read with accuracy and understanding. At an early age pupils can explain that different books are organised in different ways and that some are story books and others give information. By Year 2, many read fluently, accurately and use a good range of strategies to work out the meaning of unfamiliar words. In Year 6, pupils show very good levels of comprehension and are developing clear ideas about their favourite authors. Most appreciate the underlying ideas and subtleties in text. They can explain clearly why they like certain books giving informed reasons for their choice, for example, about the way the author uses situations to create suspense. Pupils of different ages use the library, indexes, glossaries and contents pages successfully to find information from books.
41. Writing is developed very well by the time pupils leave the school. Pupils of all ages are benefiting from the school's recent focus on improving writing but even so more can be achieved by the end of Year 2. By Year 2, pupils have developed good ideas about how to make a story interesting but, generally, they are not applying the skills of spelling, punctuation and handwriting sufficiently well. However, by Year 6, pupils' writing is developed very well and the work seen is of a high standard. This is as a direct result of excellent teaching in the oldest class. Pupils in Year 6 show good understanding about the need to write in different styles for different purposes and the importance of being clear about the key success criteria for each type of writing so that they can check the effectiveness of their efforts. They use a wide vocabulary very effectively and imaginatively in their written work and also ensure that work is well presented.

42. Teaching is very good overall. The teaching seen was excellent in the oldest class and good in the other two. All staff are secure in the subject and use the technical vocabulary associated with it very well, for example, when describing grammatical structures. A strong focus is given to the development of pupils' skills in speaking and listening throughout the school and this aspect of lessons is usually very good. There are many situations where pupils are encouraged to discuss their ideas and clarify their thinking. Relationships between staff and pupils are excellent and staff and pupils often enjoy a moment of humour together. In this atmosphere pupils are confident to say what they think. The teaching of reading is given a high profile. There is a well thought out approach to encouraging pupils' independence in reading and this is very successful. Pupils receive a significant amount of individual attention from teachers, teaching assistants and other helpers when learning to read. This is both in and outside normal lesson time. Generally, in lessons, very good attention is paid to the wide range of levels of understanding in the classes and activities are set which are well matched to pupils' needs and abilities. Pupils concentrate very well. In the oldest class, they respond particularly well to the very high expectations which are made of them, and also the excellent range of teaching and learning strategies used. By contrast, there is not always sufficient challenge fully to extend the learning of all pupils when they undertake writing activities in the younger classes. At this stage of lessons there is a noticeable difference in pace and the focus given to pupils developing high quality writing skills to that seen in the oldest class.
43. Leadership of the subject is very effective. Teachers work together on subject development and have highlighted the need to improve pupils' writing by the end of Year 2. A focused programme of development is in place and already there are noticeable improvements in the standards being achieved particularly in the current Reception group. Resources are good and the library is used effectively to support learning. Information and communication technology is used very well to support teaching and learning.

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

The National Literacy Strategy has been implemented and adapted successfully to suit a small school situation. High level skills in discussion are evident in subjects such as science. Pupils use their skills in reading very well to research information in other subjects. There are occasions, in the younger classes, where pupils' writing is not used sufficiently across the curriculum.

### **MATHEMATICS**

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are high by the end of Year 6 and pupils achieve very well.
- Pupils are very well taught and make very good progress.
- Standards have improved since the previous inspection.
- The subject is very well led.
- Good use is made of assessment to modify the curriculum, to track individual pupils' progress and to set targets.

### **Commentary**

44. Standards are well above the expected level by the end of Year 6 and average by the end of Year 2. There have been good improvements in standards and the quality of teaching since the last inspection when an issue was raised about the level of challenge, particularly for the more able pupils in Years 3 to 6. There is a good emphasis on problem solving work in all classes and consequently pupils achieve very well overall. Pupils in Year 6 are well placed to achieve very good results in the tests. Higher attaining pupils achieve very well because of the high levels of challenge in all aspects of mathematics.

45. Pupils in Year 2 apply their number skills effectively to all aspects of mathematics. Throughout Years 1 and 2 pupils become confident mathematicians. They rise to the challenges set by the teachers, try different approaches when solving problems and show good levels of mathematical reasoning. Achievement is good considering their standards on entry to Reception. Pupils in Year 6 achieve very well in all aspects of mathematics. The majority of pupils use a wide range of methods for problem solving, for example, their thorough understanding of place value is reflected in their ability to multiply and divide using large numbers. They use a wide variety of different strategies for solving mental and written calculations. Pupils explain their work very well, justify their reasoning and manipulate numbers easily and confidently.
46. Teaching overall is very good and in a lesson in the oldest class it was excellent. This is very good improvement since the previous inspection. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and understanding. This is reflected in very clear explanations and very good teaching of basic and advanced skills which contribute to pupils' good levels of understanding. Planning for all groups is clear and is based on good tracking of pupils' attainment and achievements. Sufficient time is given for revision of earlier learning and, as a result, pupils consolidate their learning very well. The excellent teaching is characterised by the teacher's very effective use of questioning and the use of pupils' responses to assess their understanding. There are also very high expectations of the pace of work and its presentation. The good quality of support given by classroom assistants, including those who support pupils with special educational needs, contributes well to the achievement of all.
47. The very good leadership has successfully raised standards and the profile of mathematics throughout the school. The effective systems for assessment, monitoring and tracking give all teachers secure evidence from which to plan. Target setting is well founded on a wide range of information about each pupil's ability.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

Pupils frequently use mathematics as an integral part of their work in other subjects. This is carefully planned to match the abilities of all pupils and extend their understanding of mathematics in the world; for example, they use graphs and charts when recording data in geography and science, shape and pattern in art and design and calculations with large numbers when comparing and contrasting historical periods.

### **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **very good**.

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

- Pupils achieve very well.
- Teaching and learning are very good and work is well matched to the pupils' various abilities.
- There is a good emphasis on investigative work.
- Science is very well led.

#### **Commentary**

48. Standards in science are well above average by the end of Year 6 and average by Year 2. Given the standards of different cohorts on entry to school, pupils are achieving very well. This is as a result of the very carefully planned opportunities pupils have to explore and to develop enquiry skills. These are taught particularly well and pupils are encouraged to pose questions and then find answers from investigative work and their scientific knowledge. By Year 6 they are confident to devise fair tests, carry them out and draw conclusions from their findings.

They also learn to evaluate their methods and how they might improve them in future, for example, when they decided different ways to separate materials such as sand, a fizzy drink and sugar dissolved in water. Pupils use their literacy and numeracy skills very well and they record accurately, for example, when they drew line graphs to show the cooling rate of water in differently insulated containers, and then used these to explain their work. Despite a drop in standards in the Year 6 national tests in 2004 the current Year 6 are displaying standards well above those usually seen. All work is well presented and pupils take care in recording their findings.

49. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. Teachers have very secure subject knowledge and insist on pupils using correct scientific language. Staff ensure pupils understand the learning objectives at the start of lessons and encourage them to pose questions and think. Pupils develop very good levels of maturity through the school and work very well in group situations and they go about scientific investigations in a very independent way. There is a strong focus on discussion to support learning. Staff use information and communication technology very well to help pupils develop their scientific skills. Teachers assess pupils' knowledge very effectively so that work can be well matched to individual abilities. Discussing science with older pupils shows that they study a wide range of relevant areas and they are clear that they have to give of their best in lessons. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported within class, often by a teaching assistant but also by the teacher and other pupils. As a result they make very good progress.
50. The subject is very well led by the co-ordinator, very well supported by the whole staff team, and this has contributed to the overall high standards in the school. Test data is carefully analysed so that any gaps in learning are addressed, and any area of weakness is tackled. Since the last inspection there has been good improvement in the subject.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards have risen since the previous inspection.
- Pupils achieve well.
- The ICT resources are used well.

### **Commentary**

51. Standards by the end of Year 6 are well above those expected nationally and by the end of Year 2 they are at expected levels, which is a huge improvement on the findings of the last inspection when standards were unsatisfactory.
52. By Year 2, pupils learn the basic operations such as switching the computers on and off, loading and saving work, and controlling the computer by means of the keyboard and mouse. They learn to program a 'roamer' by giving it a series of instructions. The school has developed a very good range of appropriate software so that pupils enjoy using the computer. Pupils use the computer for a wide range of purposes, for example to write, draw pictures and analyse data. By Year 6, they use ICT very competently, for example to present information, such as when using a PowerPoint package, exchange information and ideas with others in a variety of ways, including through the use of e-mail and the internet, and also to note patterns and trends in data. Throughout the school, pupils talk very knowledgeably about the use of ICT in everyday life.
53. The quality of teaching is very good. Staff are very confident in the subject. Pupils learn very well because they are given clear instructions and plenty of opportunities to experiment,

practise and learn from their mistakes. They also learn quickly because tasks are interesting and teachers' own positive approaches and interesting ideas catch their attention. The teaching assistants support the quality of teaching well as they have a good knowledge of the subject and confidently work with pupils, extending their knowledge and helping with any minor difficulties with the programs. There is a clear system of assessment in the subject.

54. The subject is very well led with significant improvements since the last inspection. Resources are much improved and used very well.

### **Information and communication technology across the curriculum**

55. Information and communication technology skills are taught with relevant links to other subjects. Pupils use ICT very well in all areas of the curriculum. Examples seen include recording their results of investigations in science, a wide range of word processing applications to support their work in English and the insertion of clip-art images to make their writing more interesting. There are also good examples of ICT being used to support pupils' artistic compositions.

### **HUMANITIES**

56. Insufficient work was seen in **geography** and **history** to enable judgments to be made about provision and standards. However, from the work available and from discussions with teachers and pupils it is clear that the school provides a very well-planned and enjoyable curriculum. Provision is very well enriched by educational visits to places such as Eden Camp, Humphrey Head and Bewerley Park. The pupils talked with great enthusiasm about the work they had done during and following the visits.

### **Religious education**

Provision is **very good**

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

- Standards are well above expected levels in Year 6
- Pupils have positive attitudes towards religious education
- Lessons are very well taught
- The level of resources is good

#### **Commentary**

57. Pupils have a lively interest in religious education and enjoy expressing their own ideas and beliefs. They are very open-minded and non-judgemental, and readily discuss a variety of views about matters of faith. They have a detailed recall of stories from the Bible and other sacred books. They show a good understanding of the principal facts of Christianity and other world religions, including the importance of Easter and the Resurrection. In discussion, pupils had a good recall of earlier learning about Islam and Judaism.
58. The teaching in the lesson seen was very good. Pupils made very good progress because the teacher had very good subject knowledge and caught the pupils' interest through the use of well chosen ideas. The lesson was particularly effective because the teacher gave the pupils confidence to ask questions and seek for a greater understanding. Good links were made between times gone by and the present day life of the pupils.
59. The subject is very well led by the co-ordinator. She ensures that the subject has a high profile in the school and has a good understanding of the quality of the provision from her monitoring

of teachers' planning and pupils' books. Resources are good, and effective use is made of a range of visits to local places of worship and visitors. A recent visit to Fountains Abbey gave pupils a good opportunity to study monastic life in the past.

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

60. It was not possible to observe any lessons in music or physical education. One design and technology and two art and design lessons were seen so all these subjects were only sampled. It is not possible, therefore, to judge provision.
61. Throughout the school, in **art and design** pupils have a very good range of experiences and opportunities to develop their imagination and techniques. From the work seen it is evident that pupils built up very good skills as they move through the school using a variety of media. All art lessons are taken by a specialist teacher who has very good subject knowledge, great enthusiasm and a high level of skill. Both the lessons seen were very good. Very good links are made with other subjects, for example, pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 were designing posters that would have rallied the people during the Second World War. The pupils' work shows that they have very good planning and drawing skills and use their imagination very well. The subject is very well led. There is a very detailed scheme of work that takes account of national guidance and the mixed aged classes.
62. There is significant improvement in **design and technology** since the last inspection. The teacher's planning and pupils' work shows that pupils have many opportunities to develop their ideas by using a wide range of materials for a variety of purposes. A project on Africa, undertaken by the oldest class, features many examples of good work where pupils have made different items, such as drums and small clay pots. This work shows pupils are developing their making skills effectively as well as their creativity and imagination. It shows that due weighting is given to each element of the design and technology process and, in discussion, pupils demonstrated a good understanding of the importance of planning out their work in advance, the need for accuracy when making items and critical evaluation in order to improve their work. There is a good range of activities undertaken which includes producing food, working with textiles and creating objects from paper and wood.
63. It is not possible to make a judgement on standards or the quality of teaching and learning in **music**. From the small amount of singing heard during assemblies it is evident pupils enjoy this and do it well. Planning shows a good range of opportunities are provided for pupils to develop their skills and imagination.
64. In **physical education**, there is good coverage of all areas of activity. Pupils have opportunities to participate in a full range of physical activities, including gymnastics, games, swimming, dance and athletics and also outdoor and adventurous activities. Teachers' planning shows that National Curriculum requirements are met. Facilities for the subject are good overall. The outside area is spacious and even though the school does not have a hall, effective use is made of the village hall. A wide range of equipment and apparatus purchased for the playground provides pupils with opportunities to be physically active at playtimes and lunchtimes. Teachers' plans are comprehensive and show a good level of continuity through the school. Co-ordination is very effective in the small school situation as a result of staff working closely together on developments. A wide range of out-of- school activities, such as football, netball, cricket and basketball contribute to pupils' enjoyment of the subject.

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

65. No overall judgement of provision is possible because no lessons were seen during the inspection. However, pupils' personal development is a very high priority within the school and they are given a wide range of opportunities to discuss ideas, feelings and matters of importance within a context of trust and mutual respect. Pupils of all ages are mature and articulate, and discussions with them about their work indicated that they hold firm personal



views, but respect those of others with different opinions. Pupils are made fully aware of social and moral issues appropriate to their ages and levels of understanding, and are actively encouraged to develop a healthy lifestyle.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<b>Grade</b>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>2</b>
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>2</b>
Pupils' achievement	2
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>2</b>
Attendance	2
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>2</b>
The quality of teaching	2
How well pupils learn	2
The quality of assessment	2
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	2
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>2</b>
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	1
The leadership of other key staff	2
The effectiveness of management	3

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