

INSPECTION REPORT

**THORNTON DALE CHURCH OF ENGLAND
(VOLUNTARY CONTROLLED) PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Pickering

LEA area: North Yorkshire

Unique reference number: 121520

Headteacher: Mrs Katherine Snape

Lead inspector: Mrs Moira Fitzpatrick

Dates of inspection: 4 – 6 July 2005

Inspection number: 268114

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Primary
School category: Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils: 4 - 11
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 197

School address: Castle Close
Thornton Dale
Pickering
North Yorkshire
Postcode: YO18 7TW

Telephone number: 01751 474345
Fax number: 01751 475295

Appropriate authority: Governing body
Name of chair of Ms Jane Mitchell
governors:

Date of previous inspection: 14 June 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This Church of England school is situated in the village of Thornton Dale in North Yorkshire and draws its pupils from a wide area around the village. It is smaller than most primary schools, with 197 pupils aged five to 11 years on roll at the time of the inspection. Children join the Reception class with attainments that are broadly typical for their age. Overall the school's socio-economic circumstances are favourable and the percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is below the national average. The percentage of pupils who have special educational needs is below the national average, while the percentage of pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Need is above the national average and includes pupils with physical and medical difficulties as well as learning difficulties. The school's population is predominantly white British heritage, with less than two per cent of pupils from other heritages. There is one pupil in the school who is at an early stage of learning English. Pupil mobility is not an issue for this school which has a very stable school community. The school has close links with the local community and is well involved with partner schools for links to extend pupils' learning opportunities and teachers' professional development. The school is involved in the Primary Leadership Programme and the Language Learning Network. In 2004 the school achieved the North Yorkshire County Council SEN Quality Mark.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
24326	Moira Fitzpatrick	Lead inspector	English Geography History English as an additional language Religious education
31713	Selwyn Roberts	Lay inspector	
11419	Jeanie Underwood	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Art and design Physical education Special educational needs
8263	Margaret Forsman	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Science Design and technology Music

The inspection contractor was:

Nord Anglia School Inspection Services
 Anglia House
 Carrs Road
 Cheadle
 Stockport
 SK8 2LA

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a **good** school, whose effectiveness is improving very quickly under the very good leadership of the headteacher. Standards are above average in Year 6. Pupils achieve well because of the good quality of educational provision. There is a very strong ethos of care and respect and the school makes very good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school gives good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards are above average in English, science and geography by Year 6.
- The accommodation and resources for learning are unsatisfactory in the Reception class; classrooms are too small in Year 1 and 2.
- The leadership and management of the headteacher, which impacts positively on every aspect of the school's work; the leadership and management of key staff, who support the school's development well; the very good contribution made by governors to the development of the school.
- The use of assessment is not consistent and does not impact enough on the learning of all pupils.
- There is very good provision for pupils who have special educational needs which helps them overcome barriers to their learning.
- The good teaching and valuable contribution made by teaching assistants support very good relationships which promote very good attitudes to learning and good behaviour in pupils.
- The role of subject co-ordinators has improved this year, but they need more opportunity to evaluate standards in their subjects.
- There is a good curriculum, which is very well enhanced by visits, visitors and out of school activities; in some shared classes teachers' planning arrangements can slow pupils' learning.
- There is some inconsistency of information to parents, which prevents all parents from having a good knowledge of the school and its work.

After a period of trauma following the sudden loss of its long-serving headteacher, the school has made good improvement in the last year, successfully addressing many of the issues raised at the last inspection. Significant improvements include: enlargement of classrooms in the juniors; improvements to teaching and learning which are raising standards; improvements to provision for pupils who have special educational needs. Leadership and management have improved at all levels in the school and the governors are now better informed of the school's strengths and weaknesses. There has been very good improvement to the provision for ICT and standards are rising as a result. Pupils' attendance has improved. Given the quality of leadership, management and governance, the school is very well placed to improve further.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

Pupils' achievement is good overall. The school's overall results in National Curriculum tests in 2004 show an improvement on previous years. However, because a few pupils did not make the expected progress from their results in Year 2, this brought down the school's performance compared with similar schools. The performance of girls has been above the national average in the last three years, which is better than boys', whose performance has been close to the national average. The school's rate of improvement in the tests has been above the national trend. Pupils now in Year 6 exceed the expectation for their age in English, science and geography and in all other subjects they achieve the expected level. Pupils in Year 2 reach the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics and in science they exceed it. In all other subjects they reach the expected standard. By the end of the Foundation Stage, children in the Reception class reach the goals set in all six areas of learning, though only a minority reach the expected level in writing. Achievement for children in Reception is satisfactory.

The provision for pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. Pupils behave well. They are keen to learn and work with great enthusiasm in lessons. Attendance is very good and pupils arrive at school on time.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is good. Teaching is good overall; in Year 5 it is consistently very good; in Reception it is satisfactory. Strengths of teaching include: teachers' use of practical activities and investigations which make learning memorable and fun; the contribution made by teaching assistants to pupils' learning; the very good relationships that teachers form with pupils which create a very good climate for learning. Areas for development include the use of assessment to provide work which is better matched to the needs of different groups of pupils, especially higher attainers and planning for learning in shared classes. The school provides a good curriculum, which is very well enhanced by visits, visitors and out of school clubs. Pupils who have special educational needs are very well supported to benefit from the full curriculum. Pupils are well supported and guided in their learning and personal development. Provision for their health, safety and welfare is very good, so too are links with parents, the community and other schools. Accommodation and resources for learning are satisfactory overall.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are both **good** overall. The leadership and management of the headteacher are very good. Governance of the school is very good. Governors ensure that all statutory requirements are met. The role of subject co-ordinators is developing well and this needs to continue so that they make a full contribution to the development of the school.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The majority of parents hold the school in high esteem. They feel their children are well taught and cared for, and that they are expected to work hard. Inspection findings support these views. A significant minority of parents feel that the school does not give them enough information or seek their views often enough. The inspection found that information to parents is very good, though there are a few inconsistencies in practice which need to be addressed, so that all parents have a clear picture of how well the school provides for their children's education. Pupils love their school; they are proud to be part of the caring

community and relish the hard work that is expected of them. They are enjoying the opportunities provided this year for making suggestions for improvements to the school.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Improve accommodation and resources in the Reception class, and the size of classrooms in Years 1 and 2.*
- Improve assessment for learning in order to raise standards for pupils.*
- Further improve the role of subject co-ordinators.*
- Improve planning in shared classes.
- Improve the consistency of information to all parents so they can make an informed and valuable contribution to their children's learning.

* These improvements already form part of the school's current improvement plan.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Standards are **above** average in Year 6. Pupils' achievement is **good** overall. In Year 2, standards are in line with the expectation for seven year olds overall and pupils' achievement is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- By Year 6 pupils' exceed the expectation for their age in geography. Standards are above average in English and science.
- Standards in science in Year 2 are above average.
- By the end of the Reception year the majority of pupils will not reach the expected standard in writing skills.
- Pupils who have special educational needs are very well supported to achieve well.

Commentary

1. Children join the Foundation Stage (Reception class), with attainment that is typical for their age, although from year to year this can vary significantly, with sometimes a higher proportion of lower attaining children in the class than usual. Children make steady progress overall during their time in Reception and their achievement is satisfactory overall. The majority attain the expected levels for their age by the end of the Reception year in all areas of learning. Most are successful in personal, social and emotional development and in mathematical development. Most children in this year group have been less successful in the writing element of literacy, mainly because of poorly developed fine motor skills. A number of lower attaining children have made good progress from their entry level because of good support from teaching assistants.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.5 (16.1)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	16.2 (16.5)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	16.4 (16.4)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 26 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. Results in the National Curriculum tests in 2004 for pupils in Year 2 were above the national average in reading but below the average of similar schools (those in the same free school meals bracket). In writing, standards were well above the national average and above the average of similar schools. In mathematics, pupils' performance was in line with the national average, but well below the performance of similar schools. In the teacher assessment in science, pupils' attainment was average, with fewer than expected pupils reaching the expected level. The school's performance in the tests has kept pace with the national trend of improvement in the last three years, and has been above the national average in reading during that time, and well above the average in writing and mathematics. The performance of girls has been above that of boys during that time.

3. Standards in the current Year 2 are average in reading, writing, and mathematics and above average in science. There is a significant group of pupils who have special educational needs, who reduce the overall attainment in this class. Nevertheless, pupils' achievement is satisfactory, and for lower attaining pupils who are well supported by the teacher's planning and the support of the teaching assistant it is often good. In religious education, pupils reach the level expected by the locally agreed syllabus and their achievement is satisfactory. Pupils much enjoy lessons where they have the opportunity to learn through first hand experiences. For example, this term, one group in the infants visited the church for a talk by the vicar, while another held a wedding service to know more about what happened when their teacher was married in the half-term holiday. Standards in information and communication technology are at the expected level for seven year olds. Pupils are taught well and are developing a good range of skills on computers.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.5 (26.1)	26.9 (26.8)
Mathematics	28.1 (26.4)	27.0 (26.8)
Science	29.9 (28.9)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 22 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

4. The school's overall results in National Curriculum tests in 2004 show an improvement on previous years. However, because a few pupils did not make the expected progress from their results in Year 2, this brought down the school's performance compared with similar schools. The performance of girls has been above the national average in the last three years, which is better than boys', whose performance has been close to the national average. The school's rate of improvement in the tests has been above the national trend. Pupils now in Year 6 exceed the expectation in English and science where their achievement is good because they are well taught and eager to learn. In mathematics they reach standards in line with the expectation for their age and have achieved well from their results when they were in Year 2. Standards in geography are above the expectation for 11 year olds because the subject is well planned, very well taught and pupils are encouraged to develop good enquiry skills. In religious education, pupils meet the standard expected by the locally agreed syllabus and are developing a secure understanding of the role of religion in people's lives. Despite only recently having access to a full computer suite, pupils reach the expected standard in information and communication technology, because they are enthusiastic and they have well planned opportunities to use computers for other subjects.
5. Occasionally in Year 6, pupils' learning slows when there is a change of teacher because of the arrangements for lesson planning. Teachers have recognised that sometimes pupils are slow to recall learning from some days earlier and they intend to review these arrangements at the end of this term. Nevertheless, pupils in Year 6 achieve well overall and they are very well prepared for transfer to the secondary school.
6. Pupils who have special educational needs are very well supported to achieve as well as other pupils in their class through their teachers' careful planning for their needs and the expert support of teaching assistants. In some subjects they make better than

expected progress and reach the standard expected for their age in reading and mathematics. Currently there is only one pupil in the school who is not fluent in English and who has a Statement of Special Educational Need. He has a very specialised programme of support, provided under the guidance of the local education authority that is very effective in raising his self-esteem, confidence and motivation for learning. He is very well supported in his learning by teachers, teaching assistants and his classmates, who are eager to teach him simple words and devise other successful means of communicating with him.

7. The school has established effective tracking systems in the current year which it now uses to set targets for pupils which are based on good knowledge of what they can do. Targets for next year's National Curriculum tests are ambitious and reflect the high proportion of higher attaining pupils in this particular class.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Behaviour is **good** and attitudes are **very good** reflecting the pupils' **very good** spiritual, moral and social development. Attendance rates are **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The pupils' attitudes to school and their learning are very good.
- The pupils behave well because teachers have high expectations of them.
- Although provision for spiritual, moral and social development is very good, pupils are given little information to prepare them for life in a multicultural society.

Commentary

8. Pupils' very good attitudes are demonstrated in most lessons where they are attentive and usually well behaved. This is because lessons are often made interesting and stimulating through teachers' knowledge and enthusiasm. Just occasionally some pupils become a little restless but teachers have successful strategies for managing this behaviour. The teachers promote an atmosphere where pupils respond very well to challenging targets and know their contributions to lessons are valued. They also provide opportunities for pupils to work co-operatively. A very small number of pupils have individual education plans for improving their behaviour. There have been no exclusions in the past year and behaviour generally around the school is good, being promoted through class and school rules. In Years 5 and 6 pupils' behaviour is consistently very good. Parents agree that behaviour is good and pupils are interested in their work.
9. There is a strong emphasis on personal development, with many pupils, including many of the Year 6, taking on roles of responsibility. For example, playground monitors prepare the hall for assembly or look after younger pupils. The views of pupils are taken very seriously. They are encouraged to put their thoughts into a "suggestions box". The headteacher then replies to their requests, as well as informing parents through the weekly newsletter. Because pupils are expected to treat others with respect there is very little bullying or harassment. If any arises it is quickly resolved.

10. The very good support provided for pupils with special needs educational needs helps to promote positive attitudes to their tasks and to other pupils. These pupils mostly behave well and apply themselves to their tasks. In the previous report, behaviour of special needs pupils was criticised when they were withdrawn from lessons. This has been addressed because pupils are rarely withdrawn except for very specific tasks.
11. The school ethos facilitates the promotion of a strong sense of self worth and self confidence. Daily acts of collective worship contribute much to all aspects of personal development as do regular "circle times" (sessions where pupils sit in a circle and discuss important issues). Pupils demonstrate that they know what is right and what is wrong. They are encouraged from the outset to consider their actions carefully and to realise each action has a consequence. For example, when a pupil hurts another they are expected to apologise for their action. The older pupils are good role models for the younger ones. All pupils are involved in creating the class rules each year. During lessons pupils are provided with opportunities to work together and help each other. Residential visits add another dimension to pupils' social development, as does their commitment to sporting activities.
12. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is very good. However, although pupils learn about their own culture there is little input to raise their awareness of the multicultural society in which they live. One issue raised in the previous report was the lack of provision for pupils to learn about other cultures. This issue has been partly addressed in so far as pupils learn about other cultures through geography and religious education. However, pupils are not made aware of the multicultural society in which they live. Pupils are encouraged to support charities thus raising their awareness of the plight of others.
13. Attendance is very good and is an indication of pupils' enjoyment of their school and of their very good attitudes. In cases where a child is absent, parents are very clear about procedures to notify the school and there are no incidents of unauthorised absences. Punctuality is good and lessons begin promptly. Computerised attendance data is used effectively to monitor individual and group trends of absence. Parents are aware of the attendance policy and co-operate fully with the school to ensure that high levels of attendance are maintained. The governing body set a target of 5 per cent maximum absenteeism and this has been achieved during the current academic school year.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a **good** quality of education for its pupils. Teaching and learning are **good** overall; there is a **good** curriculum in the infants and juniors; in the Foundation Stage the curriculum is **satisfactory**. There is a **very good** level of care for pupils, support and guidance are **good** and links with parents, the community and other schools are **very good**.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is **good** overall. In the Foundation Stage it is **satisfactory**. Assessment procedures and their use to plan for learning are **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers make good use of practical and investigative activities to make learning fun and memorable for pupils.
- Teachers' use of assessment has improved this year but there is still a need to improve the use of information from assessment to plan the correct level of challenge for all pupils.
- Teachers make good use of questions to develop pupils' thinking and to assess what they know.
- Teachers form very good relationships with their pupils and expect pupils to work hard, which they do. Relationships between pupils support very good collaboration on tasks.
- Teaching assistants make a good contribution to the learning of pupils, especially those who have special educational needs.

Commentary

14. The quality of teaching has improved during this year as a result of the headteacher's focus on the professional development of teachers and teaching assistants. Improvements to curriculum provision and curriculum planning have also had the impact of improving the quality of teaching and learning in many subjects. Teachers have planned imaginatively to link subjects and allow pupils to see the connections in their learning. Some arrangements for planning in shared classes are in need of evaluation in view of the length of time before revisiting topics under the present arrangements. The development of small team meetings in the school is another factor supporting improvements, as teachers have had the opportunity to work specifically on their age groups and share good practice with each other. In all classes in the infants and juniors there is some good teaching, and in Year 5 teaching is consistently very good, because of the teacher's very good knowledge of the pupils' learning needs.
15. Teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage are satisfactory in all areas of learning. Relationships are good and children are well supported by the teaching assistants who work with them. Assessment is satisfactory and is used adequately to provide the next steps in learning, though on occasion higher attaining pupils are not fully challenged. Pupils make the best progress in personal, social and emotional development and in mathematical development. Children who have special educational needs often make good progress when they are withdrawn for intensive support from teaching assistants.
16. In many lessons seen teachers make good use of practical activities or investigations to motivate pupils and to make learning fun. Pupils enjoy the challenges presented by this kind of learning. In a Year 1 mathematics lesson, pupils learned at a very good rate when they counted the number of jumps their classmates made to catch them out. When they moved on to individual tasks the games were very demanding and held pupils enthralled as they mastered more and more difficult ideas about number. Pupils in Year 4 showed a great capacity for collaboration in their learning during a very good geography lesson. Rained off from a visit to the village, their lesson was switched to one involving research using a wide variety of photographs and maps. Through careful observation and lively discussion, which was well prompted by the teacher and teaching assistants, pupils built up a very good picture of the village over time. By the end of the lesson, pupils of all abilities were able to suggest good reasons for changes in the village and felt proud that they had found it all out for themselves.

17. Teachers have extended their use of assessment this year. Procedures for assessing and recording pupils' learning have developed well. However, teachers' use of assessment to pinpoint the next stage in learning for groups of different abilities is not sharp enough. Too often higher attaining pupils are not sufficiently challenged because, while teachers expect all pupils to work hard, the tasks set for higher attainers are too often the same as for other pupils, so they are not fully stretched in their learning. On the other hand, teachers provide well for pupils who have special educational needs by providing individual education plans which identify what it is they need to concentrate on in their learning. The quality of marking and feedback to pupils about their work is improving and where teachers refer to targets and make suggestions for improvement, in most cases these are acted upon and pupils' work improves as a result. This good practice needs to extend across the school to benefit the learning of all pupils.
18. Relationships are very good throughout the school. Teachers' relationships with their pupils create a very secure climate for learning. Pupils show great fondness and respect for their teachers and rise well to their expectations. Because of this, time is used well as pupils move quickly from one activity to another without wasting a moment because they want to please their teachers. Relationships between pupils are also very good. Pupils are frequently seen supporting each other in lessons, giving advice or explaining the work. This is very effective in supporting the learning of lower attaining pupils, especially when they do not have the additional support of a teaching assistant. Pupils in the juniors have been especially welcoming and supportive of a pupil with special educational need who joined the school this term and who is not fluent in English. They have taken great pleasure in helping this pupil to learn some English words, developing his self-esteem considerably as a result.
19. Pupils who have special educational needs are well supported by the teaching assistants who work with them. Teaching assistants have been well trained and are expert in teaching pupils who have weaknesses in literacy and numeracy. They are careful to prepare pupils to become independent and encourage them to work on their own whenever possible. In this way they increase the confidence of these pupils and often support them to make better than expected progress.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 25 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	10 (40%)	7 (28%)	8 (32%)	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.

The Curriculum

The school provides a **good** curriculum which is enhanced by a **very good** range of learning opportunities which enrich pupils' experience. Accommodation and resources are **satisfactory** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is very good provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- Pupils' learning is enhanced by imaginative events.

- Support for learning outside the school day is very good.
- The contribution of teaching assistants is very significant.
- The accommodation and resources for the Foundation Stage are unsatisfactory.
- A new computer suite has enhanced curriculum provision.

Commentary

20. The school offers its pupils a broad and well-balanced curriculum which meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. Children in the Reception year follow a curriculum that covers all the areas of learning and includes religious education. The curriculum is very effectively organised to provide for pupils with particular educational or social needs. The school is working towards an integrated curriculum where valid educational links are made between subjects. Good progress has been made in developing the curriculum since the last inspection.
21. Curriculum provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. There are effective strategies for identifying the needs of pupils who find learning difficult. Individual educational plans are provided and now have appropriate targets that meet the pupils' needs. Targets are specific and have clearly defined steps that help track each pupil's progress. These are drawn up by the class teacher in discussion with the parents and pupils. Pupils with special educational needs are fully included in all aspects of the curriculum. The school is committed to equality of access and opportunity for all pupils. Planning for pupils with special educational needs is effective and closely matched to individual needs. While support for lower attaining pupils is very good, opportunities for higher attaining pupils are less well identified.
22. The school provides well for pupils' personal, social and health education. There is a structured scheme of work and a proper time allocation. The school meets its statutory obligations for health, sex and relationships and drugs education. Induction and transition through the school are good and older pupils are very well prepared for secondary education. At the beginning of each school year pupils decide on the rules for their year groups and identify the way they want to work together. They make suggestions for improvements and clearly feel that their comments will be considered fairly.
23. The curriculum has been enhanced by a number of recent innovations. It now includes French for all pupils in Years 3 to 6. This project has benefited the schools in the local cluster and is strengthening links with the local secondary school. There is increased collaboration between teachers in different year groups on combined topics such as the Romans for Years 3 and 4 together. This allows for working groups from both classes and draws on individual teachers' strengths. Literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills are frequently used to enhance other subjects such as geography.
24. Provision for sport and the arts is very good. The school has a particularly successful record in orienteering and provides training for pupils from both key stages. Inter-school competitions for the local clusters are organised by the school. Pupils have the opportunity to compete in athletics, benchball, indoor hockey, netball and football. The school has been actively involved with artists who have produced a Story Tree sculpture and a painted triptych of school life from the pupils' designs. The school enriches its curriculum by providing activities outside the school along with visits to

such places as Robin Hood's Bay, Scarborough Castle and York Minster. It supports music in the community, with the choir singing with the Thornton Dale Players. School teams play against other schools in the area in inter-school sports activities whilst members of the bowling club encourage pupils to learn the techniques of the game. Older pupils benefit from taking part in residential visits to Seahouses and Humphrey Head, enhancing their self-esteem and developing personal and social skills. The school fosters very good links with the church, support agencies and other schools, all of which greatly contribute to pupils' learning.

25. Accommodation for the pupils in Key Stage 2 has been brought to a high standard by the recent extension and refurbishment which has provided spacious classrooms and a new computer suite. Accommodation for Years 1 and 2 however, is very small and unsuitable for the size of classes. The accommodation and resources for the Reception class are unsatisfactory overall. Despite the best efforts of staff, this area is unattractive and cramped and does not reflect the importance of Early Years' education. The exception is the outside play area which is securely fenced and has stimulating outdoor play equipment. The school plans to refurbish the classroom during the summer break. Teaching assistants are well trained for their role and they make a very significant contribution to the access that all pupils, especially those with special educational needs, have to the full curriculum. There are enough suitably qualified and experienced teachers to teach the full curriculum.

Care, guidance and support

Provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is **very good**; provision for support, advice and guidance is **good**. Involvement through seeking and acting on pupils' views is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have good access to well-informed advice, support and guidance to help them make progress.
- The very good induction arrangements enable pupils to quickly settle into school.
- Child protection procedures fully comply with statutory requirements and all staff are appropriately trained.
- Pupils have trusting relationships with the teaching staff and feel confident in approaching them with any concerns.
- Children in the Foundation Stage enjoy a smooth and confident start to their school life because of the very good support given by staff and the on-going involvement of parents in the programme of education.

Commentary

26. The school provides a secure and happy environment in which pupils are protected and their individual well-being is effectively promoted. Despite a number of recent staff changes, the class teachers and teaching assistants know the pupils, and many of their families, well, and are sensitive to their individual needs. They work hard to ensure that the best interests of all pupils are met and are quick to respond to pupils' personal and social requirements. The trusting relationships which pupils enjoy give them confidence to share any concerns and help them cope with the problems that arise in everyday life.
27. Because of good support, pupils with special educational needs make good progress and achieve well. There are effective strategies for identifying pupils, and teachers know the

procedures. Pupils are regularly consulted about their thoughts and feelings, particularly in respect of their individual education plans. Where appropriate, outside agencies are involved in helping and supporting these pupils.

28. The school reflects its aims extremely well in its provision for pupils' personal, social and health education. Class teachers monitor and assess pupils' progress in personal development through observation and record appropriate details, which are collated and used in the annual report. The school uses presentation assemblies to celebrate pupils' achievements both in and out of school and also displays individual and group awards. This does much to raise pupils' self-esteem and awareness of others' talents and skills. Pupils are given a good range of responsibilities appropriate to their age and their views are taken into account for improvements to the school. While the school does not yet have a school council, pupils are very well involved through other ways of seeking and acting on their views.
29. Arrangements for child protection are good and fully comply with local authority and national requirements. There is a designated member of staff with overall responsibility and there is clear information for staff on the procedures. Clear guidelines ensure that there are effective procedures to provide early identification of any child at risk and good quality records of all cases are maintained. New staff are given formal training whilst others are given periodic familiarisation as and when required. The school nurse visits pupils regularly and carries out health checks.
30. The senior management team and governors have taken a responsible attitude to health and safety. The nominated health and safety representative carries out routine checks of the premises, record details of findings and ensure that appropriate action is taken. Whilst meeting requirements in practical terms, sections of the associated documentation are out of date and the contents have not been reviewed since 1999. Procedures for risk assessment are being moved onto an electronic database provided by the Local Education Authority health and safety service. The headteacher is currently evaluating a new local authority health and safety policy as a school document. There are no outstanding issues that might constitute a hazard to pupils and staff and the overall security of the school during the inspection was of a high standard. The school has made appropriate arrangements for ensuring the safe use of the Internet by using a filtered service provided by the LEA.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents and the community and other schools are **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has established many effective links in the wider community, taking every opportunity to enrich pupils' learning.
- Very good information is provided about the school and about pupils' standards and progress.
- An active ' Friends of Thornton Dale ' support all aspects of school life.
- The school does not seek parents' views and opinions through regular questionnaires.

Commentary

31. Although the school has successfully developed very good relationships with parents there remains a significant minority who indicate that certain aspects of school life do not meet their expectation. While the school has made good improvements in parental links since the last inspection a minority of parents have a negative and unfounded perception of certain aspects of school life. Many of the concerns

expressed have been addressed in the current year and were examined during the inspection. It was found that the perception of these parents could not be substantiated and the inspection findings do not endorse their views. Most parents, however, are very supportive of the school and feel strongly that the school's attitudes and values have a positive effect on their children. The vast majority are confident that any concerns or complaints would be dealt with quickly and effectively.

32. Parents are encouraged to play an active part in school life, with many sharing their expertise by supporting children in classrooms during arts and crafts and design and technology sessions. A family with links to Gambia discuss with pupils the differing topics taught to children in that country, with many aspects linked to the geography curriculum. Most parents find the staff, and particularly the headteacher, very approachable and always willing to discuss any issues relating to their child's health, well-being or progress. They appreciate the good standards of behaviour in the school and respond by ensuring that their children attend regularly and on time.
33. The parents of pupils with special educational needs are effectively involved from the earliest stages of concern and kept well informed about their child's progress. Parents are actively involved in both annual reviews and target setting in individual plans. When pupils are identified as having behavioural needs, the school works very closely with parents and takes account of particular difficulties experienced by the pupil, drawing up individual behaviour support plans which are monitored on a regular basis.
34. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are invited to meet the class teacher to discuss amendments or changes to their child's individual education plan. This is a termly event and parents' views are respected. Parents of those pupils with Statements of Special Educational Need who require an annual review are given plenty of notice of the date so they can attend.
35. The school sends out weekly newsletters to parents to inform them about school activities such as celebration assemblies, concerts and updates on action plans. Additionally some teachers provide half-term reports for parents detailing areas of the curriculum being taught. Those parents who receive the information find it very useful in supporting their child's education at home. The annual pupil reports to parents are satisfactory, though not consistent in the information they give about children in all year groups.
36. The 'Friends of Thornton Dale' form a very supportive association that provides much needed additional funds and practical help. They are successful in meeting their aims to enhance learning opportunities and to promote good relationships between the school, home and community. Parents recently participated in a School Travel Plan analysing methods of travel to school, distances travelled, proposed new initiatives and difficulties experienced, indicating the school's concern for improvements to this in a mainly rural area.
37. The school plays its part in the life of the village community and also uses the community as a resource for learning. Close links exist with the local Anglican and Methodist churches and representatives often attend assembly. In an effort to extend pupils' knowledge of the wider world the school arranged for a Salvation Army Captain and the Abbot from Ampleforth Abbey to talk to pupils about current affairs and lifestyles in Africa. Good use is made of support agencies to develop pupils' awareness of the world of work. Liaison with the Business and Education Partnership

of York and the North resulted in a visit from an artisan blacksmith demonstrating the skill of making religious symbols in metal.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are both **good** overall. Leadership is **good**; management is **good** and governance is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The very good leadership and management skills of the headteacher in developing the school.
- The governors' very good strategic development of the school.
- The very good management of provision for pupils who have special educational needs.
- Subject co-ordinators are developing their roles well, but these need to develop further.

Commentary

38. The headteacher provides high quality leadership for the school. She is ambitious for pupils to achieve well and her commitment to high standards is evident in all areas of the school's work. Her vision for what the school should be is shared well with all staff and governors, though not all parents are aware of the headteacher's high aspirations for their children. Her insistence on providing the best for all children has led to a very good emphasis on good inclusion practices. These are a key factor in the rise in standards for the lowest attaining pupils in the recent National Curriculum tests. Pupils' academic needs are now monitored effectively through the use of recently introduced assessment and tracking procedures and these are having a positive impact on teachers' planning, as they now plan more accurately for the different needs of pupils. The headteacher's leadership has been very effective in developing a very strong team of teachers and support assistants, who fully support her ambitions for pupils and the high standards she seeks in all of the school's work. Her recognition of the staff's need to work closely on issues relating directly to the classes they teach has led to a much improved arrangement for staff meetings and all staff interviewed commented on how effective and helpful this was.
39. Since taking up post last year, the headteacher has successfully led change on many fronts, while responding sensitively to the effect of the previous headteacher's sudden death. She has very skilfully managed improvements to lay firm foundations from which standards can rise, while maintaining the school's ethos which is so highly valued by parents and the community. The role of subject co-ordinators has been well developed this year, so that they now have a much better understanding of the part they play in raising standards in the school, by monitoring provision in their subjects and identifying areas for improvement. The headteacher has provided good opportunities for staff to visit centres of good practice so that they could learn from other professionals. Teachers have valued these opportunities and are fired with enthusiasm for their new roles. They recognise how much they can learn from colleagues and this has led to a more open, sharing culture in the school. Subject co-ordinators now have some knowledge of strengths and weaknesses in their subjects, through monitoring undertaken this year and informal discussions with colleagues. They have not had enough opportunity to monitor teaching and learning directly, so that the school's good practice has not been captured and shared for the benefit of all pupils. Leadership of English and information and communication technology are both

good and this is reflected in the improvements to provision and standards in these subjects. Leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are satisfactory.

40. The recently appointed special needs co-ordinator has already made a very positive impact on provision through the improvements in writing of individual education plans. All staff have also received additional training in how to deal with behaviour problems and other difficulties pupils have. Pupils' progress is carefully tracked and monitored. The views of both parents and children are listened to when devising their learning plans. Leadership and management of provision are very good and have led to very good improvements to provision in the current year.
41. The school has effective performance management procedures which are focused well on raising standards. All staff have targets set for their work and the headteacher is careful to provide good support and professional development opportunities to enable staff to meet their targets. The use of performance targets in the current year has allowed all staff to feel they play a part in the school's drive to raise standards.
42. The governors have a very good knowledge of the school through their close involvement in monitoring and supporting its work. They bring a very good mix of experience and expertise to the service of the school and are committed to supporting its improvement. Recent improvements to classrooms for pupils in the juniors are the result of the governors' determination to initiate and implement plans for an extension. Very good financial management and astute management of the building project enabled a more ambitious extension than was at first envisaged. The governors' remarkable achievement has produced high quality accommodation for pupils in Years 3 to 6, whose learning is clearly benefiting from a wider range of experiences as teachers make full use of the space available. Governors have played a significant role in the strategic development of the school this year through their appointment of a headteacher who is fully committed to raising standards. They have worked closely with her to support improvements and on occasion have challenged priorities to ensure that these were the correct ones for the school. Governors are fully committed to the school's inclusion policies and are rigorous in pursuing the best opportunities for all pupils to achieve as well as they can. They ensure that all statutory requirements are met and that the school's policy for race equality is understood and implemented. The school's finances are very well managed. The governors apply best value principles in the acquisition and deployment of resources and now track the school's performance against that of similar schools. They are aware that the school's performance needs to improve to match that of similar and work closely with the headteacher to ensure that this will happen.
43. The day to day running of the school is very efficiently managed. The school secretary plays a significant role in this. She is responsible for monitoring spending and informing the headteacher and governors of this as a member of the governors' finance committee. She plays a key role in establishing good relations with parents.
44. The school benefits from good parental support, which helps pupils with their learning at home. The very positive attitudes that pupils bring to their learning are another aid to their learning. There are few barriers to learning now that the school has improved its provision for pupils with special educational needs. Teachers' use of assessment and the poor quality of accommodation and resources in the Reception class are the main ones the school still has to tackle and improvements to these are planned in the next school year.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	492,059
Total expenditure	492,468
Expenditure per pupil	2,647

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	22,108
Balance carried forward to the next	21,699

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

Provision in the Foundation Stage is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children have positive attitudes to learning.
- Writing skills are below what is expected by the time children leave Reception.
- Accommodation and resources are unsatisfactory.

Commentary

45. Children start school in the September of the year they are five years old. At the time of the inspection there was a class of 27 children all of Reception age. Attainment on entry to the school is average overall, but the range of ability is very wide and children have had a variety of pre-school experiences. There is a gender imbalance in the current class because the boys vastly outnumber the girls.
46. The majority of children attain the expected levels for their age by the end of the Reception year in all areas of learning. Most are successful in personal, social and emotional development and in mathematical development. Children in this year group have been less successful in the writing element of literacy. Overall, their achievement is satisfactory in all areas of learning. A number of lower attaining children have made good progress from their entry level.
47. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory in all the areas of learning for the Reception year. There are good relations between children and all staff, and children approach adults with confidence. The teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to children's learning. Because there are two teaching assistants and the class teacher, it is possible for children to be taught in small groups and in ways that match their needs. Staff are able to give children time to discuss and explain their work. Higher attaining children are given opportunities for extending their work but are not always offered enough direction.
48. Assessment procedures are satisfactory. Staff follow the tracking procedures recommended by the local education authority and use the Foundation Stage Profile for end of key stage assessment. Ongoing assessment is built into teaching. Special educational needs are identified early and there is effective provision. Children with individual education plans have short, focused sessions each morning and are able to make good progress.
49. Leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are satisfactory. The co-ordinator monitors the children's progress regularly and has been actively involved in planning the refurbishment of the classroom. The co-ordinator and the class teacher ensure that the curriculum is properly planned and that there is a balance of focused and free-choice activities. Induction procedures for new starters are very good and have the advantage of providing Reception pupils with the chance to move into Year 1 for the day.
50. The Reception class accommodation is unsatisfactory overall. Despite the best efforts of staff, the flooring is worn, fittings tired and storage inadequate. At present there is

no appropriate place for a proper book corner. The layout is difficult to change and the school has made temporary use of a small room in the nearby portakabin to provide a quiet teaching space. Resources for the Reception class are equally unsatisfactory. The exception is the play area, which is securely fenced and has stimulating outdoor play equipment. The overall effect is unattractive and does not reflect the importance of Early Years' education. The school has recognised this as an area for development and intends to make some refurbishments to the classroom during the summer break.

51. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory overall. The quality of teaching is not as high as was observed at that time, but since then a new curriculum and new assessment procedures have been successfully implemented. Outdoor play provision has been improved since the last inspection. The adult : child ratio has been increased. Although the quality of accommodation and resources has not been maintained, the school is about to rectify the situation.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weakness

- Children learn to work together and understand the rules for sharing which helps them learn.

Commentary

52. The provision for **personal, social and emotional development** ensures that children learn how to live and work together. They take turns amicably. Children know the rules for sharing equipment and remind each other how many can play in the role-play area and how you need an apron to play in the water. Children have good attitudes to learning. They expect to finish tasks and show pride in their achievements. They have a clear understanding of right and wrong and have drawn up the rules for their class. Teaching and pupils' achievement are both satisfactory. By the end of the Reception year all pupils will have reached the goals for this area of their learning.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

53. Sound teaching in **communication language and literacy** ensures that children have frequent opportunities to develop speaking and listening skills. Children are encouraged to build new vocabulary, for example by planning holidays. Teachers use a variety of approaches to establish word-building skills. These range from fishing for letters in the outdoor pool to engaging with multi-media presentations. Higher attaining children have good reading skills and talk knowledgeably about the books in their classroom. Unfortunately, pressure for space sometimes squeezes out the reading corner. In this year group, only a minority have reached the expected levels in the writing aspect. Most children write their names but lack fluency in forming letters, arranging words and writing independently. This appears to be related to the comparatively weak fine motor skills of a number of children.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Main strengths and weakness

- Children are encouraged to think logically.
- The writing of numbers is not as fluent as expected by the end of Reception.

Commentary

54. Provision in **mathematical development** gives children regular practical experience in counting, calculating and recognising shapes. Teaching is satisfactory and so is pupils' achievement. Teaching staff encourage children to think logically and to use their knowledge to solve problems. Mental recall is better than written work would indicate. Weak writing skills affect the children's success in recording calculations. Numbers are not written as fluently as expected by the end of the Reception year. Most children count accurately to 20 and are able to add and subtract within that range. They are familiar with coins and correctly identify two-dimensional shapes. By the end of the Reception year the majority of children will reach the goals set for their learning in this area.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Children's **knowledge and understanding of the world** is as expected for their age. When working on computers, children handle the mouse well and select the tools they need to create pictures. They know there are different countries where people speak different languages. Some could repeat the Mexican phrase for "my house is your house" from their current Big Book. In religious education, children learn about Christianity and other faiths. The use of plants, flowers and animals helps children appreciate living processes so that they can sequence the life-cycle of a butterfly and the germination of seedlings. The recent visit to the Sea-life centre increased interest and knowledge of the underwater world.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Main strengths and weakness

- Children have good opportunities to learn outdoors.
- Fine motor skills are under-developed.

Commentary

55. In **physical development** children's gross motor skills are good enabling them to move under, over and around obstacles safely. Their fine motor skills, used for writing and drawing are much less developed. Teaching and children's achievement are both satisfactory. Provision in this area is enhanced by the regular use of the outdoor play area with the deployment of one member of staff. As a result, children's learning can be drawn from their own imaginations or triggered by suggestions. The task of recovering items to pack in a suitcase from an obstacle course was given an extra edge by the adult timing the seconds taken. Fine skills are practised through modelling and painting as well as through pencil and crayon control. Overall, the majority of children will reach the goals expected in this area of learning by the end of the Reception year.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Children's **creative development** is in line with expectations. Resources are adequate but providing space for creative activities puts pressure on the classroom space. Children are

able to sustain imaginative roles such as taking holiday bookings or in camping in the tent outside. They have regular opportunities to paint, model, colour and stick. Interaction with teaching staff encourages them to refine their skills such as in mixing paint colours to match skin tones.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are good in Year 6 and pupils achieve well.
- All pupils achieve good standards in speaking and listening.
- Leadership and management of the subject are good.
- The level of challenge for higher attaining pupils is not high enough in most classes.
- Teaching is good overall and pupils enjoy lessons.
- There is good use of literacy skills other subjects.
- While assessment procedures have been well developed this year, teachers should now use the information from assessment more rigorously to plan demanding work for all groups of pupils.

Commentary

56. Standards in Year 2 are average and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Writing skills are well promoted, with the majority of pupils reaching the expected level for their age and a few exceeding it. Good support for lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs has helped these pupils achieve as well as their peers, especially in reading. Sometimes these pupils achieve better than expected standards.
57. By the end of Year 6 standards are above average overall and pupils achieve well. They have good writing skills which they use well in other subjects to write for a range of purposes. High quality diaries of the pupils' visit to Humphrey Head, an outdoor activities centre, provide powerful testimony of pupils' writing skills. Pupils read well and are provided with frequent opportunities to use their reading skills for research in other subjects. Speaking and listening are good throughout the school. These skills are used well to promote the sharing of ideas through discussion and to extend pupils' thinking in many lessons seen. By Year 6, pupils' handwriting is well developed and the presentation of their work is good.
58. The quality of teaching is good overall, with very good teaching seen in Year 5. In this class very high standards are promoted through the teacher's careful planning and strong knowledge of what pupils can do and need to learn next. All teachers have good subject knowledge and use this well to plan lively and engaging activities for pupils. A weakness in teaching is in the use of assessment information to plan work that is at the correct level for all groups of pupils. This particularly affects the level of challenge for higher attaining pupils, who do not always have high enough demands made of them. However, the school has recognised this and the improvements to assessment procedures this year are now beginning to have a positive impact in some classes. Sometimes in shared classes teachers' planning sometimes does not follow through day by day regardless of which teacher is in the class. This can mean that

sometimes pupils begin a topic and do not return to it for five or six days until that teacher returns. This slows their learning noticeably.

59. Teachers promote speaking and listening very well by providing frequent opportunities for pupils to talk to partners and prepare performances of poetry for an audience. Year 5 pupils improved their rendition of "*Dog in the Playground*", with astonishing speed because of the very good teaching by the class teacher and the teaching assistant. They were delighted with their efforts, which they were able to evaluate later because of the teacher's well planned use of a video camera. Pupils who have special educational needs are well provided for by teachers' planning and the good support they receive from teaching assistants who are well trained to meet the literacy needs of these pupils. Very good relationships between all adults and pupils create a happy, secure environment for learning which enables pupils to ask and answer questions comfortably and so extend their learning. Where teachers have adopted target setting and use this in their marking and feedback to pupils, this works well in helping to improve the standard of work. In Year 5 and Year 6 pupils' work showed the benefits of this strategy as pupils acted on advice from their teachers in subsequent writing.
60. Leadership and management of the subject are good, and continue to improve in quality as the co-ordinator visits other schools and has time to reflect on the good practice he has discovered. He is expert in his own practice and well able to advise colleagues on how to improve. He has introduced a number of initiatives in the current year which are clearly impacting on standards and has a good understanding of strengths and weaknesses in provision. For instance, tracking procedures introduced this year have alerted the co-ordinator to which classes and groups need planned interventions to ensure that all pupils achieve well. They have also shown that the current Year 5 class is likely to exceed the performance of recent groups when they become Year 6 next year. There has been good improvement in the subject since the last inspection and standards are rising in all classes.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

Good use is made of pupils' good literacy skills in other subjects. Teachers plan a wide range of opportunities so that pupils can develop their reading, writing and speaking skills. For example, pupils in Year 1 wrote some moving prayers for a local resident in a link between religious education and English, while Year 2 pupils wrote about their visit to the local church and sent thank you cards to the vicar, in their religious education lesson. Older pupils in Year 4 use their persuasive writing skills to produce exciting leaflets urging people to visit Thornton Dale and taste the *Best Ice Cream in the World!* Pupils in Years 5 and 6 make very good use of their reading and writing skills for research in books and on computer for topics in geography, history and science.

MATHEMATICS

The provision for mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in mathematics by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are average but improving.
- Good teaching and learning are leading to good achievement.

- Good procedures for assessing pupils are in place, but are not used effectively to inform accurately the next step or to set individual targets.
- There is no evidence of pupils' use of ICT in lessons.

Commentary

61. Standards seen during the inspection in Year 6 are average. By the end of Year 6, pupils make good progress from their test results in Year 2, so their achievement is good. Standards seen during the inspection for the end of Year 2 are average, with a slightly higher percentage gaining the expected level and fewer reaching the higher level than is usually seen. Given that attainment on entry is broadly average, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress by the end of Year 2, therefore achievement is satisfactory.
62. Throughout the school there is an emphasis on learning and handling number and developing mathematical skills. Pupils enjoy this, and particularly in a Year 5 lesson demonstrated how well they can make connections between numbers; for example $25+75=100$ so $250+750=1000$, and in the opposite direction $0.25+0.75=1$. The work of the lower attaining pupils is of good quality because of the very good support given and tasks are carefully matched to their needs. This is most noticeable in the development of number skills. In some aspects of the subject the task is often similar for all abilities and lower attainers do not complete it, nor are higher attainers fully challenged.
63. The quality of teaching and learning is good with some very good features. Teachers' knowledge of the subject is good and their enthusiasm helps to motivate pupils. Questioning is used effectively to extend or reinforce learning. Because of very good relationships pupils are keen to respond, knowing that if their answer is wrong they will not be criticised. They are expected to explain how they found the answer. The effective use of the new interactive white boards has added another dimension to the teaching of mathematics and is stimulating pupils' interest. Through this, examples of problems can be visually displayed, helping pupils' learning and capturing their imagination. One example was observed in a Year 3 lesson when a program was used to enhance pupils' learning about fractions. Although the interactive white boards are frequently used there was little evidence during the inspection of pupils using ICT to further their learning. This is an area for further development.
64. Pupils' work is usually well matched to their needs when developing number skills. For example, in a Year 5 lesson where teaching and learning were very good, lower attaining pupils had tasks very carefully matched to their needs while higher attainers were also appropriately challenged. However, in some lessons challenge for each level of ability was not so carefully planned and extension work was not provided for higher attaining pupils. The object of the lesson is often shared with pupils but more could be made of explaining how it can be achieved. Teaching assistants provide very good support for less able pupils, particularly when working in small groups. This ensures they have access to the tasks and experience success. The marking is varied; sometimes praising pupils' efforts but rarely offering constructive comments to help them improve. Although assessment procedures are in place the information is not yet used effectively to track progress, match tasks to all abilities and raise standards.
65. The subject leader has had little opportunity to develop her role but is keen to extend the subject and raise standards. Data from national tests and optional tests for Years

3, 4 and 5 is analysed and information is used to develop strategies to increase pupils' understanding. However, this is a relatively recent innovation and has had insufficient time to impact on standards. Similarly, tracking of pupils' progress and setting of targets has had insufficient time to raise standards. Overall, leadership and management in the subject are good.

Use of mathematics across the curriculum

Mathematics is used effectively across the curriculum to support learning in science, geography, and design and technology particularly through measuring and weighing. Data handling is used in both science and geography to record information such as a traffic survey. This input helps pupils appreciate that mathematics has practical uses in everyday life and in other areas of the curriculum.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Tracking procedures have been improved recently.
- Pupils' understanding of fair testing is strong.
- In some classes the organisation of pupils' work does not give a clear picture of progress in the subject.
- The teaching of investigation methods is good.

Commentary

66. Standards in science are above the expected levels in Year 2 and pupils' achievement is good. Standards are above the expected levels in Year 6. Achievement is good overall, and it is very good for lower attaining pupils. Pupils have good attitudes and clearly enjoy the subject.
67. Throughout the school pupils are developing good investigation skills. They have frequent opportunities to undertake investigations across a range of aspects and are encouraged to design their own approaches. Skills are developed progressively. Pupils know how to make their predictions, lay out their plans, report their observations and evaluate their results. In Key Stage 1 pupils follow prepared templates and in Key Stage 2 they are increasingly using an investigation board format. This enables them to draft and redraft their investigation by writing the elements of their investigations on Post-it notes and moving them through the planning stages. The resulting plans are robust and integrated. Pupils have a good understanding of fair testing and apply it effectively.
68. The development of data handling skills is incorporated into teaching very well. Pupils learn how to sort and classify from an early age. Year 1 pupils sorted an assortment of beans using branching questions. By Year 6, pupils are able to edit and extend ICT branching databases on animals. Constructing graphs is also developed progressively and there is good use of numeracy skills. Year 2 pupils use information and communication technology (ICT) to produce charts showing measurements of hand span. Older pupils regularly create bar charts and line graphs and interpret them correctly.

69. All aspects of the science curriculum are securely covered and revisited regularly. Pupils are able to draw on their knowledge and understanding to make predictions and to offer reasoned answers. Younger pupils in Key Stage 2 used their observations of particles in soil samples to explain why water was retained, while older pupils used their observations of habitats to show that woodlice prefer dark and moist places.
70. Teaching and learning are good overall through the school. During the inspection examples of very good teaching were seen in the juniors. The quality of teaching in Years 3 and 4 has promoted good progress from the below average levels which some year groups displayed at the end of the infants. In Years 5 and 6 teachers have high expectations and challenge all abilities effectively. There is good teaching of scientific techniques and methods such as filtering. Teaching in the infants includes regular monitoring of pupils' attainment against National Curriculum levels. This enables teachers to match work to pupils' needs accurately and to give necessary support. Throughout the school, teachers make good use of information and communication technology to enhance learning in science such as modelling geological tests. Assessment is conducted regularly and is used to ensure pupils' needs are met.
71. In some classes work is done on loose sheets of paper and copied worksheets which are bound together with sheets from other subjects to make half-termly booklets. This practice reduces the identity of the subject and does not represent a scientific approach. It is difficult for pupils to appreciate their progress or to refer back to earlier work. Feedback to pupils through marking varies in its helpfulness in some year groups.
72. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. A secure curriculum organisation is in place and comprehensive assessment systems will be operating from September. The leadership of the subject has resulted in improvements in teaching, for example in the introduction of a consistent approach to investigation planning. The school has improved the computer-based tracking systems in use and has introduced extra standardised testing. As a result, there is a good overview of the progress of individuals and year groups. The co-ordinator has not had enough opportunity to monitor teaching and learning in the subject to gain a clear picture of strengths and weaknesses in provision. Resources are satisfactory and have recently been improved with new software. Improvement since the last inspection has been good because the identified weakness in investigation skills has been addressed.

Information and communication technology

Provision for ICT is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Improved provision means all pupils have many opportunities to use computers.
- Pupils' achievement is good because of good teaching.
- There has been insufficient time since the computer suite was installed to fully develop ICT across the curriculum.
- The subject is well led by a knowledgeable and enthusiastic subject leader.

Commentary

73. Standards by the end of Year 6 are average but in some aspects of the subject pupils are achieving well, for example in their understanding and use of power point presentations. However, there are some areas which these pupils have not covered because of lack of facilities such as sensing and control. The very recently installed computer suite is intended to allow them to complete the necessary curriculum requirements before the end of the school year. Standards by the end of Year 2 are in line with expectations and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Pupils can save and retrieve files, change fonts and font size and program the Roamer (a robot that responds to a variety of commands). Computers have also been used to record data such as traffic surveys.
74. Pupils are very enthusiastic about the new computer suite and are very keen to have hands-on experiences. All pupils are beginning to achieve well because teachers are more confident and knowledgeable about teaching ICT. The computer suite has added a further dimension to their learning.
75. Although no teaching was seen in Years 1 or 2 there is sufficient evidence to say that it is at least satisfactory. Pupils are offered an appropriate range of experiences to ensure all requirements are met. Only one lesson was seen in Years 3 – 6 and that was good. In the lesson, questioning was used effectively to extend or reinforce pupils' understanding or to encourage them to express their thoughts. Very good relationships give pupils confidence to explain what they think. Opportunities to work together are provided and pupils support each other very well. They concentrate and remain focused on task. Unfortunately pupils do not have time to complete their tasks because discussions have taken too long. Those with special educational needs are very well supported so they can access the curriculum and they make the same progress as others in their class. Effective assessment has yet to be implemented but procedures are ready for use in September.
76. The subject leader is knowledgeable and enthusiastic and has devised a new method of assessing pupils' capabilities, to be implemented in September. She has developed the subject well and ensured that staff are more secure in their understanding. She has not had the opportunity to monitor teaching and learning in the subject in order to identify where teachers may need further training. The addition of a computer suite is a great improvement since the previous inspection.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

There are some good examples of how ICT is used across the curriculum. Displays around the school show computer-generated pictures in the style of Andy Warhol or Henri Matisse. There is evidence of data handling and spreadsheets relating to geography or science, and wedding invitations designed by Year 1 pupils that illustrate a range of fonts and font size. As the computer suite is new, there has been insufficient time to develop the full potential of ICT in all curriculum areas.

HUMANITIES

77. **Geography and history** were sampled during the inspection so no overall judgement is made about provision. Scrutiny of pupils' work and wall displays provided evidence about standards and the breadth of the curriculum.

78. In **geography**, standards in Year 2 are in line with expectation for pupils of seven and their achievement is satisfactory. In Year 6, pupils exceed the expected level and their achievement is good. The curriculum is well planned to make good use of fieldwork to develop pupils' enquiry skills and allow them to find out from first hand experiences. In the infants, pupils conduct traffic surveys in the village and look at housing. This develops to studying a different locality so that when pupils visit Scarborough, they are able to note the similarities and differences between the seaside town and their own village. In the juniors, the emphasis on fieldwork continues and pupils have good opportunities to extend their mapping skills when developing their knowledge of places surrounding the village. In Year 5, the residential visit to Seahouses provides very good opportunities for pupils to extend their understanding of other settlements, as well make very good links with science when they visit the Farne Islands to look at bird life there. The two lessons seen during inspection were both very good, because teachers' planning was both imaginative and thorough. In Year 4, pupils were provided with a wealth of resources to investigate to explain changes in their village over time. In Year 5, pupils used a website to learn more about the impact of water shortages in Africa. In both lessons the rate of learning was very good because the tasks provided matched pupils' needs, were accessible to all and were thoroughly enjoyable and absorbing.
79. Standards in **history** are in line with expectation for pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 and their achievement is satisfactory. Learning in the subject is well based on developing enquiry skills by asking and answering questions about the past. Pupils in Year 1 and 2 visited Scarborough Castle to learn how the castle was built and what defences were used. They wrote interesting recounts of their visit, explaining devices such as the drawbridge and which windows provided the best views over the surrounding land. Year 1 pupils built a replica castle in the classroom to use for role play as a way of deepening their understanding of life in the past. As with geography, the subject benefits well from visits to sites of historic interest. For instance, Year 3 and 4 pupils visit Eden camp when they study World War 2 and a local earth fortification when they learn about the Roman influence in their area. By Year 6 pupils research the Ancient Greeks and produce well written accounts of life in Tudor times.

Religious education

Provision in Religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is very good teaching in Year 3 which allows pupils to reflect upon their thoughts and feelings.
- Pupils show a good understanding and knowledge of Christianity, their knowledge of other faiths and the impact these have on people's lives is not so strong.

Commentary

80. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6 standards are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus and achievement for all pupils is satisfactory.
81. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, with some very good teaching seen in the lower juniors. Teachers have made good links this year with other subjects to

promote knowledge and understanding about religious beliefs and how these affect people's lives. In Year 6 pupils worked on religious icons in art. They produced good quality paintings that encapsulated the key elements of the style in pictures which stimulate wonder in the onlooker. Pupils listen to music from different faiths and different eras to understand the different ways in which believers celebrate their beliefs. Younger pupils learn about Christianity and the signs and symbols that are significant to Christians. They visit the local church and look at religious artefacts at first hand, hear stories from the New Testament from the vicar and learn about the significance of religious vestments.

82. Teachers respect the culture and traditions of others and pass these positive attitudes on to pupils. They provide pupils with valuable insights into religious beliefs, moral values, feelings and behaviour. Teaching at its best is challenging and allows pupils to learn from religious practices. In a very good lesson in Year 3, pupils were taught to *be still* and reflect on their innermost thoughts. In a very well managed session, the teacher led pupils through the stages of calming and quiet until they were able to join in a period of silent reflection for a good length of time. Pupils' response was excellent and they shared their thoughts and feelings very well at the end of the session, demonstrating how well the experience had developed their spirituality.
83. The co-ordinator has a very strong commitment to the development of the subject and has provided satisfactory leadership and management this year. Monitoring has focused on teachers' planning and pupils' recorded work. The co-ordinator is preparing to introduce the new locally agreed syllabus and plans to monitor teaching and learning to ensure that staff training needs are identified. The co-ordinator acknowledges that the school needs to do more to enrich pupils' knowledge and understanding of the traditions of other faiths and develop their awareness of the diversity of the society in which they are growing up. Changes to the curriculum planned from September are intended to cater for this. In the current year the co-ordinator has increased the number of visitors to assemblies to extend pupils' understanding of the impact of religion on people's lives. Year 6 pupils voiced their appreciation of this provision when interviewed about the life of the school.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

84. **Art and design** is an area that was not inspected in depth so no judgements can be made about standards or provision. From the work displayed around the school there is evidence of some talented pupils. For example the still life drawn by Year 5 pupils show how carefully they have looked at the fruit and considered how to use the oil pastels and chalk for the best effect. In some drawings the use of light and shade is very good. Other pupils have produced some delightful water colour pictures after an input from a local artist. Another group of pupils under the expert eye of another local artist painted a fascinating mural now hanging in the school foyer illustrating scenes from the life of the school. All pupils are given the opportunity to explore a range of media from clay to Modroc to paint or pastels. Year 6 pupils made interesting models of rock climbers to capture the thrill of their experiences at Humphrey Head outdoor centre. ICT is used effectively to create pictures in the style of different artists such as Andy Warhol.
85. It was not possible to make a judgement on provision in **design and technology**. Available evidence shows that standards are at least in line with the expectations for pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. The subject is taught regularly and the curriculum is sound. Pupils' expertise and skills clearly improve as they progress

through the school. It was not possible to make an overall judgement on teaching, but an example of very good teaching and learning was seen in Year 6. On that occasion techniques were very well explained so that pupils were able to solve problems of cutting and joining. They then made boats with propellers and then explored their own ways of attaching rudders. Pupils have very good attitudes to the subject and respond well when required to work to time limits. Subject provision has improved since the last inspection because there is proper time allocation and the lack of progression in planning has been rectified.

86. It was not possible to make a judgement on the subject provision or on teaching and learning in **music**. Available evidence shows that the subject is taught regularly to a progressive scheme of work. At present older pupils benefit from the specialist expertise of the co-ordinator, who teaches all the junior classes. The co-ordinator has a sound overview of the subject and supports the teachers in the infants when needed. Tuition is offered in a range of instruments – guitar, keyboard, brass, woodwind and violins - through the peripatetic service, and the extra-curricular clubs include recorder and choir. Another specialist teaches the choir after school. Music is an important aspect of school life and often provides links between the school and the local community. For example, a large group of Year 5 and 6 pupils succeeded in gaining singing parts in the Ryedale Opera production which is due to be performed soon.
87. **Physical education** was not inspected in depth so no judgements can be made about standards or provision overall. However, a very good Year 6 lesson developing orienteering skills was observed. Pupils' standards are above expectations for their age and for a small number well above. It is clear when talking to the pupils how enthusiastic they are and how much they enjoy the challenges of the sport. All pupils enjoy a range of sporting activities including dance, gymnastics and games. The knowledgeable and enthusiastic subject leader has plans for the future development of sporting activities not just within the school but with the local groups of schools as well.
88. The school places good emphasis on **personal, social, health education and citizenship education**. The curriculum is planned to include teaching in these areas and pupils are very well involved in taking responsibility in the classroom and in the playground. Teachers are careful to link learning in other subjects to these aspects of pupils' development and draw on pupils' learning to reinforce and extend their understanding of issues that affect their lives. Representatives from the wider community bring a wider perspective to pupils' understanding. Through the planned curriculum, pupils learn about the harmful effects of some drugs and medicines, and changes to their bodies through maturation.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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