

INSPECTION REPORT

Rathmell CE Primary School
Settle

LEA area : N. Yorkshire

School Register Number : 121633

Headteacher : John Dickinson

Reporting inspector : Miss A Connor AI

Dates of inspection : 29 April - 2 May 1996

Information about the school

Type of school :	Infant and Junior
Type of control :	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils :	4 – 10
Gender of pupils :	Mixed
School address :	Hesley Lane Rathmell Settle N.Yorkshire
Telephone number :	01729 840360
Appropriate authority :	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors :	Mrs Reva Crossland

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Main findings

1. In 92 per cent of the lessons standards of attainment and progress are in line with national expectations and in half of these good standards are achieved.
2. Attainment is good in English and information technology in both key stages, and in science and design technology in Key Stage 2. In Key Stage 2 attainment in music is excellent for some pupils in some elements.
3. Pupils make progress at least according to national expectations in most subjects, except in history and geography at Key Stage 2 where work needs to be more closely related in detail to the current National Curriculum. Progress is good in English, mathematics, science and information technology at both key stages, in design technology in Key Stage 1, and in Key Stage 2 progress is very good in music.
4. In almost all of the lessons seen, teaching promotes at least sound educational standards, and in 39 per cent of these lessons, teaching ranges from good to excellent. There is good teaching at both key stages, for example in mathematics and information technology, and in Key Stage 2 in English, science and design technology. There is some exceptional teaching in science and design technology in Key Stage 1 and in music at Key Stage 2.
5. Some of the curriculum policies would benefit from updating to reflect the current National Curriculum requirements. There are no schemes of work to support teachers' planning.
6. Pupils' read well on sight vocabulary, but many read inaccurately because they are insecure in tackling unfamiliar text. Consistent methods in the teaching and learning of spelling are not evident.
7. Assessment is an overall strength and is covered in a number of different ways. However, the different approaches to assessment are separate and do not sufficiently inform curriculum planning, particularly for more and less able pupils.
8. The headteacher provides positive leadership in relation to the ethos in the school, which successfully encourages the development of pupils as responsible individuals, recognising and drawing on their characteristics and personalities. This could be extended by giving pupils goals to aim for in even higher standards of work and behaviour. There are opportunities for pupils to work co-operatively and also to take responsibility for their own actions. The school encourages good behaviour through establishing principles rather than through rewards or fear of punishment.
9. The school development plan lacks sufficient detail to provide an effective planning tool, particularly for the curriculum. It provides insufficient information about costings, responsibilities or resource implications, and lacks the element of evaluation necessary to ensure cost-effectiveness.

10. The financial management of the school is satisfactory. Despite a decreasing balance over the past few years, the provision of staffing and resources is good due to the governing body's priority to maintain two classes within the school. The governing body is supportive of the school, although the role of the governing body is underdeveloped at present, for example in curriculum development and financial planning.

11. The school gives good value for money overall, which is reflected in the levels of attainment and rates of progress in most curriculum areas, the personal development of pupils, and the deployment of resources.

Key issues for action

12. In order to develop the school and raise standards further, the headteacher, staff and governing body should:

- * develop the teaching and learning of history and geography in line with the National Curriculum;
- * review the school development plan in order to clarify priorities and details more precisely, and establish procedures for evaluation;
- * further develop the role of the governing body through greater involvement in curriculum and finance;
- * draw up detailed schemes of work in the light of the revised National Curriculum to support teachers' planning.
- * provide consistent learning strategies to enable pupils to tackle unfamiliar text with ease and confidence;
- * draw together the present methods of assessment, and in particular continue to develop methods of formative assessment, in order to inform curriculum planning, especially with regard to the specific provision for the more and less able pupils.

Introduction

Characteristics of the school

13. Rathmell CE Primary School is situated in the Yorkshire Dales near Settle. There are 29 pupils on roll between the ages of 4 and 10, in almost equal proportions of girls and boys.

The pupils come from the nearby villages of Rathmell and Wigglesworth, and from outlying farms. Approximately one third of pupils come from outside of the area normally served by the school. The number on roll has increased steadily over the last few years from 19 to 29. None of the pupils is eligible for free school meals. One pupil has a Statement of Special Education Need. All of the pupils are of white ethnic origin and come from a wide social background. Attainment on entry is varied with some pupils displaying limited readiness for learning, whilst others start school with a range of experiences which have prepared them well.

14. The school aims to provide pupils with a caring environment in which each child feels valued, and which will enable them to develop academically and also as a responsible individual with their own characteristics and personality. The school aims to ensure that pupils acquire basic skills and to offer a range of first hand experiences including visits and residential opportunities in order to enhance learning.

15. As the number of pupils on roll is small, the school is divided into two classes, one for each key stage, with a full time teacher in each class. The school has few pupils under 5 years and provision for them is appropriate in the reception class.

16. Religious education was not inspected as Rathmell is a voluntary aided school.

Key indicators

Attainment at Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1
for latest reporting year:

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1994/5	2	2	4

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	2	2	2
	Girls	2	2	2
	Total	4	4	4
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	100	100	100
	National	78	80	79

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	2	2	2
	Girls	2	2	2
	Total	4	4	4
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	100	100	100
	National	56	54	64

Attendance

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed
through absence for the latest complete
reporting year :

		%
Authorised Absence	School	0.6
	National comparative data	5.7
Unauthorised Absence	School	0
	National comparative data	0.5

Exclusions

Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age)
during the previous year :

	Number
Fixed period	0
Permanent	0

Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is :

	%
Very good or better	12
Satisfactory or better	93
Less than satisfactory	7

PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Educational standards achieved by pupils at the school

Attainment and progress

17. At the start of school pupils' attainment is very varied. Some pupils have limited readiness for learning and are not able to play co-operatively, imaginatively or constructively, whilst other pupils come having had a range of experiences which prepare them well. As they move through the school most pupils achieve national expectations and make good progress, and some achieve well.

18. Attainment is sound and often better throughout the school. In both key stages, attainment is sound in art and physical education, and is good in English and information technology. In history and geography, attainment does not always cover the content of the National Curriculum. In English, by the end of Key Stage 1 many pupils write well in joined-up writing using sentences with full stops and capital letters, and some speech marks and paragraphs. Using information technology they can word-process and print work independently. In mathematics and science, attainment is satisfactory.

19. In Key Stage 2, attainment in mathematics, design technology and science is good. Pupils are able to use mathematical instruments accurately, discuss the properties of reflective symmetry and make appropriate predictions. In design technology, pupils are able to modify a design in the light of construction, and in science they can set up a fair test and present their observations in chart form. Some pupils achieve excellently in some elements of music, where they show high levels of instrumental skill and score-reading.

20. In most subjects, pupils make progress at least in line with national expectations and in both key stages progress is good in English, mathematics, science and information technology. Progress is also good in design technology at Key Stage 1 and very good in some elements of music at Key Stage 2. In physical education and art, progress is satisfactory.

21. In history and geography, attainment and progress do not always cover the content of the National Curriculum.

22. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress.

Attitudes, behaviour and personal development

23. Pupils are keen to learn and enjoy what they are doing. They apply themselves well to each new task and work with purpose and sustained concentration, especially when classroom management is effective. Overall, their behaviour is good both in and around the school. On those occasions when behaviour is less satisfactory, it is well managed by the staff. Pupils value their school environment and respond positively to the way in which the school promotes individual responsibility and self-discipline without the need to impose formal rules. Relationships in the school are good. Pupils are mostly courteous and polite,

but at times do not always fully demonstrate respect for adults or voluntarily provide help where it is needed. They are, however, confident and willingly carry out any jobs they are given to do.

Attendance

24. Attendance at the school is very good. Pupils are punctual and arrive in class promptly at the start of sessions. The keeping of registers meets statutory requirements.

Quality of education provided

Teaching

25. Teaching is sound in almost all the lessons at both key stages, and in 39 per cent of lessons observed it was good and sometimes better.

26. In Key Stage 1 in science and design technology, there is some excellent teaching where aims are clear, questioning is skilful, and content and pace are good, as for example, where an ideal shelter for snails was under design and construction. In mathematics and information technology teaching is good where the teacher has good subject knowledge, resources are appropriate and available and the teacher moves around supporting and encouraging pupils.

27. In all other areas teaching is sound.

28. In Key Stage 2, teaching is very good where the demands on pupils are high and supported well by the teacher's own subject expertise and interest, as for example in music. The teaching is good where there is thorough preparation of pupils for the task, as for example in creative writing, where there is differentiation in demands of the task, organisation of pupils varies according to the work in hand as in design technology, and the teacher is involved with pupils in their work.

29. Whilst overall medium term planning is satisfactory in most subjects, careful use of day-to-day assessments needs to inform the daily planning to ensure all pupils are challenged appropriately. Time is generally used well and resources are appropriate and available. Class management is satisfactory overall and incidents of low-level disruption are usually dealt with promptly and firmly.

The curriculum and assessment

30. The curriculum is balanced and broadly based, although the provision for history and geography needs to reflect more closely the current National Curriculum. Policies are in place for all subjects, although some of these have not yet been updated in line with the revised National Curriculum. Schemes of work are not available to support teachers' planning. The curriculum provides equality of access and opportunity for all pupils, with positive steps being taken in some lessons to ensure a gender balance within groups. Pupils with special educational needs are included in all activities, with appropriate special provision

made as necessary. There is limited extra-curricular provision.

31. Teachers' planning provides a framework for continuity and progression, but it needs to be more systematic in building upon existing knowledge, understanding and skills, particularly in the translation of medium term into short term planning.

32. There is a wide variety of methods of assessment in the school, many of which provide useful information for staff and incentives for pupils. The school needs to draw together the present assessment methods to form a coherent structure, and in particular to continue to develop the methods of formative assessment across the curriculum, in order to inform planning.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

33. The headteacher provides positive leadership in relation to the ethos in the school, which successfully encourages the development of pupils as individuals, recognising and drawing on their characteristics and personalities. This could be extended by encouraging the pupils to aim for even higher standards of work and behaviour. There are opportunities for pupils to work co-operatively and also to take responsibility for their own actions, with the school providing a framework of moral values through assemblies and day-to-day interactions which encourage good behaviour through principles rather than through reward or fear of punishment.

34. The school provides activities for the pupils during playtimes which encourage co-operative pastimes. This produces a pleasant atmosphere in the playground, in which the children enjoy opportunities to play together, often in groups of mixed ages and gender.

35. The school has links with various establishments within the community. Pupils have the opportunity to perform in concerts, visit museums and participate in residential visits and exchanges with another school, all of which help in the development of the pupils' social and cultural understanding.

36. There are few opportunities within the daily life of the school for the pupils to begin to explore questions about the meaning and purpose of life itself, and there is little evidence of understanding and knowledge about the beliefs, traditions and practices of other cultures.

Support, guidance and pupils' welfare

37. The school is effective in promoting the health, welfare and safety of its pupils. It has a supportive ethos. Pupils are known and valued by all members of staff, who have concern for their educational and personal needs and provide effective guidance which is strongly supported by parents. This has a positive effect on pupils' work and the standards which they achieve.

38. Attendance registers are maintained in accordance with statutory requirements and unauthorised absence is reported in the prospectus. Any unexplained absences are followed up.

39. Good standards of behaviour and personal conduct are effectively promoted and maintained through appropriate policies and, because the school believes that pupils should be responsible for their own actions at all times, there are no school rules and very few formal rewards.

40. Effective policies and procedures in respect of health and safety and child protection are in place, and good links exist with the specialist support agencies. There are established procedures for dealing with accidents and illness and both class teachers are trained in basic first aid.

Partnership with parents and the community

41. Parents are encouraged to participate in their children's education. They are welcomed into school and provide help with some sporting activities and educational visits. The Parent Teachers Association is not very active at present, but in recent years has raised useful amounts of money for the school. Information about pupils' progress is provided through consultation evenings and annual reports, and regular correspondence from the headteacher keeps parents well informed about life in the school. The current practice for providing parents with information about curriculum matters in Key Stage 1 needs to be built upon across the school. Parents are involved in reviewing progress when their children have special educational needs.

42. There are close links with the local community, and other schools in the cluster, which serve to enrich areas of the curriculum and also help to increase pupils' personal and social development. Educational visits are organised to places of interest and pupils receive talks from visiting speakers. Older pupils are given an opportunity to participate in a yearly residential visit. Funds to create a small wildlife area have recently been donated by a national bank which has connections with the school, and work experience is regularly provided for local high school pupils.

43. The young people in the community are welcome to use the school field and playground for recreational activities out of school hours. This privilege is respected.

The management and efficiency of the school

Leadership and management

44. The headteacher has been successful in establishing and maintaining a positive ethos within the school community. Good relationships, pupils' attitudes to work and the whole staff's sense of being valued and part of a team stem from his clear vision and values. These are strong features of the school, together with promoting individuality, achievement and equality of opportunity for all.

45. The governing body gives commitment and loyal support to the school. It now needs to develop a greater knowledge of the work of the school especially in relation to curriculum and finance.

46. The school development plan is approved by governors and is reviewed annually against a predetermined checklist. The plan needs to focus systematically on individual curriculum areas in order to ensure that all elements are included in the school's overall curriculum planning. There are insufficient costings and deadlines included in the plan, and there is no formal system for evaluating cost effectiveness.

47. The school has a system of short, medium and long term curriculum planning but it needs attention to the detail of National Curriculum Programmes of Study to ensure that what is taught in the classrooms does deliver the school's long term plan. A review of policies in line with current National Curriculum Programmes of Study would support the work, and schemes of work for each subject would help to ensure consistency and depth and rigour in knowledge, skills and understanding especially in the foundation subjects.

48. Each of the two full-time teachers is responsible for a key stage of pupils. Curriculum development and co-ordination is undertaken through discussion on a very regular and an informal basis. Monitoring of pupils' work and achievement occurs through monitoring of half termly planning, visits to classrooms and exchange of classes for music and art. Effectiveness could be increased with a more focused use of the same time. At the present time, the headteacher has two half days a week release from class for management responsibilities and the classteacher has a small amount of non-contact time. The school's priorities at this time are to retain two full time classes.

49. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported in school because of small class sizes. Teachers are able to give plenty of support with well timed interventions. Arrangements are in line with the Code of Practice. At the present time there is no external support used in school, although the school does request outside agency involvement when necessary. Some voluntary qualified support has been available.

Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

50. Both full-time teachers are trained to teach the age group. With only two teachers, demands on individuals in terms of meeting National Curriculum requirements for pupils of different ages and attainments are great. There is also a temporary teacher who works one half day a week to enable the headteacher to have some time for management responsibilities. The staff attend in-service training regularly and teaching skills have been broadened, but in-depth subject training should be undertaken to ensure greater subject knowledge in the curriculum. Arrangements for the appraisal of teachers are effective. The first phase has been completed and the second phase is in progress with GEST funding being used for relevant and related support.

51. Non-teaching staff are well deployed. The school's non-teaching assistant is well qualified for her work in the classroom and puts her skill to good effect with the children. The same member of staff undertakes clerical and cleaning duties which she carries out effectively and efficiently. The one member of the kitchen staff and the lunchtime supervisor play a full part in the school. The school has benefited from voluntary, qualified support for pupils with special educational needs. Overall, the full staff create a productive and friendly team who are supportive of each other as well as the pupils.

52. The accommodation is clean and well maintained. Classrooms are of adequate size to meet teaching requirements and storage is adequate. The hall is large enough for whole school assemblies and just adequate for physical education lessons. Good use is made of a small alcove in the entrance lobby to accommodate the school library. Available wall space is well used to mount attractive displays, which include pupils' work and provide further learning opportunities.

53. The school has started to address the issue of security but further development is required.

54. Outside, the grounds are well maintained and the hardsurfaced play area is in good condition. A small wildlife area is being created by pupils on land adjacent to the school with funds which have been donated by a local bank and this will provide a valuable teaching and learning resource for the school.

55. The school is well resourced for English, mathematics, science, music and physical education. The hardware for information technology is well used and well resourced, although some of it should be updated in Key Stage 1 in order to give pupils access to a wider range of skills and information-software to support their learning. Resources for geography and history need to be supplemented in line with programmes of study. Artefacts for religious education are borrowed through the local cluster group, but further investment is called for in range of books. Book provision is good in quantity, quality and range both in classrooms and in the library, in fiction and non-fiction material. Books are well presented in the library and are coded for ease of access and return.

The efficiency of the school

56. The school development plan is initially drawn up by the headteacher, after consultation with the staff and Chair of Governors, before being presented to the governing body for consultation. It lacks sufficient detail to provide an effective planning tool, particularly with regard to curriculum. It provides insufficient information about costings, responsibilities or resource implications, and lacks the element of evaluation necessary to ensure cost-effectiveness.

57. The financial management of the school is satisfactory. The governing body has delegated the day-to-day running of the budget to the headteacher, assisted by the secretary. The draft budget is initially addressed midway through the financial year, in preparation for the following April, and prepared by the headteacher and Chair of Governors, with assistance from an officer from the education authority. The school has not been audited within the last five years.

58. The provision of staffing and resources is good. The main priority for the governing body is the maintenance of two classes within the school. This has resulted in a decreasing balance over the past few years, which will continue if budgetary patterns remain the same. The governing body should take this position into account when setting future budgets.

59. In terms of attainment and progress, in most curriculum areas, and the personal development of pupils and the deployment of available resources, the school gives good

value for money.

PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS

English, mathematics and science

English

60. Across the school attainment in English in relation to national expectations is generally good at both key stages. In 1995, Key Stage 1 SAT results were above the national average.

61. Most pupils listen attentively to the teacher, they answer questions willingly and make relevant comments. At Key Stage 1, pupils discuss their own experience of life, they talk easily to each other for example, helping with ideas and spellings for writing, how to use a particular technique in art, discussing designs in design technology. At Key Stage 2, pupils collaborate well in geography, sharing personal knowledge of the local area. In physical education, pupils follow instructions, and in information technology some of them use their speaking and listening skills in writing their own program together. At both key stages, pupils engage in conversation with adults with ease and confidence. Occasionally, in whole school groups, the pupils do not always listen attentively.

62. Standards in reading are in line with national expectations and some pupils exceed them. The strengths and weaknesses are similar in both key stages. In Key Stage 1, pupils enjoy books, they tell a good story from pictures and they read known words confidently. By the end of the key stage, some pupils read fluently and with expression. On occasions, some pupils have insufficient strategies to tackle unfamiliar words. At Key Stage 2, most pupils are fluent on text which they can read at sight but some have difficulty attempting unknown words, which leads to inaccurate reading which is then not corrected. Assessment techniques which pinpoint a pupil's development precisely are just beginning and will help in the process of providing consistent word-building skills.

63. Overall standards in writing are good. Even though some pupils enter school with poor pencil control, all the pupils can now underwrite with reasonable letter formation and by the end of Key Stage 1 all pupils are writing independently. Some pupils write fluently with joined up writing, correct sentences, and some speech marks. Pupils are able to write an account of their activities, retell a story and make up their own stories. They are able to word process their material and print it. Pupils use their writing skills in other areas of the curriculum. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils write in ink and most use paragraphs. In this key stage, writing an account of their own activities needs development in line with their creative writing which is very well developed and uses words for effect in fluent, mature phrasing, complex sentences, powerful description and use of images. Spelling needs to be more consistently taught, drawing attention to word shapes and ensuring pupils learn spellings as they use them.

64. Teaching is at least satisfactory in both key stages and good in creative writing at Key Stage 2. Teaching is sound where the teacher gives good, clear explanations, pupils are given appropriate goals and the pace is purposeful.

Mathematics

65. As each class covers a complete key stage, pupils work individually from worksheets or the published scheme at their own level.

66. Attainment in Key Stage 1 is sound. Pupils learn to handle numbers and are working appropriately on subtraction of number and data handling. This work supports gathering and recording of information for science work on weather. In Key Stage 2, pupils show satisfactory understanding and facility with number operations. Attainment is good in data handling and work on shape and space where they are able to use mathematical instruments with a high degree of accuracy, discuss properties of symmetrical shapes, and make predictions. However, attainment is not satisfactory where insufficient work is completed.

67. Progress in both key stages is generally good, and pupils progress well when they are building upon previously learnt skills and knowledge. In Key Stage 2, the good progress is not always consistent where there is a high reliance on self-motivation.

68. Teaching in Key Stage 1, is sound to good, and in Key Stage 2, it is more variable. Where teaching is good, the teacher's subject knowledge is good and makes strong links with previous learning, lesson aims are clear, appropriate resources are well prepared and the teacher moves around the classroom, giving individual support and encouragement.

69. Pupils' response is generally sound or good, being slightly better in Key Stage 1. They are usually well behaved and enthusiastic, and concentrate on the task.

Science

70. Attainment in Key Stage 1 is sound and in Key Stage 2 it is good. The pupils are able to respond to suggestions and make simple predictions. They are able to set up a fair test and record their findings appropriately.

71. Progress is good in both key stages. Pupils are able to build upon previous knowledge in order to undertake the tasks set. They develop their observational skills and become more familiar with the theories involved in the lesson content.

72. The teaching in science is excellent at Key Stage 1 and good in Key Stage 2. Evidence in pupils' topic folders indicates an overall level of good teaching. Where teaching is excellent, a combination of clear aims, appropriate teaching style, good quality resources, skilful questioning and sensitive intervention is used, in order to encourage each pupil to produce their best possible work, and links with other curriculum areas are made as appropriate. There are also challenging activities and high expectations.

73. In the lessons seen, the pupils concentrate well and are enthusiastic about their work, in both key stages. They show obvious enjoyment in their lessons, and are able to work individually or co-operatively, as appropriate. They discuss their work frequently, and although this can lead to a high noise level at times, it also helps to increase their knowledge and understanding.

Other subjects or courses

Information technology

74. Attainment and progress in information technology is good in both key stages. In Key Stage 1, pupils are able to enter, save, retrieve, display and amend work independently of an adult. They are able to select and load from a range of programs. Key Stage 2 pupils support Key Stage 1 pupils in daily computerised monitoring of the weather. They also use computers confidently and with purpose. Some are able to use the computer to compose three and four-part music, and a few older pupils write their own programs. In both key stages pupils use information technology resources in different curriculum areas. All pupils have constant access to the resources and they are able to build upon previous knowledge and skills.

75. Teaching is good in both key stages. Teachers have good subject knowledge and facility with the resources available. Pupils are supported at an individual level and are given the opportunity to be creative, to explore and to solve problems.

76. Pupils use the information technology hardware and software with skill and understanding. They are able and willing to support each other in their work.

Design technology

77. Attainment in design technology ranges from sound in Key Stage 1 to good in Key Stage 2. At Key Stage 1, pupils are able to design and build a shelter for snails, selecting materials appropriately. At Key Stage 2, pupils are able to design and construct a tower to support a given weight, and to make modifications to the design in the light of experience. Pupils are confident with the different resources available and use equipment skilfully.

78. Progress is good in Key Stage 1 and sound in Key Stage 2. In Key Stage 1, pupils build upon previous knowledge and experience, and develop their skills of observation. In Key Stage 2, pupils use existing knowledge of shapes and structures in their design and construction.

79. Teaching in design technology ranges from excellent in Key Stage 1 to good in Key Stage 2. The good teaching observed incorporates clear aims, skilful questioning, good subject knowledge, use of pupils' suggestions, and good resources and pace.

80. Pupils in both key stages have positive attitudes to their work.

Geography

81. In both key stages geography and history are taught mostly through topics.

82. In Key Stage 1, pupils are aware of similar features and how they differ in the town and country, for example, type and volume of traffic, number and size of shops. They are able to give some of the reasons why they differ in contrasting localities. They make

progress as they use their experience of the town and the country and make connections between the two. Pupils discuss the quality of the environment with an awareness of wider contrasts in pollution and litter.

83. In Key Stage 2, some pupils are very knowledgeable about the local area and from experience are able to name places and put roads between them to create a reasonable plan. Others are not as confident and need support. Pupils use appropriate vocabulary for landmarks, for example bridge, by-pass, turn-off. They make progress as most are able to place their own home on the map at a second attempt, and they can give directions. In both key stages, speaking and listening skills are used well as pupils share their local knowledge.

84. In both key stages pupils use instruments accurately to measure and record the weather daily.

85. The teaching is appropriate where the teacher uses skilful questioning to keep the content specific and focused on geographical features and reasons.

86. Through the topics which are followed in school, a reasonable amount of geographical work is done but it does not reflect sufficiently the depth and rigour of geographical knowledge and skill which is required by National Curriculum. Only some of the planning is aligned closely to national requirements.

History

87. On the days of the inspection history was not being taught. In Key Stage 1, the work planned falls naturally into the topic theme and a look at how life was different in the past at a given time. There is evidence of specific work on chronology. In Key Stage 2, the planned local study complements the geography theme and will involve the use of log books, registers and old maps of the area.

88. There is evidence of work done on times and events in the past and topic books have been created which document thoroughly the work in history, geography and sometimes science over a period of time. However, this work does not cover adequately the National Curriculum content of knowledge and skills, and does not provide sufficiently the breadth nor the depth of learning. The required number of study units needs to be planned in detail and in relation to the perspectives and key elements required in the curriculum.

89. A scheme of work should be drawn up and implemented for both history and geography.

Art

90. Attainment in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory, and progress with clay is good as pupils learn and are able to use new techniques, such as modelling from a single piece of clay and using 'slip'.

91. The teaching is supportive with both adults in the classroom involved with pupils throughout the lesson, discussing pupils' aims and ways of achieving them.

92. During the inspection art was not taught in Key Stage 2.

93. Pupils have opportunities to work with paint, to work on line, tone and shade, close observation and perspective. Achievement would improve if the techniques were used regularly and more opportunities were given to explore and experiment with media. Some interesting work has been done combining techniques of dyeing, printing and brush work.

94. The opportunities provided need to be widened to explore tools, materials and techniques to give pupils the broad based opportunities for 'Investigating and Making' with a variety of media; and 3D resources, prints, artefacts are needed to develop their 'Knowledge and Understanding' of art and the work of other artists.

Music

95. No music was observed in Key Stage 1, although music is included in the daily act of worship.

96. In Key Stage 2, pupils generally attain standards that are at least appropriate to their age, in the lesson observed, and some pupils are attaining levels of instrumental skill and score reading which are more characteristic of Key Stage 3. However, attainment in singing is poor, with little control over diction, breathing or pitch.

97. The pupils make good progress in their instrumental work, building upon previously learnt skills and practising techniques.

98. Teaching in Key Stage 2 is very good. The teacher has good subject knowledge and high expectations of the pupils. Resources are of good quality and easily accessible. There is a good range of instruments to allow the pupils to experience a wide variety of sounds and to compose their own music. There was little evidence of other aspects of music, however, including singing.

99. The pupils are very enthusiastic, concentrate well and respond positively to the teacher's instructions. Behaviour is generally good, although the less able tend to lose interest and become disruptive if the lesson is too long. When the pupils are asked to sing, this is undertaken with little enthusiasm, and many pupils do not take a full part, for example in the songs in assembly.

Physical education

100. The pupils generally achieve appropriately. The majority are able to undertake the tasks set, with varying degrees of control and sensitivity. At Key Stage 1, pupils are able to travel in different ways, running and jumping, both on the floor and using apparatus. They are able to use different dismounts. At Key Stage 2, pupils are able to control their movements to express feelings, moods and ideas in response to music.

101. Progress is sound in both key stages. Pupils build upon skills learnt previously and improve their techniques through practice.

102. Teaching in physical education is sound in both key stages. The teachers have good subject knowledge and clear aims. Resources are appropriate and used well, and some use is made of demonstration, in order to help the pupils to improve their techniques. Good use is made of a teaching assistant, where available, in order to give groups of pupils sufficient attention.

103. The pupils are enthusiastic and generally behave well, although the wide range of age and ability can result in marked differences in performance and concentration. Some pupils are unaware of safety issues, and regularly run in front of another group, who are either running up to equipment or jumping off it.

104. The whole school attends swimming lessons each week, where they are taught in groups according to ability. However, swimming was not observed during the inspection.

PART C: INSPECTION DATA

Summary of inspection evidence

105. The inspection of Rathmell school was undertaken by a team of two additional inspectors for two and a half days, and a lay inspector for one day completing a total of six inspector days in school.

106. For the majority of time in school inspectors visited classes, talked with individuals and groups of children and evaluated the work they had done. A total of 15 hours was spent on classroom activities.

Key Stage	Key Stage 1	Key Stage 2	Total
No. of hours	7	8	15

In addition:

- * interviews were held with the headteacher, classteacher, all non-teaching staff and Chairman of Governors;
- * informal discussions were held on many occasions through the week with staff of the school and included the vicar of the local church who is also vice chair of the governing body;
- * informal conversations were held with pupils at playtimes and lunchtime;
- * a video recording of the school band entertaining at last summer's local Gala was observed. Some of these pupils are in school at this time;
- * assemblies were attended;
- * the majority of pupils in school were heard reading and were questioned on their understanding and knowledge of books in general;
- * samples of work covering the full ability range were scrutinised in all year groups in the core subjects, the humanities and art;
- * the policy documents of the school and the school development plan were analysed;
- * attendance registers, some records kept on pupils and the teachers' planning documents were inspected;
- * the budget figures were analysed.

107. At the time of the inspection history was not being taught on the days the team was in school. Religious education was not inspected as the school is voluntary aided and will have

a section 13 inspection in the near future.

Data and indicators

PUPIL DATA

	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with Statements of SEN	Number of pupils on school's register of SEN	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
YR - Y5	29	1	3	0

TEACHERS AND CLASSES

Qualified teachers (YR - Y5)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent)	2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	15 : 1

Education support staff (YR - Y5)

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked each week	not known

Average class size

15

FINANCIAL DATA

Financial year:	1995/96
	£
Total Income	70,050
Total Expenditure	74,042
Expenditure per pupil	2,553
Balance brought forward from previous year	12,528
Balance carried forward to next year	8,535

PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out:	29
Number of questionnaires returned:	11
Percentage return rate:	37.93

Responses (percentage of answers in each category):

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school	47.4	36.8	10.5	5.3	
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	84.2	15.8			
The school handles complaints from parents well	61.1	33.3		5.6	
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	42.1	52.6		5.3	
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	63.2	31.6			5.3
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	73.7	26.3			
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	50.0	33.3	16.7		
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	52.6	26.3	21.1		
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	63.2	26.3	10.5		
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	68.4	26.3		5.3	
My child(ren) like(s) school	84.2	10.5	5.3		

Other issues raised by parents

A wide range of comments was made, but significantly, the most commonly mentioned features relate to the helpful and approachable nature of the staff, and the care and support which they are able to give in classes which are small.

This clearly contributes to the happiness of children in the school and their ability to learn and make progress.

Parents are happy with the school and appear very supportive towards it.

Staff are friendly and approachable.

Small class numbers are an advantage. Attainment and progress good.

Family atmosphere. Happy with values of school. School encourages good manners and behaviour.

Communications from school good, in a friendly style. Early contact with parents if behavioural difficulties.

Written reports good but some parents would like to know how their child compares with others.

Positive behaviour charts. Good support from staff especially at times of difficulty.

Good to have a volunteer teacher to support special educational needs.

Varied views on homework.

Poor behaviour dealt with promptly and fairly.

Parents have not been asked to help in classrooms - various reasons offered.

Feeling that school would be open to suggestions or complaints.

Parents pleased that staff are concerned about childrens' safety.

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