

INSPECTION REPORT

MEADOWSIDE COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Knaresborough

LEA area: North Yorkshire

Unique reference number: 121443

Headteacher: Mr A Holmes

Reporting inspector: Mrs L Clark
25431

Dates of inspection: 4 - 7 February 2002

Inspection number: 230357

Full inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior school

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 5 - 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Halfpenny Lane
Knaresborough
North Yorkshire

Postcode: HG5 0SL

Telephone number: 01423 866207

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr J Forster

Date of previous inspection: June 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
25431	Mrs L Clark Registered inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Art and design French Provision for children in the foundation stage.	What sort of school is it? The school's results and achievements How well are the pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further?
1165	Mr P Dannheisser Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
14591	Dr R Perkin Team inspector	English Music Physical education Equal opportunities Special educational needs English as an additional language	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils? How well is the school led and managed?
17857	Mr D Walters Team inspector	Science Design and technology History Geography Religious education	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Meadowside County Primary School is an average sized school with 213 pupils on roll aged from four to 11 years. The school serves a small residential area on the north east of Knaresborough. About 35 per cent of pupils come from outside the immediate area. The pupils' attainment on entry to the school is slightly below average and reflects the very wide range of social and economic backgrounds of the pupils. Although the percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals falls within the average range at 10 per cent, a large proportion of parents are employed seasonally or have several part-time jobs. Ten per cent of pupils have special educational needs which is below average; these needs, however, include specific learning difficulties, multi-sensory impairment and autism. The proportion of pupils with statements of special educational needs is slightly above the national average. A small number of pupils come from other European countries, two of whom are at an early stage of learning English. The majority of pupils have had some pre-school education, about two-thirds in the playgroup situated within the school grounds. The school is currently over subscribed and additional teachers are employed to keep infant class sizes small.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a highly effective school in which pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who are learning English as an additional language, achieve very well. The school is exceptionally successful at incorporating all pupils and enabling them to achieve and to develop. Excellent provision is made for pupils and the quality of teaching and of pupils' learning is very good throughout the school. Standards are well above average and exceptionally high in information and communication technology (ICT). The leadership and management of the school are excellent. The school gives very good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards are well above average in English, mathematics, science, art and history; they are above average in all other subjects and very high in ICT.
- Teaching is very good in all classes with many excellent lessons throughout the school and enables all pupils to achieve very well.
- The school has excellent procedures for promoting good behaviour and as a result behaviour is very good, pupils have excellent attitudes to their work and attendance is well above average.
- The quality of leadership and management is excellent and with the excellent support of the governing body ensures that standards of teaching and learning are consistently high for pupils of different levels of attainment.
- The school makes excellent provision for pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is excellent.
- The school offers a very rich curriculum, enhanced by excellent links with neighbouring schools, a wide range of visits and visitors and very good support from parents.

What could be improved

- There are no significant areas for development and so there are no key issues.

The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made very good improvement since the last inspection in June 1997 when there were no key issues for action. The recommendations of the last report, intended to help the school maintain its high standards, have been fully met. As well as implementing a consistent approach to

managing the behaviour of a small minority of pupils with behavioural difficulties as recommended, the school has thoroughly revised its systems for behaviour management. As a result, behaviour is very good throughout the school, attendance is well above average, pupils' attitudes and enthusiasm for school are excellent and standards have improved in most subjects. Financial management is excellent, following the recommendations contained in the last report and so is the quality of leadership and management. Other aspects of the school have made very good improvement, namely the quality of teaching and learning, which are now very good, and the provision for pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and the provision for pupils with special educational needs which are excellent.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	A	C	C	D
Mathematics	A	D	C	D
Science	B	E	C	C

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

Standards are much higher than the most recent grades indicate. The group of eleven-year-olds tested in 2001 had many unavoidable changes of teacher in Year 5. The co-ordination of science was also affected and partially explains the fluctuating standards in science during that time. Although the comparison with similar schools appears to be unfavourable in the above table, this reflects the slightly larger than average proportion of lower attaining pupils, some of whom had special educational needs, in that particular year group. The current improvement in standards is the result of changes in the management of science and extremely good teaching in Year 5 and 6 as well as excellent provision for pupils with special educational needs. The trend in the school's results has been a little below the national trend in the past two years. However, the school's targets reflect an improving trend which inspection judgements support, confirming that pupils in other year groups in the junior classes are also performing at a higher level than that expected of their age.

By the age of eleven, almost all pupils attain at least the level expected of their age with about two-thirds attaining more highly. Standards clearly improve year on year and rise from above average overall at age seven to well above average at eleven. Inspection judgements are that standards for the present Year 6 are well above average in English, mathematics and science and above the average expected of seven-year-olds in these subjects. In ICT, standards are well above average for seven-year-olds and exceptionally high for eleven-year-olds with virtually all pupils performing three years' ahead of their age. At age eleven, standards are well above the expected level in art, history, dance and singing and above average in all other subjects including religious education. There was insufficient evidence to give a judgement on standards in French. At age seven, pupils attain above the expected standards in all subjects apart from design and technology and history where standards are broadly in line with those expected of their age.

Pupils achieve very well for they enter school with slightly below average attainment in most areas of learning. They achieve very well in the reception year, with the majority of children attaining at least the standard expected of their age and a small proportion attaining more highly. Overall, pupils throughout the school, including those with special educational needs or those who are learning English as an additional language, make very good progress. Higher attaining pupils also progress very well and those identified as being gifted or talented make very good progress often because of the skilled extra teaching they receive.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Excellent; pupils clearly enjoy coming to school and are enthusiastic about their lessons. They readily take part in all aspects of school life because they feel valued. Pupils are extremely well motivated.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good; pupils' behaviour is very good in lessons, assemblies and in the playground. Pupils consider there is no bullying or oppressive behaviour at the school. They are very sensitive and caring, respecting the needs of others.
Personal development and relationships	Excellent; this is a distinctive feature of the school and at all times, whether in lessons or at play, pupils' personal development is fostered by the excellent relationships they have with each other and with adults in the school.
Attendance	Very good; attendance is much better than average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Very good	Very good	Very good

Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that the teaching is adequate and strengths outweigh weaknesses.

The quality of teaching and of pupils' learning is very good. Teaching is very good or better in over half the lessons and it is good in all others. In over a quarter of lessons teaching is excellent. Excellent teaching was seen in many classes and in different subjects. Teachers have very good knowledge of the subjects of the primary curriculum. In the mixed age infant classes, teachers plan very well together to ensure that pupils receive similar experiences in each class. Support assistants are used very well to help pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who are acquiring English as an additional language, to learn at a very good rate.

The teaching of English, including literacy, and mathematics, including numeracy, is very good with a high proportion of excellent teaching. The teaching of ICT is excellent. Specially trained support assistants teach specific ICT skills and in class lessons teachers incorporate the use of ICT in most subjects so that pupils have many opportunities to learn. Teaching is very good in art, music and physical education and in science in junior classes. Excellent teaching also takes place in these subjects. Teaching is good in all other subjects. The teaching of children in the reception year is very good. The adults share the supervision of activities very well to help children to learn. Many of the activities are highly imaginative and develop children's independence very well. Throughout the school there is a very good rapport between adults and children and there is often a great sense of enjoyment in lessons. Teachers find interesting ways to begin and end lessons so that they maintain a high level of interest and concentration from their pupils. The quality of marking in some classes is excellent; in others it is less detailed.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good; the curriculum is very rich, significantly enhanced by excellent links with the playgroup and local schools and by the extensive programme of visits and visitors.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Excellent; the provision for pupils with special educational needs is excellent and there is very high quality inclusion of all pupils in the life of the school.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Excellent; the provision for pupils who are learning English, as an additional language is excellent, enabling them to make very good progress.

Provision for pupils'	Excellent; the provision for pupils' personal development is a very
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personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	strong feature of the school and excellent opportunities for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development permeate all subjects and aspects of the school. Assemblies are of a consistently high quality.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good; the school cares very well for its pupils and helps them to achieve highly. There is excellent inclusion of pupils with specific needs.
How well the school works in partnership with parents	Very well; the school places much emphasis on working with parents. This makes a very good contribution to the school's excellent reputation locally and well above average standards nationally. There is a need to further develop and implement the existing plans so that assessments in all subjects are used to give sufficient information to parents in annual reports about the standards their children achieve and what they have to do to improve.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Excellent; the management delegates extremely well and this enables key staff to operate highly effectively. The very clear educational leadership is reflected throughout the school and is shared by adults and pupils alike.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Excellent; the contribution to the management of the school by an experienced and highly competent governing body is excellent.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good; the headteacher, staff and governors are fully aware of the school's strengths and its relative weaknesses largely because monitoring procedures are very effective.
The strategic use of resources	Excellent; resources are used extremely effectively to enable pupils to learn. All spending is evaluated in terms of its impact on standards and provision.

The accommodation is satisfactory in terms of space. Although the central area of the school is very well thought out and is used exceptionally effectively, some of the classrooms are a little cramped. Learning resources are satisfactory apart from ICT resources, which are of very good quality. The school is well staffed and there is a very good match of teachers and support staff to meet the demands of the curriculum.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
- Parents feel comfortable to come into school with any questions or problems. - Their children like coming to school. - Teaching is good and the teachers have high expectations of their children. - The school helps their children to become more mature and responsible and they behave well. - Their children make good progress	Parents would like to see a more extensive range of activities outside lessons.

Questionnaires were returned by over 90 per cent of parents and nearly all expressed the above positive views; these views the inspection team agrees with wholeheartedly. The team disagrees with parents about the range of activities outside lessons. The range of extra-curricular activities is in fact rather better than normally seen with additional clubs such as the after school clubs, as well as the wide range of educational visits and visitors to school to supplement after school activities in sport and music. In addition, pupils have many opportunities to use the computers during lunch hours and playtimes.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Standards are well above the national average in English, mathematics and science for eleven-year-olds. Seven-year-olds achieve above the standards expected of their age in all three subjects. This represents very good achievement for most children enter school with slightly below average skills in most areas of learning. Throughout the school, pupils make very good progress because they are very well taught in each class.

2. The school's results in the national tests at ages seven and eleven tend to vary from year to year according to the wide range of abilities in particular year groups and the distribution of pupils with special educational needs. The results of the national tests in 2001 indicated that standards were close to the national average in all three subjects, with performance in science less consistent than in English and mathematics. The trend in the school's results has been a little below the national trend in the past two years. The apparent decline in standards at this time can partly be explained by individual year groups and the many changes of teacher the particular group of eleven-year-olds tested in 2001 had in Year 5. In particular, the co-ordination of science was affected and the current improvement in science can be directly attributed to the change in management of this subject. Comparisons with the results in similar schools in 2001 again are unfavourable, reflecting the slightly larger than average proportion of lower attaining pupils in this particular year group.

3. While in several classes boys significantly outnumber girls and in last year's national test results for eleven-year-olds, boys were markedly more successful than girls, boys and girls achieve equally well in all subjects because teachers are well aware of the needs of all their pupils and plan for them accordingly. Pupils with special educational needs, including those with behavioural and emotional problems and those with physical difficulties, make very good progress and their needs are catered for in an excellent fashion. Higher attaining pupils also progress very well and those identified as being gifted or talented make very good progress often because of the extra skilled tuition made available to them. Pupils with English as an additional language make very good progress because of the excellent provision made for their needs.

4. The school has carried out comprehensive analyses of individual pupils' performance according to gender and examined in detail the questions pupils attempted or found difficult in the national tests. This has revealed that in both mathematics and science pupils needed more practice at solving abstract problems and that pupils had comparative weaknesses in extended writing because they had fewer opportunities to practise these than formerly. With characteristic thoroughness, the leadership and management has tackled these in all year groups with the resulting rise in standards. The school's targets reflect this improving trend and other year groups in the junior section of the school are on course to perform as well as the current Year 6. Inspection judgements are that standards improve year on year and rise from above average at seven to well above average by the age of eleven.

5. There are several reasons for pupils' very good achievements in English, mathematics and science. The subjects are very well led and managed by co-ordinators who have an excellent grasp of how to raise attainment by adopting and adapting national schemes of work and by monitoring carefully the quality of teaching and pupils' work. In English, the national strategy for literacy has helped to improve the quality of teaching. Pupils have many opportunities to use their skills in literacy in other subjects. The level of expectation is much higher and there is some inspirational teaching, particularly in relation to genre, and rich opportunities to write with feeling and to be creative. In mathematics, the implementation of the national strategy for numeracy is similarly successful and has inspired some inventive teaching as well as very good planning well matched to foster individual pupils' understanding of mathematics. Pupils are encouraged to use mathematics in other subjects. Pupils' learning in both English and mathematics benefit in infant classes from

specialist teaching for lower attaining pupils and for those who have special educational needs or who are learning English as an additional language. This means that when pupils enter the junior classes they have a very firm grounding in the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. Support assistants throughout the school are very well trained and employ their skills to the full. Standards have improved in science because of improvements in teaching, which is often very good and sometimes excellent. Pupils now have many more opportunities to investigate and explore scientific concepts through practical activities. The consistent use of appropriate mathematical and scientific vocabulary throughout the school has also contributed to the rise in standards.

6. In ICT, standards are exceptionally high for eleven-year-olds and well above the level expected of seven-year-olds. ICT is used extremely well in other subjects and this factor, combined with intensive teaching of skills for every pupil each week, gives pupils ample opportunity both to learn and to practise their skills. The teaching of the subject is excellent, as is the assessment of what pupils learn and what they need to know. The system of certificates shared by local schools and awarded when pupils have attained a certain level of expertise, has also helped to raise the level of expectation of what pupils can achieve. Currently, pupils' attainment is three years ahead of the level expected of eleven-year-olds.

7. Standards at age eleven are well above average in art and history and above average in all other subjects. Standards are also high in singing and in swimming. In religious education, standards are above average. Seven-year-old pupils attain above average standards in all subjects apart from history and design and technology where standards are broadly average. Standards for infant pupils in these two subjects reflect the bias at this stage in the curriculum towards developing skills in speaking, listening, art and literacy rather than historical skills of enquiry. Standards are broadly average by the end of the reception year with a small proportion of children attaining more highly.

8. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress. The generous staffing level means that these pupils can be given a great deal of assistance in most lessons and this enhances their understanding of tasks, their concentration and their progress towards the targets set in their individual education plans. Those with statements of special need are provided with a learning support assistant and also make very good progress. Staff are aware of the needs of pupils learning English as an additional language and suitable support is made available as required, enabling them to make very good progress. Gifted and talented pupils have been identified in music and physical education and they make very good progress in the aspects in which they show flair.

9. Since the last inspection, standards have improved in most subjects. This rise in standards is largely due to the excellent leadership supported through an excellent structure of management and the shared commitment shown by pupils and staff alike. The school sets itself appropriately challenging targets which it is likely to meet.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development are excellent. Reported as good at the previous inspection, action taken since then has had a significant impact on making the school a truly orderly community in which all are valued and appreciated. Pupils are very proud of their school. The enthusiastic manner in which they sing the school song shows how much they enjoy being there. The pupils' enthusiasm for school, commitment and hard work is having a very good impact on their rate of progress and achievement. As a result, attendance is very good, above the national average. The vast majority of parents believe that standards of behaviour at the school are good. They also comment favourably on the attitudes that the school promotes and the impact this has on their children's personal, social and emotional development. Inspection judgements support these opinions wholeheartedly. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are very well integrated into the life and work of the school and have excellent

attitudes to learning. Pupils with special programmes relating to behaviour or emotional difficulties make very good progress and are supported extremely successfully to behave well and to make very good progress in their learning.

11. Pupils are well motivated and their behaviour shows very good relationships exist in lessons. When teachers invite them to respond to questions, they do so politely and with enthusiasm. On most occasions they listen carefully and do not interrupt other speakers. In nearly every lesson, pupils sustain interest and attention, seek assistance when needed and are always ready to talk about the work they are doing. Classroom rules are applied consistently and fairly, making an effective contribution to the very good work ethic that characterises learning. Consequently, behaviour in lessons and around school is very good. In assemblies it is excellent. Pupils respond very well to the rewards and merits system because it recognises effort as well as attainment. During the inspection, no bullying or oppressive behaviour was observed and no pupil has been excluded during the current school year. As reported previously, pupils show respect for resources, as well as the school building and grounds. Pupils with English as an additional language are very well integrated into their classes and work confidently at their tasks.

12. The high quality of the care for pupils with special educational needs is a key factor in the excellent attitudes they have to learning. The skills of teachers and support assistants alike ensure that pupils with special educational needs maintain their confidence and self-esteem and above all their enjoyment of learning; for example, a physically disadvantaged pupil had the confidence to volunteer to be a 'blocker' in an active ball game. Teachers and classroom assistants ensure that each pupil has a part in performances, such as class assemblies and music. This was especially evident in a Year 1/2 music lesson. Other pupils give help unselfconsciously, which successfully promotes all pupils' self-esteem. All pupils are willing to 'have a go', and they predict, investigate and suggest ideas. This is because they know they will be taken seriously and not made to look foolish in front of other members of the class. For example, Year 6 pupils discussing features of a landscape used their general knowledge confidently when challenged to give reasons for a particular feature. Children in the reception class have excellent attitudes to learning and enjoy playing games with their teacher, teasing her by pretending their lips are literally sealed.

13. Pupils' personal development is excellent, as are their relationships with each other and adults. Pupils of all ages show a high level of confidence when communicating with adults. Adults associated with the school present caring and supportive role models that show genuine care, affection and interest in the welfare and education of pupils. As a result, pupils are well settled into the school and prepared effectively for the next stage of their education. Many pupils have helpful roles around the classrooms and support school systems by acting as register and assembly monitors. Such responsibilities are carried out responsibly and conscientiously. The 'buddy' scheme helps both the older and younger pupils show care and understanding of the needs of other pupils. One of the distinguishing features in lessons judged to be excellent or very good is the quality of the opportunities for personal development. Pupils' choice of instruments that could reproduce the rhythm they wanted formed a significant part of a Year 1/2 music lesson. Similarly, in Year 3, pupils had to think carefully about the mathematical language needed to give directions about building three-dimensional shapes with plastic cubes, to a partner they could not see. Since the previous inspection, opportunities for pupils to show initiative have improved through their work with computers. Residential visits continue to support pupils' experience of group and personal responsibility successfully.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

14. The quality of teaching is very good throughout the school and excellent teaching was seen in many classes and in different subjects. Teaching is very good or better in over half the lessons and it is good in all others. In over a quarter of lessons teaching is excellent. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection, with a higher level of very good and excellent teaching. Inspection findings support parents' positive views.

15. Classroom management is very good and teachers have very good knowledge of the subjects of the primary curriculum. Teachers manage the large junior classes very well, in some cases reorganising the lay-out of the classroom to ensure that all pupils receive equal support and attention. Very careful planning ensures that both age groups in the infant classes receive appropriate attention. In junior classes, planning is also very good and teachers take time to think through imaginative ways of linking subjects. For example, in Year 6, close observational drawing of taut muscles is linked to science then to ICT and art as pupils go on to produce animated figures in two and three dimensions. Teachers choose resources carefully and so in an infant class, for example, pupils have the opportunity to touch and to talk about historical artefacts such as a washboard to develop their sense of the past. Because the teaching is never less than good, the rate of learning is brisk and in response to the high proportion of very good and excellent teaching pupils achieve very well.

16. The introduction of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy has had a positive impact on teaching, sharpening teachers' focus on making clear to pupils what they are to learn. The greater emphasis on teaching phonics and basic mathematical skills has also had a positive impact. Teachers often bring an imaginative element to introductions to literacy and numeracy lessons which immediately engages pupils' attention. Closing sessions are used equally well to clarify what has been learnt but also to offer new challenges; this especially benefits the learning of higher attaining pupils. The teaching of English, including literacy, and mathematics, including numeracy, is very good with a high proportion of excellent teaching. Teaching is also very good in art, music, and physical education and in science in junior classes. Some exceptional teaching was also seen in these subjects. The teaching of ICT is excellent, with a very well thought out balance of teaching specific ICT skills, which is undertaken by specially trained support assistants, as well as within ordinary class lessons, often in conjunction with other subjects. Teaching is good in all other subjects including science in infant classes. Some very good lessons were seen in design and technology.

17. The teaching of children in the reception year is very good. The teacher and nursery nurse share the supervision of activities very well to help children to learn. The teaching is highly imaginative and challenges higher attaining children as well as offering lower attaining children ample opportunities to learn through constructive play. Activities are very well thought out to develop independence and children learn to evaluate what they have learnt and to suggest improvements. There is a very good rapport between adults and children and a tremendous sense of fun often infuses lessons.

18. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is very good and sometimes, particularly in support of pupils with statements of special educational needs, excellent. Very efficient use of an extra very experienced teacher to work with individuals and small groups leads to very good progress for these pupils, particularly in English and mathematics. Support staff are very well trained and are deployed very effectively so that not only one or two individuals benefit but other pupils of similar levels of attainment are also very well supported. The targets set in individual programmes are specific and detailed and allow teachers to plan specially adapted work at the right level. Teachers also ensure that pupils with special educational needs receive their share of responsibilities in performing tasks around the classroom and school. Teachers' very well developed skills in the management of pupils ensure that pupils with behavioural or emotional problems make very good progress in developing their sense of what is required in the classroom and in relating to other pupils. The teaching of pupils with English as an additional language is very good, particularly in the way in which support and visiting staff are deployed to help their learning.

19. Where the quality of teaching is good there is an element which lifts it out of the ordinary. Much of the teaching is characterised by an individual approach and very good management of pupils. Resources are used very well and teachers set up many activities to help pupils to learn for themselves. Sometimes the pace of lessons can be a little too relaxed, particularly towards the end of morning or afternoon lessons in the infant or lower junior classes. Where the quality of teaching is very good, teachers use time particularly well because of the very good preparation which results

in pupils organising themselves and the resources they need quickly. These lessons set high standards and a very good rate of learning, creating an atmosphere in which it is all right to make a mistake because everyone can learn from it. Teachers adapt their explanations very well to the different levels of attainment within the class and as a result pupils are very responsive and there is a real sense of shared enjoyment.

20. Where the quality of teaching is excellent, teachers' innovative approach, often using pictures or diagrams and vocabulary specific to the subject, marks it out of the ordinary for it helps pupils to learn from visual and aural images and raises considerably pupils' understanding of what they do and the way they express it. The use of time is excellent and there is a real sympathy of understanding between teachers and pupils in their shared absorption in their work. For example, in an excellent art lesson, part of a sequence of lessons, incorporating English, based on characterisation, the teaching showed some 20 slides of paintings to give an impression of the work of an artist. The teacher invited the class to comment on common themes. The level of interest and the quality of response was high as pupils pointed out the 'dark, dull colours', the 'distinctive chin', 'like the way a young child would draw' as the teaching drew pupils to consider 'the inner sadness' or the 'muted tones' and the idea of 'representing without copying'. In other excellent lessons, the teaching generates imaginative and exciting ideas and pupils discuss animatedly with one another. The overall very good teaching throughout the school promotes an atmosphere of challenge, support and achievement in classrooms organised to meet the needs of a very wide range of abilities. Homework is used well to support the work done in class.

HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?

21. The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum of very high quality, an improvement since the last inspection. All subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education are taught and literacy and numeracy are appropriately prioritised. The curriculum for ICT is particularly strong, with teachers and pupils making excellent use of the very good resources for the subject to support most other subjects of the curriculum. The school's partnership with a national computer firm is also of great benefit. The availability of the computers at lunchtime provides even more opportunities for pupils to develop their skills. The national literacy strategy has been very effectively implemented, resulting in pupils' very good achievement. Particularly good features are the systematic teaching of basic reading and writing skills for younger pupils and the highly imaginative written work developed with older pupils. The national strategy for numeracy has been very effectively implemented and opportunities for mental calculation and solving problems are well developed in all classes. The curriculum gains greatly from a rich programme of visits and visitors and the provision of frequent opportunities for pupils to perform in front of others. For example, the residential visits for pupils in Year 5 and Year 6, as well as significantly benefiting their personal development, make a major contribution to pupils' learning in geography and physical education. Games skills are further developed by visiting coaches for basketball, tennis and rugby and regular visits to the swimming pool ensure very high standards in swimming for pupils by the time they leave the school. The music curriculum is enhanced by a wide range of instrumental lessons and opportunities for the choir and instrumentalists to perform in school and elsewhere. A visit from an elderly local resident made the pupils' study of World War II come alive. Visits to religious buildings and a nearby inter-faith centre enhance the curriculum for religious education. The curriculum for art and design and design technology is very imaginatively supported by the very high standard of display throughout the school and by the provision of many copies of great works of art for pupils to savour.

22. The curriculum for children in the reception class fully meets the requirements of the foundation stage of education. A good range of opportunities for learning is provided and the curriculum to develop children's knowledge and understanding of the world is particularly good. The curriculum for children is enhanced by the same provision for developing their ICT skills as older pupils in the school.

23. Excellent links with neighbouring schools further enhance the curriculum. A local special school sends its pupils to Meadowside to help prepare them for entry into mainstream education. The very close relationship with the playgroup that shares the school's site makes the start of school so much easier for children beginning in the reception class. Teachers from the high school visit to teach subjects such as drama and to help with performances. The local cluster of schools provides very strong mutual support and enables subject co-ordinators to share ideas and problems.

24. The programme of personal, social, health and citizenship education is very stimulating. The science curriculum includes attention to sex education and the dangers of drugs and the culture of care in the school ensures that excellent attention is paid to, for example, safety and care for others in physical education lessons. Insights into issues relating to democracy were provided for Year 6 pupils when, as part of their work on persuasive writing, they examined speeches of election candidates to see how they framed their points of view. Pupils experience issues related to the world of work through activities such as, for example, the very productive investigation undertaken by Year 5 pupils into the possibility of setting up a business to sell snacks at break-times, which involved contacting local businesses and realistically costing the project. The school's strong European links through the Comenius Project enable pupils to communicate with other pupils in schools in Belgium, Ireland and Norway. Pupils in Year 6 extend their international awareness further through their weekly lessons in French.

25. All subjects have useful policies and schemes of work which reflect the National Curriculum and guide teachers in their planning of lessons. The school curriculum benefits from long-term plans that give details about what each class will be learning about each term. Further detail is provided by well-developed medium term plans. These describe which objectives will be taught and often include details of how and when pupils will be assessed.

26. The school provides a good range of sporting and musical activities outside the normal school curriculum and pupils have opportunities to take part in musical and other performances and events as well as taking part in matches against other school in a number of sports. There is also an after-school club that is very well thought of by parents and pupils alike. Inspection judgement did not support the views of a minority of parents who were dissatisfied with the range of activities provided outside school.

27. The school provides very effective measures to ensure that all pupils have equal access to the curriculum. This is an extremely inclusive school. Very great care is taken to guarantee that pupils who need support to achieve to their full capacity receive it and that it is of very high quality. Pupils with English as an additional language are provided with sufficient language support and adapted work to enable them to receive the full curriculum. The excellent provision for pupils with special educational needs, which has improved since the last inspection when it was judged to be good, fully meets the requirements of the Code of Practice for pupils with special educational needs and the school is moving smoothly towards meeting the requirements of the new Code of Practice. Pupils receive the same curriculum as other pupils but it is adapted so that they can understand it and succeed in it. Any problems are identified at an early age and strategies are well thought out to help individuals. The support provided, both by teachers and learning support assistants, is of very high quality and very effectively organised. Individual education programmes, including those for pupils with emotional or behavioural needs, have clear targets for pupils to reach against which progress is reviewed regularly. Pupils with special educational needs are respected and valued members of the school.

28. Provision for pupils' personal development is excellent. Excellent opportunities for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development permeate the life of the school. There is considerable consistency in the way in which subjects contribute to this; the way in which pupils' work is shared and celebrated, for example, including the work of lower attaining pupils, raises self-esteem and builds confidence very effectively. The high quality of display combines academic quality with moral messages, often devised by the pupils. For example, the screen saver on a computer in the open

area repeats the school rules and pupils' reflections on their positive and their less pleasant experiences are displayed prominently. Pupils are able to see their own writing and art work alongside works by great writers and artists and are encouraged to emulate the best. The school's culture of sharing and praising others was extremely effectively modelled in a physical education lesson in Year 5, where pupils were encouraged to make constructive comments about other pupils' dance sequences. Pupils are encouraged to share their work with people from outside school as well; for example, one boy has his paintings exhibited at the local hospice. Pupils have opportunities to write in role from the viewpoint of others, thus developing an understanding of and sympathy for the plight of others; for example, pupils in Year 5 produced excellent poems in the shape of a tear or a fist sensitively expressing the feelings of both bully and victim. Composing their own myths, legends and fables after experiencing those of other cultures promotes understanding of the life style and beliefs of others. Younger pupils study life in an Indian village or have the opportunity to find out about a number of religions and beliefs from around the world.

29. The excellent wholehearted singing that characterises assemblies and music lessons and the increasingly varied music from around the world that pupils listen to promotes pupils' cultural development very effectively. Similar development results from the regular opportunities pupils have to perform music and plays for an audience; the confidence with which pupils from Year 1 and Year 2 performed the Little Red Hen's tale about sharing in front of the whole school and an audience of parents was admirable and very well received. Pupils also benefit from watching visiting theatre groups and from drama lessons taught by a teacher from the high school. There are productive opportunities to read plays and to perform them; pupils even produce their own versions of classics such as 'Romeo and Juliet' – though Shakespeare never thought of love between the families of the Peapods and the Peapads!

30. Very high quality assemblies are used extremely well to promote moral, social and cultural development as well as to involve pupils in celebration and reflection. The story of Maui from New Zealand and how he responded to a challenge was followed by the opportunity for pupils to think and pray about the challenges that they meet in their own lives. The school's merit system is consistently and sensitively applied and reinforced through messages in assemblies. The vitality and commitment when pupils sing the school song with its message of sharing and caring leaves no doubt that the opportunities provided by the school bear fruit in the way in which the pupils respond.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

31. The school has very good procedures for the care of the pupils. Pupils with special educational needs or English as a second language are identified early and are given very good support to help them make progress using the skills of support staff, learning assistants and a full time teacher who is available to provide extra help where needed. The school takes very great care to ensure that the needs of all its pupils are met and sometimes goes the extra mile to ensure this. For example, when a teacher observed that two boys were emotionally upset, she ensured that they were able to work quietly together on the computer with the classroom support assistant, who was briefed not only to help them with their computer-based task but also to give them an opportunity to discuss their problem with her. The school is also identifying pupils with special gifts or talents. It has yet to do this in a systematic way, but because of their careful tracking of test results, the school is able to follow the progress of pupils at all levels of ability.

32. The visitor is immediately struck by the happy, positive atmosphere in the school. Pupils are keen, busy, and enjoy exploring their interests and extending their experience of life. Staff have a good knowledge of their pupils. Pupils say that all the staff are kind and supportive. When asked what they especially like about the school they are quick to say their teachers.

33. All pupils feel included and involved. Pupils with special needs, behaviour problems or pupils whose home language is not English are included in all tasks. If they are withdrawn from the classroom, for example for additional reading support they follow a planned programme which fits in

with the work others are doing. A well-attended after-school club helps to ensure that all pupils have continuity and all round, care and nurturing experience. The school provides the accommodation and some of the facilities for this popular service.

34. There are proper child protection procedures. All staff and including midday staff have been trained and are suitably qualified and the school works closely with the relevant authorities. Pupils are carefully supervised at playtime and lunchtime. Staff are well aware of their responsibilities regarding health and safety and most staff have been trained in emergency first aid. In addition, three have had the full four-day training in first aid. First aid equipment and material are kept safely and pupils whose parents ask the school to administer regular medication are well looked after. Good records are made of incidents. Pupils are reminded of health and safety issues, for example during physical education lessons.

35. The school is clean and well maintained. The school is well aware of its health and safety responsibilities and is rigorous in its observation of proper procedures. A few minor issues became known during the inspection and the school is addressing these.

36. Pupils' personal, social and emotional development is carefully monitored. Pupils are aware of their individual targets, both academic and social. However, there is no standard way of helping pupils keep targets in focus. For some subjects these targets are put in the front of the relevant exercise book – but not all. Pupils who need help in their behaviour and attitude are tracked through individual plans that are reviewed with their parents. Logging sheets are kept so that progress can easily be monitored. Pupils' good behaviour is also tracked. Pupils work hard to earn 'merit stamps' and there are special assemblies to recognise their achievements. Younger pupils also receive a sheet which they can show at home, with reasons for their awards.

37. Pupils are helped to understand the beliefs and cultures of others. For example, in assembly they were told a Maori myth. As part of a religious lesson for all 6 and 7 year olds, a video was shown about Sikhism. After this, their teachers dressed in the traditional costumes of Sikhs and with great respect showed pupils how this faith is expressed in dress and custom. This was the first of three lessons on the subject. The experience was interesting and fun for pupils and adults as well of educational benefit.

38. Procedures for testing and assessing pupils' progress are very good for English, mathematics and science but less well developed in other subjects. The results of assessment are very well used to guide lesson planning in the subjects mentioned above. Pupils' progress can be followed using data analysed by a computer program. Elements in the curriculum, which need reinforcing, can easily be identified and remedial action taken. At its best, for example for English, there is a mass of useful data collected from statutory and optional testing of pupils' attainment as they grow older. All the results are carefully analysed to produce a picture of individuals' strengths and that of the year group. This data is acted on to affect the ways that lessons are planned. To some extent there is too much data available and the school is rightly considering how best to rationalise the collection of results so as to optimise the efficiency of the process.

39. The data also enables the school to consider whether there are any significant differences in learning between groups of pupils - for example between girls and boys. In other subjects, assessment is limited and as yet not used as fully. However, staff do evaluate the learning taking place within lessons and adapt their lesson plans to take this into account for their class and for individual pupils. They do this by collecting in work, by observation and asking good diagnostic questions at the end of lessons to gauge if there are areas of learning which need reinforcing. Swimming attainment is assessed and recognised with badges and awards. The school acknowledges that the focus of assessment tends to prioritise English, mathematics and science, and that these efforts will need to be broadened to make more assessment formal in most taught subjects.

40. The assessment of pupils with special educational needs is very good. As soon as a pupil is identified as having difficulties, these are assessed and strategies are put in place to deal with the

problem. A detailed individual programme is written and progress towards the targets is assessed and recorded regularly, with new targets set termly. The provision specified in statements of special educational need is fully implemented. In addition to pupils on the register of special educational needs, a separate record is kept of pupils with medical or other personal needs, which are carefully monitored. When necessary, the school has adapted the accommodation to meet particular needs.

41. Procedures for monitoring attendance and punctuality are very good and clearly successful. A record is kept of the few pupils who are late. The school works closely with the educational welfare officer when necessary. Registers conform to legal requirements. Attendance is well above the national norms and there are very few absences which are not satisfactorily explained.

42. There are very good, structured opportunities for pupils to discuss feelings, attitudes and behaviour with each other. This work is being done in assemblies, and science lessons dealing with health and physical development. Issues of health and safety, drugs, cleanliness and relationships are covered and pupils have other experiences that help them mature into responsible and caring individuals including religious education lessons and visiting health experts. A special discussion time is set aside for younger pupils to help them express ideas and learn how to relate and to deal with problems. For example in one lesson, sitting in a circle, they took turns to say how they felt about snow and then, how they might help someone in the group who was a bit sad. The school has no formal programme of work associated with the personal, social, health and citizenship as currently issues tend to be dealt with as they arise.

43. Many pupils, especially in the older years, are given tasks to help them develop a sense of responsibility and participation. For example, they help younger pupils in the playground, at lunch, and during indoor play at lunchtimes on rainy days. Pupils also contribute to assemblies by working computerised projection system, the audio system, and organising furniture. Their very good behaviour and demeanour suggests that the school could take this process forward throughout the school and encourage more participation in the organisation of the school.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

44. The analysis of the parents' questionnaires and the comments made at the parents' meeting held before the inspection were predominantly supportive. A very high proportion of people responded and they expressed very positive views of the school. The school has maintained its very strong links with parents since the last inspection. About one third of parents come from outside the local area and they clearly feel that their journey is worthwhile. Some parents went out of their way to praise the work of the school, its ethos and standards. Some concern was expressed about one year group who, because of staff illness had had temporary teachers. In addition, there was a view that expectations, especially of the more able pupils, could be higher. Parents would also like to see the school provide a wider range of extra-curricular activities. Parents of children in the reception class appreciated the helpful procedures to ensure their children had a good start to school.

45. Parents say that the school works closely with them and keeps them well informed. Parents welcome the newsletters, which regularly include information about events. They are also sent information each term about what their children will be learning. A recent newsletter was illustrated and its presentation helped to make it interesting and accessible. Notices in front of the reception class remind parents what their children will be learning and what resources parents might want to bring in from home. This has a very good impact on children's learning.

47. Parents have a very positive view of the school's provision for pupils with special educational needs and increasingly parents of such children are joining the school from outside its immediate area. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are kept fully informed of their children's progress and, whenever possible, are fully involved in their children's learning. The school maintains close links with the parents of pupils learning English as an additional language.

47. Parents say they feel very comfortable about approaching the school with problems and all parents spoken with during the inspection said that they felt that staff were always very willing to listen to their concerns. One parent said that the school is open, welcoming, and friendly –‘people want to be part of it’. The school makes considerable efforts to involve parents.

48. At the end of the year, parents discuss reports on their children's academic progress. Pupils are encouraged to write their own self-evaluation in a confidential diary. The school's reports on pupils' progress are quite brief and concentrate mainly on what the pupil had been learning, rather than the standards reached in all subjects and consequent targets for the future. Nevertheless, reports and the simple pupil profiles provide useful background information for the well attended meetings with parents.

49. Parental involvement with the school is very good. Many parents come in to help – usually to read with pupils on a regular basis and to run a weekly book club. Parents support their children's efforts by attending special events such as special assemblies and class assemblies, which are well attended. Parents accompany pupils on visits and there is a regular rota of helpers for swimming. The Parent Teachers' Association is very well supported. A large group organise events. These are very well publicised through letters and notices. These activities enhance the school and wider community as well as raising useful funds.

50. Parents are given opportunities to help their children's learning at home with homework, for example hearing children read at home. This has a positive impact in pupils' confidence in reading. Parents are encouraged to record comments in reading diaries. Parents are invited to be involved in the regular reviews of the individual education plans for those pupils with special educational needs.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

51. The leadership of the headteacher and the management of key staff are excellent. A major strength of the management of the school is in the quality of the headteacher's delegation to other staff. The extremely capable deputy headteacher and the curriculum co-ordinators have the power to act independently within the very clear brief laid down for them. Roles are extremely clearly drawn up, particularly in regard to the specific roles of the headteacher and the deputy, so that the senior management team operates extremely effectively. A real strength of the arrangement is that, while giving a large measure of autonomy, the headteacher makes it clear that he is always there if needed. Both leadership and management have strengthened since the last inspection.

52. An example of the arrangement is seen in the way in which the excellent provision for pupils with special educational and other needs is managed. The headteacher is the special needs coordinator and he works very closely with staff to ensure the best possible provision for all pupils who have educational and other needs. The deputy headteacher has a clear role in dealing with welfare issues relating to these pupils. The school has an extremely strong commitment to the inclusion of pupils, whatever their individual needs, in the full life of the school and spends its money extremely efficiently in fulfilling that commitment. For example, it provides a computer for each teacher to use at home for writing individual education plans for those who need them in their class. The governor with oversight of special educational needs is the head of a children's special unit, who, along with the governing body, wholeheartedly supports the school's intentions and is generous with his time and expertise. The very high quality support staff are used to the greatest benefit of pupils and teachers and support staff receive appropriate training for the particular needs of the pupils they work with. The use of outside agencies is also very efficiently managed. When necessary, parents are provided with support to enable them to play a full part in their child's development. The shift to the new Code of Practice is being managed very efficiently and documentation relating to special educational needs is thorough, very well organised and

appropriate. The monitoring of pupils' needs is of a very high quality and reviews, individual education plans and statements show an appropriate involvement of parents, pupils and outside agencies. The co-ordinator for special educational needs takes responsibility for managing arrangements for pupils with English as an additional language and does so extremely effectively.

53. The school's aims and values, which are clearly set out in its development plan, its prospectus and its excellent equal opportunities policy, are thoroughly and extremely consistently reflected in all areas of the life of the school. For example, the very high standard of display celebrates pupils' achievements while presenting them with the highest quality examples to attain to. Displays promote pupils' personal development as well as their academic achievement; for example, infant pupils design brightly coloured posters interpreting rules of behaviour and these are prominently displayed. The school's outward vision is shown in its links with schools in Europe and its teaching of French. The whole ethos of the school was summed up in an infant class assembly attended by the whole school and the parents of pupils in the class: the pupils' performance was excellent; every child played a part; the moral, spiritual, social and cultural messages were clear and appropriate; and the school song, with its strong commitment to excellence in achievement and in personal development, was tunefully sung with enormous enthusiasm by all the pupils and staff.

54. The excellent governing body has a wide range of skills and experience, with an effective committee structure and strong chairpersons of committees. It is extremely capably led by a very experienced chair and vice-chair, both of whom have wide experience of school leadership in their own right. The governing body and the school work very closely and effectively together as a team, with a clear understanding of appropriate roles and functions. The governors know the school extremely well and individual governors are involved with day to day activities in the school. Each governor is attached to a class, for example, and the chair visits the school to hear readers every week. The governing body makes an excellent contribution to the life of the school.

55. The school's strategy for performance management works very well, with professional development closely linked to the school's needs as identified in the effective school development plan. The arrangement by which a senior member of staff is not attached to a particular class in order to work with individuals and small groups of pupils and to provide release time for co-ordinators to monitor teaching and manage their subjects works very well. Induction arrangements for newly qualified teachers and for teachers new to the school are excellent.

56. The school development plan shows evidence of impressive strategic planning. The school's priorities are appropriate; they are identified after careful review and evaluation and, often, substantial consultation with parents and the community. National test results are carefully analysed and compared to those of similar schools and action taken as a result. Financial planning is of an extremely high quality and specific grants are used most effectively for their designated purpose; for example, the school's spending on pupils with special educational needs is justified by the very good progress those pupils make. Priorities are prudently costed and spending takes place only after careful consideration of whether it provides the best value possible in terms of its impact on standards and quality of education. Day to day administration of the budget and the running of the school is very efficiently dealt with by the financial secretary who fills many roles extremely effectively. The school makes excellent use of information and communication technology in many aspects of its life and work.

57. The school's accommodation is satisfactory and is used very well. The central area provides a stimulating work area for small groups and individuals as well as an arena for performances; it is also an excellent vantage point from which to observe the life of the school. The small classrooms, designed for smaller numbers than exist in the junior classes, are used well by the teachers, who manage to provide a very high quality curriculum in spite of being cramped for space. The potential of the outside accommodation is effectively exploited though a lack of large play equipment limits the reception children's play. Resources are satisfactory for most subjects but are excellent for information and communication technology; they are used to very good effect. The library is central to the school and is adequately stocked with up-to-date books. There is a very good match of teachers and support staff to the school's needs and they are used extremely

effectively to promote pupils' learning and to improve the quality of education in the school. There is an extremely strong shared commitment to improve and an excellent capacity to maintain and extend the very high standards that exist at present.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

There are no significant areas for development and so there are no key issues. The following minor areas for improvement should be considered:

- (1) Further develop and implement the existing plans so that assessments in all subjects are used to give sufficient information to parents in annual reports about the standards their children achieve and what they have to do to improve.
- (2) Take account of some of the excellent practice that exists in some parts of the school to ensure a consistent implementation of the school's marking policy.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	47
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	33

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	13	13	21	0	0	0	0
Percentage	28	28	44	0	0	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. [When the total number is substantially less than 100, add: Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than three percentage points.

[Where the total is close to or greater than 100, use only the first sentence.]

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	0	213
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	20

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	22

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	2

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	15
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	6

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.7
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2
National comparative data	0.5

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	17	13	30

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	16	17
	Girls	13	13	12
	Total	27	29	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	90 (93)	97 (100)	97 (100)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	16	17	17
	Girls	13	12	13
	Total	29	29	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	97 (93)	97 (97)	100 (93)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001			36

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	25	21	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	69 (79)	58 (69)	86 (79)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	25	21	20
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	69 (72)	58 (79)	56 (83)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Numbers of boys and girls have not been included because the number of girls is ten or fewer.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	100
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	3	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

This table gives the number of exclusions of pupils of compulsory school age, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Teachers and classes**Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20.6
Average class size	26

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	3.6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	129

Financial information

Financial year	2000-01
	£
Total income	416,922
Total expenditure	412,648
Expenditure per pupil	1,947
Balance brought forward from previous year	16,460
Balance carried forward to next year	20,734

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	214
Number of questionnaires returned	195
Percentage response rate	92

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	67	29	3	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	49	45	4	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	34	62	3	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	29	57	11	1	2
The teaching is good.	54	41	1	1	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	33	56	8	2	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	70	24	4	1	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	49	46	3	1	2
The school works closely with parents.	33	51	9	3	4
The school is well led and managed.	46	42	6	2	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	42	54	2	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	21	37	20	10	12

The range of extra-curricular activities is rather better than normally seen. There are additional clubs such as the after school club, as well as the wide range of educational visits and visitors to school to supplement after school activities in sport and music. In addition, pupils have many opportunities to use the computers during lunch hours and playtimes.

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

58. When children enter the reception class the range of attainment is very wide, reflecting the full range from very low to above average. Overall, attainment at this stage is just below average. By the end of the year, the children have made very good progress, learning a great deal from the very good teaching they receive. As a result, most children are likely to achieve the level expected of their age with a small proportion achieving more highly. In this particular year group, many of the youngest children are boys and their attainment reflects their immaturity. The teaching caters very well indeed for the extremely wide variation in attainment levels and makes very good provision for children with special educational needs, for those who are learning English as an additional language as well as for those who need longer to mature. They receive the type of education and individual support they need. The teaching makes very good use of assessment. Adults keep detailed records in children's books so that children's progress is very carefully charted and work can be devised to suit their stage of development. This means that the children can achieve well.

Personal, social and emotional development

59. Children enter the reception class with widely different levels of attainment. By the end of the reception year, most children attain at least the standards expected of their age with a small proportion attaining above that level. They achieve well as a result of the very good teaching they receive. The children quickly learn to listen carefully, knowing that it will be important for them to understand what activities they will have to choose from during the day. They understand the classroom routines and quickly tidy up after themselves. Children are expected to behave responsibly and sensibly and to take turns. Two children are chosen each week to take the registers to the school office, for example. The very good quality of teaching ensures that children have special times to talk in front of others. These times are used very well to promote children's personal, social and emotional development. For example, when one child was feeling sad, the others all helped to think of what they could do to cheer him up, thus learning how to express friendship as well as appreciating the importance of helping others. Although some children are still at the stage of playing alongside rather than with others, by the end of the year most are able to work with a partner and are well placed to learn in a more formal situation. They behave very well and their concentration is good. They respond very well to the interesting activities adults prepare for them and are busy and happy.

Communication, language and literacy

60. Children's knowledge of letters and their sounds and their ability to communicate through speech and writing are slightly below the level expected of children when they start school. By the end of the reception year, they have achieved well and standards are likely to be at least in line with those expected. The very wide range of attainment means that the teaching has to be very carefully planned so as to develop each children's skills so they fulfil their potential. Through a mixture of formal and informal activities, children learn through the course of the year that print and pictures convey meaning. The quality of teaching is very good. The teacher's lovely quiet manner imposes an orderly response on the children. The excellent reading of stories instantly engages pupils' attention and they begin to predict plausible next stages of the story. They join in, reading words they know, with great delight, while the teacher uses her voice, expression and gestures extremely well to involve the children and control their responses. The resources for learning are very well chosen. Specially made books with a variety of fasteners for children to choose from invite children to learn. The teacher gives the children the maximum independence possible; for example, to choose which part of the story they would like to draw. Additional support is very carefully targeted, so, for example a child learning English as an additional language tells an adult 'I've drawn a pig. Now I'm going to draw the pond' and did so. Tasks are very carefully prepared and adults question well, helping the children to respond more fully, in sentences. As a result, children become more

confident and articulate communicators. Higher attaining children achieve above average standards. They begin to recognise punctuation, some distinguishing between a question mark and a 'shouting mark'. Those children whose level of achievement was well below average at the start of the year begin to recognise and to write their own names and average attaining children begin to copy words and to write the initial sounds of others.

Mathematical development

61. Children's understanding and use of mathematical language and number recognition are below average when they begin school. They achieve well and by the end of the reception year are on course to attain standards which are in line overall with those expected of their age. A small number of children attain more highly. The quality of teaching is very good and many different but complementary activities are planned to develop the children's understanding of mathematics. During the week, all children are expected to do specific mathematical tasks which the teacher and nursery nurse carefully assess, monitoring their progress. At the same time, children have the freedom to choose from many other related mathematical activities and so set their own level of challenge. Most children recognise the numbers 1 to 6 and begin to add and subtract with a fair degree of accuracy. Children concentrate very well and higher attaining children quickly completed their task of drawing round different coins in the appropriate columns. Average attaining children worked hard at counting out pennies to 'purchase' toys from the shop. The quality of assistance given to children by adults is very good and well directed to enable children to learn. For example, support assistants working with children with English as an additional language helped them to recognise 4p and use it. Lower attaining children enjoyed the tactile experience of finding 'treasure' in soapy water and then trying to count out the coins into an adult's hand. Activities are extremely well thought out and encourage children to learn to share. The adults in the class have an excellent rapport with the children and the teacher's sensitivity as to when to redirect the children's attention or to change tasks ensures that they are kept happy and busy. This helps them to learn very well.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

62. Children enter the reception class with a very wide range of knowledge and understanding. By the end of the year they have gained considerable experience and as a result most are on course to reach the expected standard and a small number to exceed the standard expected of their age. They are very well taught. The teaching is most thoughtful and has some excellent features. Children use their growing knowledge to tease their teacher, pretending, for example, during registration that their lips are sealed 'with sticky tape'. Children were keen to show their homework, a picture they had drawn of their home with their address, and then gasped with delight when the teacher showed them her homework, a detailed map showing where every single one of them lives, colour coded to match their groupings in class. The quality of explanation was excellent as the teacher demonstrated how maps are made, using aerial photographs, explaining to the children that they have to imagine that they are 'birds in the sky, really high up, looking down.' The children were absolutely fascinated and when it was time to look at the street plan asked excitedly, 'Where's me?' Through discussion, the teaching helps children to see differences between the houses they have drawn. One child pointed out that the wiggly lines he had drawn were all the drainpipes he had noticed and a higher attaining child had attempted perspective. The children comment positively on each other's work, saying 'that's a nice drawing' and most agree that they would not like to live in 'an igloo made of ice'. The very well prepared and organised activities lead to very high levels of learning and concentration. Through adding green food colouring to large and small blocks of ice, average and lower attaining children can easily grasp that ice turns to water when it is heated as they see the water change colour before their eyes. By giving the children large and small cuboids and spheres of ice, the teaching also reinforces the children's mathematical learning.

Physical development

63. Children enter school with skills which are broadly average. They achieve well, making

good progress as they learn to use apparatus safely and to respond to music physically. The equipment for outside play is minimal. The children have several planned opportunities each week to use the hall for physical education and this they enjoy enormously. They particularly like dancing and get changed quickly, putting their indoor shoes neatly at the side of the hall. They keenly recall the dances they did the previous week and take it in turns to move to the appropriate parts of the music. The teaching is very good. Seven children bounded on all fours 'like springy lambs' while the others watched and counted the beats and then pupils commented on each other's performance. About two thirds of the children move in a very controlled way and a small group rolled very realistically, with a good rhythmic sense, as piglets in the mud. The teaching generates good humour and a real sense of fun. The children display similar skills on the apparatus. Children use pens and pencils with appropriate dexterity for their age and enjoy building houses out of small interlocking bricks. Their skills on the computer are particularly well developed as they receive the same advantages in common with the rest of the school of intensive individual tuition in the ICT suite each week as well as many opportunities within class to use the computer. As a result, by the end of the reception year, higher attaining children can program a toy to move to the right and left as well as backwards and forwards for specified moves and while lower attainers find it hard to program even one move they have sufficient skills to be able to log on and off the computer and to type some letters of their names.

Creative development

64. Children have many opportunities to develop their creative skills. Most enter school with fairly limited experience but quickly learn that painting, drawing and making music is fun. Although there is limited space in the class room, and no easels, for example, for painting, areas are carefully set aside to allow the maximum opportunity for children to explore different media. They enjoy painting and carefully mix their own colours in a palette, making sure they return the brush to the correct pot. With the very good guidance of the nursery nurse, the children made houses out of boxes, carefully counting the doors and windows which they cut out of paper and then stuck on, explaining, 'When they're dry we take them home'. The quality of teaching is very good and activities are very well thought out to develop constructive play and independence. The teaching is highly imaginative and challenges higher attaining children who produce, for instance, pictures of 'a mermaid in the sea'. Children learn to use musical instruments such as 'shakers' to accompany their singing. This they do very well, learning to shake rhythmically and more quietly as a result of the teacher's careful guidance. Much of the teaching is highly challenging and the children respond to this very well, learning to evaluate what they have learnt and to suggest improvements. Overall, children achieve well and most, including those with special educational needs or who have English as an additional language are likely to attain expected standards by the end of the year with about a third attaining more highly.

ENGLISH

65. Pupils' standards of attainment in English are well above the national average by the time they are eleven; their standards are well above average in reading, writing and speaking and listening. This marks an improvement since the last inspection. It is also markedly better than the results of last year's national tests which were at only average levels largely because of the disruptions in teaching for that group of pupils and the large preponderance of boys. In this year's group, girls and boys both achieve very well. Pupils are well on track to meet the school's very ambitious targets for 2002. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress because teachers adapt work appropriately for them and they receive very skilled support from well-trained and carefully briefed classroom assistants. Higher attainers also achieve very well because of the teachers' very high expectations and the stimulating work planned for them. Standards of attainment by the age of seven are above average in reading, writing and speaking and listening, with the proportion of higher attainers being similar to the previous year. Girls and boys achieve well. Pupils for whom English is an additional language make very good progress because of the extra language support they receive, because of the adapted work planned for them and because

they have become so well integrated into the class. Pupils with special educational needs also make very good progress; very high quality support and often individual attention develop their basic skills in reading and writing very effectively and staff boost their self-esteem extremely well so that they are confident to speak in front of others.

66. Standards of speaking and listening are above average for infant pupils and well above average for juniors. In both infant and junior classes, rich opportunities are provided for pupils to listen to the teacher and to each other and for them to work together on co-operative tasks. The tradition of performance in the school ensures that all pupils develop confidence in saying their lines clearly aloud in assemblies or to their classmates so that, for example, pupils in Years 1 and 2 tell and act out the story of the Good Samaritan in modern form with style and panache. Teachers provide very good role models in the way in which they speak or read aloud so that pupils find it easy to listen to even very challenging passages such as a section from 'The War of the Worlds' without losing the flow. Pupils' confidence is increased because they know that adults and other pupils will listen carefully to what they have to say and respond sensitively and with appreciation. Teachers are good at finding strategies to develop pupils' skills further; for example, pupils in a Year 3 mathematics lesson were asked to sit back to back and describe clearly how to solve a problem, just by using words. Pupils in Year 6 confidently discuss their reading preferences, animatedly giving opinions on characters and predicting future events. They use the appropriate vocabulary in discussing historical matters, listening carefully in order to pick up clues to come to a correct conclusion. They evaluate each other's written pieces of science fiction clearly and sensibly, expressing their views in a measured and articulate way.

67. Standards of reading are above average for infant pupils. Most read accurately with good understanding from the appropriate book in the reading scheme; they can recognise a good range of words at sight and use a range of strategies for tackling unfamiliar words. They can identify features of a book and average attainers are comfortable with using the index and contents; higher attainers know how to use the glossary and read the information on the back before choosing a book to read. Standards of reading are well above average for juniors. Most read fluently, accurately and with good levels of understanding; they often read with expression, especially when reading, for example, play texts or their own writing. Most are able to discuss characters and appreciate the humour in a situation. They appreciate the language used by the author and are confident in working out the meaning of an unfamiliar word by looking at its make-up as well as by using the context in which it is used. Pupils have a very good insight into the characteristics of different genres and are very aware of elements of style and the language used. Pupils have very well developed research skills, both in using reference books in the library and in using the Internet and CD-ROMs.

68. Infant pupils have above average skills in writing. Their basic skills in spelling and punctuation are well developed because of the very good teaching they receive and they write in generally correct sentences. Some of the everyday tasks that pupils take responsibility for help their writing skills; for example, the pupil whose job it is to write the date on the board each morning also writes up the tasks pupils are to do when they arrive in class. Higher attainers produce writing that is imaginative, showing a creative choice of words. By the time they are in Year 2, pupils' handwriting is clear and well-formed. A significant number of pupils in Year 2 produced very imaginative writing of above average standards about 'Preston the Masked Avenger' that was full of humour. Pupils write for a good range of purposes and are provided with good opportunities for writing in most subjects.

69. Standards of writing for older pupils, particularly those in Years 5 and 6 are well above those expected for their age. In response to very imaginative teaching about H G Wells, for example, pupils, including many with special educational needs, produced writing in science fiction mode that was well structured and mostly correctly spelt and punctuated; much was very good, capturing the style cleverly and showing high levels of imagination. Most of the writing was characterised by very effective choice of words, dialogue and varying sentence length which were used to develop tension very well. Higher attainers were set the task of using the Internet to discover all they could about the author and to prepare a report – this they did with great efficiency.

Pupils in Year 5 produced a superb collection of their own myths, legends, fables and fairy tales, showing a mature awareness of the characteristics of these different kinds of writing and translating them into their own inventive tales. Poems by these pupils are also of a very high quality, often showing great sensitivity in dealing with difficult issues and considerable creativity in finding a form for their feelings. Pupils write from different points of view, for example, pupils in Year 6 writing humorously about the same incident from the viewpoints of both Adrian Mole and his mother. Pupils in Year 5 produced some excellent writing as a Victorian maid envying life above stairs, providing very telling insights into history. Pupils sometimes show an unexpectedly mature understanding of how poetry, story and other kinds of writing work, strong evidence of the often excellent teaching they receive. During their time in the junior classes, pupils produce imaginative and often original writing covering a wide range of audiences and purposes in most subjects. Their excellent skills in ICT enhance their learning in both reading and writing and teachers and support staff are adept at exploiting these resources to the full; for example, a group of pupils with special educational needs developed their composition skills significantly when using the projected computer screen with their classroom support assistant.

70. The quality of teaching and learning is very good, with a substantial proportion of teaching being excellent; none of the English teaching seen was less than good. Very high quality support staff are used very effectively to support the development of pupils' basic literacy skills. The use of the subject co-ordinator to support individuals and small groups, both higher and lower attainers, is very productive. All staff have very well developed skills in using ICT and pupils of all ages and abilities benefit. The staff's training in delivering the school's literacy strategy is also effective in developing pupils' basic skills in reading and writing through very good, systematic teaching. For example, Year 3 pupils were taught the spelling rule about doubling the consonant before adding 'er' very clearly and in a stimulating way so that, by the end of that part of the lesson, they had a firm grasp of the rule and could apply it in their writing. Teachers generally have very high levels of expectation to which the pupils respond extremely well; the work produced by pupils at the top end of the school, for example, is the result of extremely challenging tasks that are presented in such a way as to catch the pupils' imaginations and free their creativity. It is not surprising that pupils work extremely hard and are confident to use their imaginations creatively. Teachers are not satisfied with easy answers and question stringently to push pupils to take their thinking further; consequently lower and higher attainers alike make very good progress in their learning.

71. In some classes, pupils have target cards that include writing targets based on the teachers' assessments; these are referred to frequently, both by the teacher in pressing the pupil to move forward and by the pupil who is committed to improving the work. Teachers display pupils' work to excellent effect so that they have something to aim for, knowing that their best efforts will be highly valued. Classroom displays are used very effectively to promote literacy, often including key words or processes that pupils can use as a resource. Pupils respond to the teachers' very good and often excellent class management skills, based on extremely positive relationships, with very good and often excellent behaviour and very high levels of concentration. Teachers' planning for the infant mixed-age classes takes good account of the needs of all the pupils and they use support staff very effectively to support particular individuals and groups. They also use questions very effectively to help those who need it and to challenge those who can go further. Pupils with English as an additional language are provided with expert support and consequently learn very well. The very good progress made by pupils with special educational needs results from the very good individual education plans devised by the teachers and the often excellent support these pupils receive. Teachers cope with the large numbers in the junior classes very well, with the biggest class being organised cleverly to allow staff to have good access to the full range of pupils' needs. Some of the teachers use their marking of pupils' work to excellent effect but practice is not consistent throughout the school and assessment would benefit if the excellent practices were shared by the other teachers.

72. The subject is effectively led and managed. The English curriculum is very rich, supplemented as it is by a variety of visitors, a strong tradition of performance and a major contribution to literacy by the other subjects of the curriculum, particularly ICT. Effective assessment procedures enable teachers to plan more closely for pupils' needs and the school to

make wider decisions about the curriculum. The school is very placed to maintain its very high standards.

MATHEMATICS

73. Standards are above average for seven-year-olds and well above average by the end of Year 6. This is an improvement since the last inspection and reflects the very good impact the national strategy for teaching numeracy has had on teaching and on pupils' learning throughout the school. Careful analysis of the questions pupils answered well and those they found more difficult in the national tests highlighted a relative area of weakness in solving abstract mathematical problems. The school has taken appropriate steps to remedy this and so standards have risen since last year. Currently, two thirds of the present Year 6 class are on course to exceed the nationally expected standards for their age. Pupils achieve very well in relation to the level at which they start.

74. There are several reasons for pupils' very good achievement. The quality of teaching and of pupils' learning is very good and there is some excellent teaching of mathematics throughout the school. The teaching of mathematics in the junior classes is particularly strong and much of it is excellent. Assessments of what pupils know and understand are used well to establish areas of weakness and teachers check how much pupils have understood at the end of the lesson. Teachers have adopted a consistent approach in all classes to develop pupils' skills in this area.

75. The quality of teaching and of pupils' learning is very good. Many pupils say that mathematics is their favourite lesson and it easy to see why. The national strategy for numeracy is followed closely but within that, teachers have adapted it most successfully to their individual styles of teaching. Work is carefully matched to pupils' different levels of attainment. Lessons begin well, making explicit to the pupils what they are going to learn. Resources are imaginatively prepared to engage the immediate interest of pupils. For example, a cardboard space rocket and planet used to mark points on a line of numbers add a certain zest to counting forwards and back for younger pupils. In Year 6, ICT is used extremely well to set up lessons in advance so that during registration pupils begin work on calculations, which are then used as a starting point for the day's lesson. The liveliness of pupils' response in mental mathematics sessions mirrors the enthusiasm of their teachers. Work in mathematics is carefully planned so that pupils have many opportunities to use and apply their mathematical knowledge. Higher attaining pupils in Year 2, for example, select 'problem cards' to solve when they have completed their tasks. Teachers consistently use correct mathematical vocabulary so pupils quickly learn to use and to understand the different terms. This means they have a high degree of competence by the age of eleven. Teachers encourage pupils to work in groups or in pairs to check their answers and to justify their reasoning. The closing sessions of numeracy lessons are used particularly well both to reinforce what has been learnt but often to introduce a development, which particularly challenges the higher attaining pupils.

76. Teachers set and expect high standards, expecting speedy and accurate calculations: 'Almost is not good enough' pupils are firmly told. By the age of seven, pupils are very clear about the relationship between addition and subtraction. Teachers challenge higher attaining pupils in Year 2 to swap from doubling to halving and expect all pupils to use their knowledge of odd and even numbers when calculating so that they learn to be receptive to recognising patterns in numbers. Pupils use terms such as 'multiples' correctly and through practical work such as walking round the local town noting different shapes, gain an above average understanding of two and three-dimensional shapes, explaining the key characteristics of hexagons for example. By the age of eleven, pupils' attainment is well above average, with virtually all pupils working at least at the level expected of their age and about two-thirds exceeding this. Pupils achieve very well. Teaching in the older junior classes sets a fast pace and teachers are skilled at increasing the challenge so that higher attainers are constantly working to the peak of their ability. Virtually all pupils are as comfortable working with negative numbers as they are with positive and calculate mentally using decimals and fractions with ease. Pupils have a very good understanding of consecutive, multiple and triangular numbers and quickly work out the rules to find the missing numbers in a variety of

sequences. The excellent quality of teaching caters equally well for pupils with special educational needs as for those with high ability. Often the closing 10 minutes of a lesson extends pupils' learning. For example, higher and average attaining pupils were fascinated to learn of second and third difference between numbers in a sequence and clearly found the concept intellectually challenging.

77. One of the main reasons why attainment is well above average is the excellent support given to pupils who have special educational needs or who are lower attaining. Infant pupils who require this additional support are taught in a small group and this intensive teaching greatly aids their understanding and gives them a very firm basis on which to build further mathematical knowledge as they grow older. Support assistants help junior pupils to concentrate fully, drawing out their ideas and repeating in a simplified form what pupils need to understand. Teachers' planning takes full account of these pupils' needs and because pupils have been so well trained to work independently, teachers can give additional help to those who find mathematics most difficult. The subject is extremely well led.

SCIENCE

78. Standards are above average for seven-year-olds and well above average by the end of Year 6. Pupils therefore achieve very well during their time in school. This is similar to standards reported in the last inspection. Although standards have been inconsistent since then, changes in the leadership of the subject have led to improved management and improvements in the quality of teaching. Standards are high because teachers have very good subject knowledge. There is a much greater focus on investigative activities so that pupils learn through finding out for themselves. Teachers analyse the results of national tests and use these to indicate which areas of learning need improvement. Mathematics and ICT are used extensively in science and contribute significantly to high standards in this subject.

79. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress and achieve at least levels within the expectations for pupils aged eleven. Over four years, boys have performed marginally better than girls. Inspection evidence shows, however, that there is no discernible difference in the attainment of boys and girls. Pupils whose first language is not English and those who have special educational needs are well supported in lessons. As a result, they are achieving close to the expectations for pupils aged seven.

80. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve well and make good progress in relating science to everyday life. They are well taught and understand the properties of materials in terms such as, 'hard', 'soft', and 'transparent' and can relate this information effectively to talk about what houses are made of. Pupils enjoyed testing the stretching capacity of elastic bands and worked safely and sensibly as they measured carefully in centimetres. Results from this experiment were presented electronically as a graph and pupils were able to draw simple conclusions from these findings. The quality of teaching at for infants is good. Throughout practical lessons, pupils behave well and are very interested in what they are doing. Support teachers are used well to help those with special educational needs or who are lower attaining to learn effectively. Teachers use technical language well and terms such as 'prediction' and 'fair test' are used confidently by younger pupils. Sometimes teachers miss opportunities to encourage simple recording of experiments. The pace of lessons is steady and so an element of excitement can be missing. Teachers are good at enabling pupils to talk about what they have learnt and this helps pupils to reflect at the close of lessons.

81. By the time they are in Year 6, pupils' achievement is very good in using specific vocabulary and researching information. Year 6 have a very good understanding of the need to base scientific ideas on collecting evidence. Increasingly, they present such evidence in electronic form and they draw conclusions based on what is collected. The level of understanding and use of specific language is very good in Years 3 to 6. The quality of teaching in junior classes is very good.

Overall, there is a higher proportion of very good teaching than reported at the previous inspection. This has been achieved through effective monitoring of teaching and a more consistent understanding of how basic skills, such as mathematics, can be used in science lessons. Teachers organise and manage their classes so that pupils always know why they are doing a particular activity. Lessons usually begin with a brief recall of previous work and establishing the objective for the new lesson. Consequently pupils are brought into the lesson immediately. They begin their activities quickly, having understood what is expected of them, and this aids their learning. Lessons proceed at a fast pace and the rate of learning is high. In all classes, relationships between pupils and teachers are very good. This helps develop pupils' confidence to ask questions and try ideas without fear of ridicule from other pupils. By Years 5 and 6, pupils are beginning to ask their own scientific questions which deal with more challenging activities, such as recognising and explaining exceptions to rules and patterns. This leads to very good attitudes and interest in science. There is good practice that praises what pupils have achieved and directs them to how they can do even better. The quality of teachers' marking is excellent in some classes but less thorough in terms of comments in others. While this does not directly affect progress it does mean that some pupils have a clearer idea of their learning than others.

82. After a period of disruption, the subject has regained the momentum for development. The leadership of the subject is settled and standards are now high. Resources have improved and are now readily available to teachers. The new subject leader has a clear sense of educational direction for using information technology and mathematics regularly and understands the importance of analysing results to keep progress under review.

ART AND DESIGN

83. Standards in art and design are well above the level expected of eleven-year-olds and higher than those reported in the last inspection. The school displays its wide range of art very well, from the 'Victorian Parlour' at the entrance, with its cunningly constructed picture frames and fireplace, made by pupils and exhibiting their paintings, to the more formal 'gallery' in the school hall. Pupils achieve very well largely because of the very good and often excellent teaching they receive and the variety of resources they have to choose from. Art is clearly valued throughout the school and pupils are encouraged to take pride in their work.

84. Art is often taught in conjunction with other subjects. In this way, pupils have more opportunities than usual to employ their creative and artistic skills. For example, pupils in Year 2 drew a bird's eye view of their ideal room, attaching a key to explain the furnishing, thus combining geographical skills of mapping with art. Information and communication technology is used extensively throughout the school to support art. Pupils' expertise develops from younger pupils using different width paintbrushes and pencils on a computer program to draw pictures of houses, to older pupils' skills at importing pictures which they then animate.

85. The quality of teaching is very good and several teachers have a flair for art. The curriculum is carefully planned to include printing, sculpture, painting and drawing using pastels and charcoal as well as different densities of pencil. The resources are well thought out and in spite of the lack of storage space teachers contrive to keep adequate stocks of a wide range of materials. This means that pupils have opportunities to work with a wide range of media. Pupils are encouraged to think about art: displays both celebrate and instruct as in 'the gallery' in the hall which shows how different classes interpreted a poem through art.

86. Much of the teaching is excellent and consequently pupil's attainment is well above average. Pupils in Year 4 show a really good sense of colour and life in their impressionistic pastels and paintings inspired by early twentieth artists. Pupils are taught how to use different brush strokes for different effects and they smudge and blend pastels very well to produce some very effective pictures, for example, of the wind racing across the landscape. Pupils are encouraged to make choices and to evaluate their work. One explained, 'I don't like it, its not very tidy.' Older juniors

receive excellent instructions on how to create different shades of grey using their choice of soft pencil. What makes this teaching distinctive is the combining of art with mathematics as pupils learn to explore pattern through texture and tone. By Year 6, most pupils are able to give a very good impression of a person by using shading very well to indicate depth and to suggest inner feelings, commenting on one, for example, that 'she looks really angry and tired.' Older pupils' sketchbooks show attention to detail in observational drawing and reflect the carefully planned programme for the development of skills. Teacher's knowledge of the subject is very good and as a result pupils learn at a very good rate. The subject is extremely well led and managed and the co-ordinator monitors scrupulously pupil's achievements.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

87. Standards are above the level expected of eleven-year-olds. Although this is similar to standards reported in the last inspection, in aspects of design and technology which involve the use of ICT, standards are much higher. Pupils, particularly those in Years 5 and 6, use ICT very well to research, design and evaluate products. Standards by the end of Year 2 are in line with those expected of seven-year-olds. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress throughout their time in school and achieve well.

88. Seven-year-olds use effective techniques to cut, fix and finish their model police cars and ambulances. Pupils have good ideas for designing and making a finished product and teachers plan good links with other subjects such as geography to make the work relevant and interesting. Teaching is good overall, with some very good features in Years 5 and 6. The very good teaching encourages pupils to discuss their designs and make suggestions to one another as to how they might be improved. Pupils learn a wide range of skills and techniques that enables them to put their ideas effectively into practice. Consequently, there are good opportunities for pupils' personal development and initiative to improve. Pupils concentrate well and there is a good balance of discussion, evaluation and making in lessons.

89. Some of the work undertaken by older pupils is quite distinctive, as in Year 5. The whole concept of designing and making was put in a realistic context, involving local businesses and manufacturers. The teaching encouraged pupils to use their own initiative. They sought advice from local traders about how a greengrocery business is run, drew up a business plan and organised a rota for work. The whole project exercised their imaginative skills as well as giving them an insight into the importance of good design. In Year 6, pupils had a very clear view of the intended market for their slippers and were highly competent at using computers to research their product. As a result of imaginative ideas and very good teaching, pupils really enjoy design and technology lessons and learn very well.

GEOGRAPHY

90. Standards are above expected levels by the end of Year 6. While these are similar to those reported in the last inspection, standards are higher than they were for seven-year-olds and are now also above average, reflecting improvements in the curriculum. Pupils use ICT extremely well throughout the school to support their learning. Older pupils use websites and CD-Rom sources highly competently to search for information. Teachers encourage pupils to use ICT to present some of their work. Other subjects, such as art and science are also used well in conjunction with geography. For example, with art to develop pupils' skills in observational drawing and sketching when on an educational visit to examine local geographical features and with science when studying different types of houses and the materials used in their construction. Pupils with special educational needs and who are learning English as an additional language make very good progress. Support for these pupils is very effective, enabling them to participate fully in the lessons.

91. By the end of Year 2, pupils begin to express clearly their opinions on how their local

environment could be improved. They wait excitedly to hear from 'Barnaby Bear' as he travels around the world. Pupils recognise the main buildings in Knaresborough and begin to understand about public services such as health, fire and police services. They describe the weather using appropriate language. By the end of Year 6, pupils are sufficiently confident to present reasoned answers to questions and events. They use their mathematical skills well to help them to read co-ordinates and to tally results and present a significant amount of data using ICT. Pupils' high standard of general knowledge is partially accounted for by the school's participation in the Comenius project which plays a considerable part in developing pupils' understanding of Europe. Pupils are accomplished at seeking information from websites and other electronic sources, but their ability to sift and apply the information is an area for development.

92. Teaching is good and lessons have a good balance between studying places and exploring geographical features and the development of geographical skills of enquiry. The increased use of ICT during lessons gives pupils high quality opportunities to work at their level of ability and interest and this has a good impact on improving standards. Pupils have many opportunities to study the local environment and residential visits for older pupils further support learning in this subject. There is a particularly strong emphasis on teaching geographical terms and specific vocabulary; this enables pupils to express their ideas clearly. The effectiveness of this is clearly seen in Year 6 pupils' discussion of landscapes. Pupils' work is marked and corrected, but marking rarely provides guidance on how the work could be improved. The subject is well organised and there is a good sense of shared interest amongst staff.

HISTORY

93. Standards are well above the level expected by the end of Year 6. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection. Pupils now have very good opportunities to develop their skills through a wide range of writing and they use ICT very effectively to research information. Pupils with special educational needs use specific vocabulary correctly and as a result they make very good progress. By the age of seven, pupils' attainment is in line with that expected of their age. Pupils who are learning English as an additional language receive very good support from classroom assistants and so make very good progress in lessons.

94. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 enjoy handling historical artefacts and offer credible suggestions when describing their use. They have good opportunities to discuss differences in houses and domestic equipment from times beyond their memory and from these they make useful comparisons with their own rooms and those in pictures or films. Pupils in Years 3 to 5 have good general knowledge about the topics they have studied. They understand the need to assess evidence, which they often collect using ICT. Descriptions of people coping with 'the Blitz' written by Year 4 pupils are full of pertinent historical detail, as well as showing a sensitive understanding of how adults and children felt at the time. Year 5 work based on life during the Victorian era is particularly good. The quality of analysis and the reasons given to explain the working conditions, suggest pupils have a very good level of understanding for their age. Educational visits to places of local historical significance help to generate pupils' interest in history. Pupils make very good progress in assessing evidence and by the end of Year 6, they have a well-developed sense of chronology.

95. The quality of teaching is good and some lessons in the junior classes are very good indeed. Teachers plan very carefully and make it clear to pupils what they are going to learn and how it relates to what they have done previous lessons. They make good use of historical artefacts to raise pupils' interest. Teachers question effectively to assess what pupils understand and in the very good lessons this quickly engages pupils' interest. Pupils have very good attitudes to learning and older pupils show a high level of independence. They respond in a mature and sensible manner, which has a good impact on their rate of progress and creates a good atmosphere for working. History is popular. Pupils benefit from a good curriculum enriched by visitors to the school who involve pupils in role-play. Teachers are conscientious in marking pupils' work, but inconsistencies occur. Where the marking is cursory it does not enable pupils to know how well

they are progressing or what they have to do to improve.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

96. Standards in ICT are exceptionally high. Most pupils in Year 6 are already performing at the level expected of 14 Year olds. Standards throughout the school are similarly high with seven-year-olds attaining standards well above the average expected of their age. Pupils make excellent progress and their achievement is high due to the excellent provision made for ICT in the school. The resources for learning are up to date and of very good quality. The use of accommodation is extremely good, with all classes having a space dedicated to ICT, as well as having a small ICT suite in the central shared area of the school. The computers are in use in all classes and ICT forms the hub of the school throughout the day. Pupils choose to spend their lunch hours working on computers.

97. Undoubtedly, one of the main reasons why standards are so high is the high level of expertise shown by all staff including, support assistants, and the excellent leadership and management. ICT is indeed central to the work of the school and its use can be seen in all subjects. Over a period of time, staff expertise and the resources for learning have been built up systematically from the reception class through to Year 6. The greater part of the money spent on ICT goes on providing non-teaching assistants who teach ICT skills to all pupils. The school has developed its ICT 'skills matrix' based on national schemes of work but which in terms of difficulty and expectation far exceeds these. Other local primary schools now use the same system, which is linked closely to assessment and as the basis for awarding certificates, which indicate which level of skill the pupils have attained. Very close links with the local secondary school, now a college for technology, further supports work in school and provides expert technical support.

98. The quality of teaching and of pupils' learning is excellent. By the end of Year 2, pupils are expected to search a CD-ROM purposefully and follow straight forward lines of enquiry as in an encyclopaedia. They use ICT based models and simulations to explore aspects of real and imaginary situations. By Year 6 pupils use ICT to explore and solve problems in a variety of subjects and investigate parallels with the use of ICT in the wider world. They assess the value of ICT in their working practices. Pupils use a multimedia program to organise, refine and present a set of linked multimedia pages, which incorporate images, sound and text. Staff keep very detailed records for each pupils on each topic with notes on their progress and development and how much help they needed. Over two thirds of pupils need very little help and once they are shown what to do they remember.

99. Pupils really enjoy ICT and are keen to show what they can do. By the end of Year 2, pupils need very little help and once they are shown what to do have the confidence to learn for themselves. By Year 5, pupils competently set up and insert data into a spreadsheet and learn very quickly the effects of choosing the wrong graph. Pupils do not want to stop working because the work is so interesting. Because of the intensive teaching of skills at pupils' own level, lower attaining pupils also attain high standards and it is quite common for their response to be 'it's not too hard.' Pupils in Year 6 have produced very high quality presentations using projected computer images on screen, talking with great enthusiasm about what they can do. One such presentation, on food hygiene shows delightful humour as in 'Welcome to our slideshow'. Succeeding images and information are introduced by 'hosts' who turn out to be an animated 'Fry Man' (represented by a bag of chips) and 'Burger Boy' (a picture of a hamburger on legs). Multiple speaking images and the text appears rapidly word-by-word. The use of language is very good as in 'protect against harmful micro organisms.' Pupils explain very clearly each stage of the process and are very proud of their work showing a high level of knowledge for their age. Standards are much higher than they were at the time of the last inspection and parents recognise it as an area of immense improvement and development.

MUSIC

100. Pupils' attainment at seven and eleven is above average and in singing it is very high; standards have been maintained since the last inspection. Pupils, including those who are gifted and talented, achieve well. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language make good progress. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 produce very tuneful singing of very high quality, varying louds and softs appropriately and working with very high levels of concentration. They play a range of untuned percussion instruments with very good levels of control maintaining a very accurate beat to produce an impressive performance of a song with actions and accompaniment. Older pupils sing a variety of songs extremely well with great enthusiasm, singing well in harmony and confidently maintaining their part in a two-part song with tuned percussion. All pupils have the opportunity to learn to play the recorder during their time in school and so they learn to read conventional notation. Older pupils compose music for performance, such as a rap for harvest or a rhythm piece about feelings to perform at an assembly. They listen to a good range of music from around the world, responding to it in movement or in discussion.

101. The quality of teaching and learning is very good and sometimes excellent. Teachers take a very confident and energetic lead in singing sessions, often wholeheartedly supported by their colleagues. They have very high expectations. Their choice of songs is excellent, often supporting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and invariably calculated to stimulate the pupils' best efforts. These factors, alongside the teachers' very highly developed class management skills and the excellent relationships they have with the pupils, mean that pupils work extremely hard with excellent behaviour, even in very large groups. Pupils have very positive attitudes and are appreciative of each other's efforts, listening well, for example, when it is the other pupils' turn to become the 'orchestra'. Their enjoyment of singing and their commitment to what the school stands for is clearly seen in their performance of the school song, where enthusiasm is allied to control very convincingly. The curriculum is enhanced by the range of instruments taught by visiting specialists and by the many opportunities pupils have for performing in front of an audience. Music makes an excellent contribution to pupils' personal development.

102. The subject is led by a very effective co-ordinator with a dynamic view of what could be achieved and the capacity to make it happen. The school recognises the need to develop more formal systems for assessment and has plans in place for this.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

103. Pupils' attainment is above average at seven and eleven, maintaining the standards seen at the last inspection. Standards in swimming are well above average. Pupils of all levels of ability achieve well and those with special education needs make good progress, as do pupils with English as an additional language. Pupils identified as gifted and talented make very good progress because of the extra tuition they receive, in, for example, tennis. Pupils with physical difficulties make very good progress because the extremely high quality of the support they receive enables them to play a full part in physical education lessons. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 show good balance and awareness of levels on the climbing frame and well above average skills in safety awareness. This class were able carefully and safely to set up the large apparatus and, when prompted, perform a final safety check before starting their activity. After the lesson, they got dressed quietly and independently, while softly singing 'Bobby Bingo'. Older pupils have well developed movement skills; for example, Year 5 pupils produced effective sequences showing very good symmetry and originality and a good understanding of what makes an effective sequence. Year 6 pupils showed expected levels of ball control and a grasp of tactics in group ball games. Pupils understand the effect of exercise on their heart and other muscles and know the importance of warming up the muscles before exercise.

104. The quality of teaching and learning is very good throughout the school and sometimes

excellent for both infant and junior pupils. Teachers have a confident subject knowledge and very high standards of class management and control based on excellent relationships. Pupils respond very positively to the praise and encouragement they receive and their behaviour is often excellent. The teachers' very high levels of expectation ensure that pupils concentrate extremely well and work with a very high rate of creative and physical effort, whatever their level of ability. Pupils are very well motivated and enjoy their lessons. Younger pupils work with very good awareness of other pupils, taking the greatest care in moving across one another on the climbing frame, for example.

105. The curriculum is rich and full and includes swimming for pupils in Years 4 and 5 and outdoor and adventurous activities in Year 6. Such activities are supplemented by links with other subjects and by a range of sporting out-of-school activities, coaching by visiting experts and competitive games. The subject makes a very strong contribution to pupils' personal development. A culture of sharing and praising others is modelled extremely effectively. Pupils are offered and willingly take on responsibilities; for example, a boy in Year 5 was allowed to lead the class's cooling down session at the end of the lesson.

106. The subject is led by a very competent and conscientious co-ordinator who has a clear view of where the subject is going. Her expertise is supported by regular meetings with co-ordinators from other local schools. The subject is well resourced, partly because of generous contributions from the parent and teachers' association. The school recognises that an area for development is the formalisation of assessment. The school is very well placed to maintain its present high standards.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

107. Standards are above average and higher than those reported in the last inspection. Teaching is more effective and the curriculum is more relevant. All staff understand very well how to develop pupils' sense of self-worth through religious education and this subject plays a major part in contributing to the excellent atmosphere for learning. This is especially apparent in the excellent spiritual and moral development of pupils. The teaching of self respect and respect for the lives and views of others reflects a clear Christian ethos. Links with the local churches are good and pupils undertake purposeful visits to places of worship of other faiths. Resources have improved since the previous inspection and are used very well, for example, to show the significance of different ways of dressing in non-European cultures. Older pupils use ICT very well to organise their work and to present it imaginatively.

108. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 remember details of the Christmas story and know some stories from the Old Testament. Teachers are adept at relating this work to pupils' personal experience of life so far. A good example is the teaching about being brave in a new or unfamiliar situation, such as having medical injections. Older pupils know stories from the Gospels and begin to understand the significance of the Lord's prayer and the Ten Commandments. Pupils' factual knowledge and their ability to interpret help to extend their understanding of the main features of places of worship of other world faiths very well. The school's emphasis on the importance of reflection is very good. Year 6 pupils writing about 'Harvest Thoughts' and some of the work in Year 5 work are good examples of how religious education is used to foster pupils' personal development. For instance, pupils are asked to place themselves on a scale between 'selfish/unselfish', 'organised/disorganised' and similar traits. This clearly has a good effect on pupils' excellent attitudes to school, the high standard of behaviour and the level of personal responsibility in lessons.

109. Lessons are well-prepared and good resources used to very good effect to help pupils to learn. Pupils are quite unselfconscious about answering and asking questions because relationships between pupils and the teaching staff are so good. As a result, much learning takes place through discussion. Pupils participate readily in lessons, knowing that their views will be

taken seriously. Such effective teaching is a significant improvement since the previous inspection.