

# INSPECTION REPORT

**GRIMETHORPE LADYWOOD PRIMARY  
SCHOOL**

Grimethorpe, Barnsley

LEA area: Barnsley

Unique reference number: 106618

Headteacher: Mrs R Stansfield

Reporting inspector: Mr P T Hill  
6642

Dates of inspection: 14<sup>th</sup> - 17<sup>th</sup> January 2002

Inspection number: 194479

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Nancy Road Grimethorpe Barnsley South Yorkshire
Postcode:	S72 7JX
Telephone number:	01226 711488
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Cllr Chris Sykes
Date of previous inspection:	May 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
6642	P Hill	Registered inspector	Science Information and communication technology Geography History Equal opportunities Special educational needs English as an additional language	What sort of school is it? How well is the school led and managed?
9882	A Rea	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
1272	I Hocking	Team inspector	Mathematics Physical education Design and technology Under fives	How well are pupils taught?
16761	M Hemmings	Team inspector	English Music Religious education Art	The school's results and pupils' achievements. How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Ladywood County Primary is an average sized school catering for pupils from the ages of three to eleven. It is situated in Grimethorpe, a village about seven miles to the north east of Barnsley. There are 236 pupils on roll, and a further 52 attend the Nursery part-time. In the past the area was socially and economically disadvantaged after the closure of local mines. The legacy remains. A national survey clearly shows that the level of multiple deprivation is very high when compared with other parts of the country and overall families' socio-economic circumstances are well below average. There are high levels of unemployment and changing social characteristics. Approximately half the pupils are entitled to free school meals. Most children attend the Nursery part-time for four or five terms before transferring to full-time school. The average level of attainment when starting Nursery is well below average, and many children still need a lot of help to prepare them well for formal learning. There are 54 pupils on the special needs register, with three having statements of special educational need. No pupils are from other ethnic backgrounds or speak English as an additional language.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

This is an improving school. There has been considerable and rapid recent improvement in many areas. This has not yet had time to raise standards appreciably. However, all the data available from the inspection, including from analysis of work and lesson observations, indicates that although attainment remains below average, it is rising. Considering the overall low level of attainment on entry and the multiple deprivation of the area, the school is rapidly becoming an effective one. Leadership and management have improved considerably and the school is enjoying a period of stability and good management. Teaching has improved and is good overall. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- The interim headteacher provides very good leadership and the school is now well led and managed. This is an area of considerable recent improvement.
- Teaching is good overall with almost a quarter of teaching being very good.
- Pupils have a good attitude to school and form good relationships with each other and with their teachers.
- The school provides well for pupils' individual and special needs and for equality of access and opportunity.
- The overall provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and an improvement since the last inspection.
- Procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare are good with very good procedures for improving attendance and promoting good behaviour.

#### **What could be improved**

- The school needs to raise standards. Pupils' level of achievement in the latest Standard Attainment Tests (SATs) are very low and constitute an area of serious weakness.
- Governors, together with the local education authority (LEA), should take steps to secure the future leadership and management of the school, building on the very good management of the interim headteacher and the considerable recent improvements.

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

Governors and the LEA are fully aware of these areas for improvement and already have strategies in place to address the issues.

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in May 1997. Until recently the school has made an unsatisfactory response to the issues identified in the report. However, since the appointment of the current interim headteacher, there has been a significant and rapid improvement in many areas including leadership and management, teaching, staff morale, pupils' attainment, especially that seen in lessons and in pupils' personal development. The formation of the Strategic Planning Group, consisting of three governors, the headteacher and representatives of the LEA, to monitor and evaluate improvement and plan for the future, is a very positive step. After a period of uncertainty and a lack of forward movement, the school has improved considerably.

## 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	E	E*	E*	E
Mathematics	E	E	E*	E
Science	C	E	E*	E*

**Key**

well above average    A

above average        B

average                C

below average        D

well below average    E

Pupils' levels of attainment, as measured in the 2001 SATs, are amongst the lowest five per cent nationally. They are well below the average of similar schools nationally. This is an area of significant weakness. However, during the inspection, pupils' levels of attainment, although below average, have shown improvement. Pupils' achievement in Key Stage 1 in reading and writing is in line with similar schools and in science is in line with the national average and well above that of pupils in similar schools. In Key Stage 1 the downward trend of results over recent years has now been turned into an upward trend and there are clear indications that standards are improving in Key Stage 2. Children in the nursery are achieving well, as are pupils with special educational needs. It is clear that the recent advancements in teaching are improving the rate of pupils' progress. The school has set much higher targets for pupils' attainment for the current Year 5 and is confident that they will be met when these pupils take the tests.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils are enthusiastic about school, they like their teachers and have good relationships with them. They are interested in their lessons and keen to participate and answer questions.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Behaviour in both in classes and around school is good. The number of exclusions has reduced significantly during the current school year.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Relationships between pupils and their teachers are good and often very good.

Attendance	Below average.
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Pupils' attitudes, and personal development are good with relationships between adults and children and children themselves being strengths. This makes a very significant contribution to the improvement in the rate of children's progress and creates an environment where children enjoy learning. The school still has difficulty with a small but significant number of pupils but the good strategies recently developed to combat unacceptable behaviour are having a marked effect.

### TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Good	Good	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.*

Overall, the quality of teaching is good, with a significant amount being very good. In a quarter of lessons teaching is very good. This represents an impressive amount of good and very good teaching. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen. This is a substantial improvement on the quality of teaching reported in the previous inspection where a significant percentage was unsatisfactory. The delivery of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies is enabling pupils to achieve well in English and mathematics. The teaching funded through the Education Action Zone initiative is having a very good and significant effect on standards in many areas of the school's work. The good work of classroom support assistants makes a significant contribution to the learning of those pupils with special educational need and particularly so in English and mathematics lessons. The needs of all pupils are well met and there has been an improvement in the provision for pupils with special needs since the last inspection. Good teaching in most lessons, and good teaching of basic skills, result in pupils now making good gains in their learning.

### OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good for children in the Foundation Stage and satisfactory for Key Stages 1 and 2 where it is broad and balanced and meets requirements.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. They are well catered for and have access to all aspects of school life, lessons are well planned to meet their needs and they are well supported by all staff.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Good. This has improved since the last inspection. All areas have improved, especially recently, with significant improvement in strategies to raise pupils' awareness of other cultures.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school takes good care of its pupils. All staff have good relationships with the pupils and know their needs. Assessment of pupils' levels of attainment is recognised as an area for development

Relationships between the school and parents are developing well. There has been a rapid, recent, improvement across the school, building on the good information provided for parents of children in the Foundation Stage and the good relationships between staff and parents found there. Parents now feel

better informed about what is happening in school and value the care given to their children and the attitudes and values that the school promotes. The curriculum is appropriate and is enriched through involvement in national and local initiatives; for example, the school is part of the Barnsley Education Action Zone. This involvement is being successfully targeted at improving pupils' literacy and ICT skills. The school cares well for its pupils. Systems for monitoring attendance, punctuality and behaviour work well alongside positive encouragement.

### HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good, with the headteacher providing very good direction, leadership and management. The stability provided in this area is directly responsible for the turn around the school is experiencing.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors fulfil their responsibilities well and have a very good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good overall with some very good aspects, including the monitoring, evaluation and development of teaching.
The strategic use of resources	Good and now clearly matched to the school's priorities for development.

Currently the school is well led and managed by the headteacher and other key staff. The lack of stability in leadership in the recent past has been addressed. The interim headteacher is providing very good leadership and a clear direction for the school. Governors and the LEA are very determined to build on the current good and rapid improvement and stability and are formulating a strategy to secure the long-term leadership and future of the school. The school makes good strategic use of resources and has a good level of teaching and support staff to meet the schools' needs. All staff are well deployed and support staff are an integral part of pupils' learning. Recent instability in staffing has been addressed apart from difficulty in recruiting a permanent teacher for Class 3. However, the governors remain committed to making a good quality appointment at the earliest opportunity. Learning resources are appropriate in most areas of the school and very good for information and communication technology. The accommodation is well used, is bright with good quality display and is well maintained. The school clearly and effectively applies the principles of best value.

### PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<p><i>only 17 per cent of parents returned questionnaires. Approximately 90 per cent of parents who returned questionnaires strongly agree, or agree, that:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children like school.</li> <li>• Teaching is good.</li> <li>• Parents feel comfortable approaching the school about problems and suggestions.</li> <li>• The school expects children to work hard.</li> </ul>	<p><i>A significant number of parents who returned questionnaires would like to see improvements in:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The way the school work with parents.</li> <li>• The leadership and management of the school.</li> <li>• The range of activities outside lessons.</li> </ul>

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The school is helping children become mature.</li></ul> |  |
|---|--|

Only a small number of parents returned questionnaires and two parents attended the Parents' Meeting. However, from these and discussions with a small number of parents during the inspection week, it is clear that although worried about the instability in leadership and management over recent years, parents are recognising the recent improvements. The inspection team agrees with parents' comments.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and pupils' achievements**

1 Over the last few years the standards attained by pupils in the national tests for 11-year olds in English, mathematics and science have been very low in comparison with all schools nationally and with similar schools. Standards for 7-year-olds have also been low, though there was some improvement in the 2001 tests so that results were comparable to similar schools, and were above average in mathematics. The school recognises that, although pupils start school with low-level skills, they are not making sufficient progress and are not achieving the standards of which they are capable. The main reason for this is that the school has been through a difficult period, with a lack of stable and effective leadership and high levels of staff changes. Since the arrival of the current interim headteacher a significant number of initiatives have been put in place to improve the position and the indications are that pupils are now making much better progress through the school as a result. It will take some time for these initiatives to have a positive effect on standards and it is unlikely that the current Year 6 pupils will attain much better than previous years' cohorts. However, the picture is one of recent steady improvement in English, mathematics and science with a staff committed to enabling all pupils to achieve to their full potential.

2 On entry to the school most children show very low skill levels, especially in language and personal social and emotional development. They experience a wide range of meaningful activities in the Nursery and Reception classes that develop them across all six areas of learning recommended for children under five. By the age of five most achieve the nationally agreed Early Learning Goals in mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development, creative development and personal, social and emotional development. There is a significant minority who do not reach these goals in communication, language and literacy, and knowledge and understanding of the world. This represents good progress and is a direct result of the high quality teaching that the children receive in the Foundation Stage. The children aged up to five are provided with a stimulating learning environment that effectively prepares them for the Programmes of Study of the National Curriculum as they enter Year 1.

3 Standards of literacy are low throughout the school, but there has been a recent improvement in the progress that pupils are making because of the improved quality of school leadership, which has resulted in a more successful implementation of the National Literacy Strategy.

4 Standards in speaking and listening are low. There are not enough opportunities for pupils to take part in structured class discussions and role-play activities to more effectively develop their communication skills. The plenary sessions are not always used as effectively as they could be to improve these skills by allowing them to talk about what they have learned in lessons. The listening skills of most pupils are also poor, which hinders their ability to make relevant answers to the teachers' questions and to gain an appropriate understanding of the work that they are to do.

5 The standards in reading are below average, with most pupils aged five to seven not being able to read accurately and confidently from texts appropriate for their age. By the time that they are seven, few pupils are able to use a wide range of strategies effectively to determine unfamiliar words, including the use of phonics. Pupils who are aged seven to eleven also demonstrate below average reading skills, being limited in their ability to recount stories, express preferences in reading matter and to talk in an informed way about famous authors. To improve the pupils' reading skills the school has now timetabled guided reading sessions outside the literacy hour. There is also a range of strategies

being explored to develop pupils' ability to answer complex comprehension questions, which the school has identified as an area for improvement. The library area and some classrooms do not provide stimulating environments for pupils to foster an enjoyment of reading. There are also insufficient opportunities for pupils to effectively develop their library and individual research skills.

6 The quality of writing has been identified as a priority area for development, especially in terms of improving pupils' story writing skills. Few pupils aged five to seven show the ability to use an interesting range of vocabulary or show an awareness of the reader in their writing. Most pupils are unable to write a sequence of sentences and punctuate them accurately, with simple words spelled correctly. Pupils in Year 6 do not show appropriate ability to identify the difference between biographical and autobiographical writing or how to change from active to passive tense. The standards of handwriting and presentation are poor, with words often spelt incorrectly through carelessness. Appropriate use is made of information and communication technology (ICT). The quality of the individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs has been improved since the last inspection and this is enabling them to make better progress towards the targets in writing that have been set for them.

7 Numeracy standards are below average at the later stages of Key Stage 2, but broadly average elsewhere in Key Stage 2 and throughout Key Stage 1. The impact of the National Numeracy Strategy is enabling pupils throughout the school to make good progress in developing their recall of number facts and in mental manipulation of number. They are becoming adept at using correct terminology when explaining their methods of performing mental calculations. However, very few pupils in Year 6 have reached average levels of skill in written calculations and in mental calculations mainly because this group of pupils has only experienced the National Numeracy Strategy for the relatively short period of two years and they have had many teachers during this period. Pupils are able to use and apply their numeracy skills in other subjects, for example the use of measuring skills in design and technology and in science.

8 In science, pupils have are now improving their ability to carry out investigations as a result of the improved planning in the subject. When making conclusions during investigations, the pupils tend to be descriptive rather than evaluative and are not always effective in interpreting the data that they have collected.

9 The provision for ICT has been greatly improved since the last inspection through the creation of an ICT suite with up-to-date computers and software. Consequently, pupils are now making much better progress and standards are improving, though they are still below those expected for their age.

10 Until recently there has been little improvement in the provision for religious education since the last inspection and, as a result, by the time they are eleven, most pupils do not show more than a basic understanding of Christian beliefs and values nor an appropriate awareness of the traditions and customs of other major world faiths.

11 In most other subjects standards are inhibited by the pupils' poor literacy skills, which often results in unsatisfactory presentation of work and an inability to communicate their ideas and feelings to others in an appropriate manner. Pupils of all abilities are not achieving standards of which they are capable but recent improvements have meant that they are now making good progress in their learning. In the last two years girls have significantly outperformed boys by the time they are seven; however, this is explained by those classes having many more boys identified as having special educational needs than girls.

## **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

12 Pupils are enthusiastic about school, like their teachers and have good relationships with them. They are interested in their lessons and keen to participate and answer questions. However, a number of pupils do find it difficult to concentrate for long and many find it difficult to express their views clearly because of their poor speaking skills.

13 The last inspection report judged behaviour in school to be good overall, with better behaviour in the classroom than around school. Behaviour remains good but the behaviour around school is equally good as that in the classrooms. Pupils are very well behaved in assemblies and appreciate and participate in the pleasant social atmosphere of the dining room at lunchtimes.

14 During the last school year there were a high number of exclusions. The number has reduced significantly during the current school year and exclusions are only used as a last resort for pupils who experience significant behavioural difficulties. Careful plans are made for the pupils' return to school and parents are involved at an early stage when a pupil is having difficulty behaving in an acceptable way.

15 Any instances of oppressive behaviour are dealt with promptly and effectively. The headteacher is involved at an early stage and she involves parents if there are further occurrences.

16 Parents do have some concerns about behaviour in the school. The inspection team judged that the concerns stemmed mainly from the previous instability within the school and the few children in school with significant behavioural difficulties.

17 Relationships between pupils and their teachers are good and often very good. Pupils and staff have a great deal of respect for the headteacher. The school secretary takes very good care of pupils who are unwell or upset and pupils know they are valued and cared for in school.

18 Pupils are given jobs to do around school, such as returning registers to the office. Pupils in Year 6 give up their playtime to help set up for the cricket session and the youngest pupils are able to take responsibility for tidying up in the classroom. Pupils are able to work well together in pairs and in small groups or teams. Year 3 pupils worked together as a whole class to remain quiet and carefully pass a tambourine around the circle without making any noise. However, the pupils in Key Stage 2, and especially the older children, have suffered from previous instability in the school. Now that they have a clearer view of what is expected of them they should be able to take on more responsibility and be encouraged to show more initiative.

19 Pupils are encouraged to attend school regularly and to be punctual. Nevertheless, attendance at the school is well below the national average. This is limiting the progress in learning of those pupils whose attendance is poor.

## **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?**

20 Overall, the quality of teaching is good, with a significant amount being very good. In 37 per cent of lessons teaching is satisfactory, in 39 per cent of lessons teaching is good, and in 24 per cent it is very good. This represents an impressive amount of good and very good teaching. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen. This represents a substantial improvement on the quality of teaching as reported at the previous inspection where 18 per cent was unsatisfactory, and about 30 per cent was good or very good.

21 At the present time, the school is experiencing difficulty in recruiting a permanent teacher for Class 3. However, the governors remain committed to making a good quality appointment at the earliest opportunity.

22 Teaching in the Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception), is good overall with a significant amount of very good teaching. This represents considerable improvement since the previous inspection and leads to children achieving well in this part of the school.

23 Teaching is planned very well and caters well for the needs of all. However, the school is currently planning to implement an improved system of record keeping. Attractive and stimulating displays in both Nursery and Reception make important contributions to learning and reflect staff commitment and understanding of the needs of very young children. Resources are well organised and facilitate the growth of children's sense of independence and responsibility, for example, when tidying up.

24 Children are given a rich and stimulating range of experiences that enable them to develop confidence and linguistic competence, for example, in Nursery, when children present a 'concert' style recitation of rhyme for their peers. Very good quality classroom support enables the children to have many opportunities for fruitful dialogue with adults. Children are introduced to books within Nursery and develop interest and basic skills of early reading.

25 Good teaching in both classes leads to good gains in knowledge, understanding and skills within mathematics. The children are provided with a variety of activities and classroom organisation that develop concepts such as number, measurement, time, space, shape and size, with suitable emphasis on mathematical vocabulary; for example, in a very good nursery lesson, children developed a secure understanding of the words 'behind' and 'next to'.

26 Children are given many and appropriate opportunities for exploration and skill development. For example, the provision of a wide variety of well-organised resources such as masks, hats and clothes enables children to engage in imaginative role-play such as that of a paramedic.

27 Throughout the Foundation Stage, children are encouraged to listen, concentrate, persevere and behave socially and with courtesy. They are rightly reminded about manners, and the need to care for each other. Staff ensured that equal opportunities are afforded to all children. Staff set excellent role models for children's personal and social development, particularly through their relationships.

28 Very good teamwork and relationships between the staff and children contribute to very good class management which is achieved in an unobtrusive manner. In summary, the Foundation Stage provision represents a real strength of the school.

29 Overall, teaching is good in Key Stage 1. Teaching and learning are good in English, ICT, science, and physical education. Teaching and learning are very good in mathematics and satisfactory in art, music and religious education. Insufficient lessons were observed during the inspection period to enable secure judgements to be made about the quality of teaching and learning in history, geography and design and technology.

30 Overall, teaching is satisfactory in Key Stage 2, with a significant amount being good and very good. Teaching and learning are good in mathematics, science, ICT and physical education, and satisfactory in English, religious education, art, design and technology and music. Insufficient lessons were seen to make secure judgements about teaching and learning in history and geography.

31 Across the school, teachers plan thoroughly for their lessons, taking into account the different needs of pupils. Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and how they should behave. Another key feature of teaching is the efficient and effective use of material and human resources in order to maximise learning opportunities for pupils. Teachers and support staff work in close partnership to present a consistent and supportive ethos in classrooms. In virtually all lessons, pupils' behaviour is managed very effectively, though this aspect of teaching is more variable from class to class. Pupils respond co-operatively as a result of the good levels of mutual respect between staff and pupils.

32 The basic skills of literacy and numeracy are prioritised and in most cases taught well. Teachers' delivery of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies is enabling pupils to achieve well in English and mathematics. The good work of classroom support assistants makes a significant contribution to the learning of those pupils with special educational need and particularly so in English and mathematics lessons.

33 The additional staffing from Education Action Zone (EAZ) is having a significant impact on learning, as was most evident in a Year 2 English lesson involving pupils writing character descriptions. Both teachers worked very effectively as a team to meet the needs of all pupils, resulting in very good learning. Similarly, pupils' learning about ICT is benefiting significantly from the contribution of the EAZ teacher and the classroom support assistant. Their expertise is undoubtedly boosting learning and helping to raise teacher expertise in ICT.

34 Some very good teaching was seen in mathematics lessons, especially in Year 2 and Year 5. In these successful lessons very good management of pupils, stemming from excellent relationships between teacher and pupils, enthusiastic teaching and use of correct mathematical language resulted in enthusiastic response from pupils and rapid gains in their learning. A further example of very good teaching occurred within a science lesson involving Year 4 pupils. A striking quality of this teaching was the teacher's clear use of scientific language and effective questioning that reinforced pupils' investigative skills.

35 Teaching is good for pupils with special educational needs. Lesson planning reflects the fact that teachers and support staff have a good level of awareness of the needs of individual pupils. Teachers and very good support staff respond sensitively and appropriately to the needs of all pupils, especially for those who have statements of special educational need.

36 Homework is set appropriately in line with the school policy and supplements work done in school. Pupils' work is marked thoroughly and positively with teachers giving praise where appropriate and, in best practice, indicating where improvements need to be made. However, the school recognises further development is required in the records that are kept of pupils' progress in learning. There is also acknowledgement that whilst very good use is made of the new ICT suite, greater use needs to be made of classroom-based ICT.

37 In summary, teachers and support staff are hardworking and firmly committed to pupils' personal and educational development.

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

38 The curriculum provided for the children in the Foundation Stage of learning is good, with an effective balance between teacher-directed activities and independent learning experiences for all the

children. There is a strong emphasis on promoting their personal, social and emotional development. This is very important as many children enter the Nursery with poor personal and social skills and low self-esteem. The curriculum for pupils aged five to eleven is broad and balanced and meets all the statutory requirements, including the demands of the Barnsley Agreed Syllabus for religious education. There has been recent additional emphasis on improving literacy and numeracy skills and, as a result, pupils are now making better progress in English and mathematics. The provision for ICT has been greatly improved since the last inspection through the creation of an ICT suite with new computers and software. Consequently, they are now making much better progress and standards are improving. The curriculum is enriched by involvement in national and local initiatives, exemplified by the school being part of the Barnsley EAZ. This involvement is being successfully targeted at improving pupils' literacy and ICT skills. The school also works with the Barnsley Performing Arts Development Team to give teachers confidence in delivering this aspect of the National Curriculum. The school serves an area in which social inclusion is an issue and all staff work hard to develop and maintain the pupils' self-esteem.

39 The provision for the pupils' personal, social and health education is satisfactory and is enhanced by a range of visits, including residential stays for older pupils. During these visits they learn social skills such as working together and caring for others. This experience is important, given the disadvantaged part of the country in which pupils live, as for many of them it is the first time they have visited other areas and experienced a different way of life. With the help of the school nurse, the school provides for sex education in a sensitive and supportive manner. The pupils are able to take on a variety of responsibilities, for example older pupils looking after younger ones, and this has a positive effect on their personal development. All pupils are able to take part in 'circle time': activities in which they sit in a circle with their teacher to explore a range of issues, such as the effect of their actions on others.

40 The school is successful in ensuring that all pupils have equal access to the curriculum. There have been recent improvements made in the planning procedures, so that they take better account of the needs of pupils of different abilities. The school has identified the need to develop a more consistent approach to medium and short-term planning so that all teaching is well focused with clear learning objectives. Good systems are in place to support pupils with special educational needs, thus enabling them to make effective progress towards the targets in their individual education plans.

41 The provision for extra-curricular activities, including educational visits, is wide ranging. Pupils are able to take part in activities such as drama club, choir, design technology, keyboard (music), line dancing and ICT club. The school gives all pupils an opportunity to take part in a variety of visits that enrich the curriculum by providing further learning experiences. These include a residential visit for older pupils, helping to develop their personal and social skills. There have been visits from theatre groups, artists, an Indian dance company and a professional drummer, to help develop pupils' creative skills.

42 projects, for example the school magazine. The community police come in to give 'Stranger Danger' talks, and the local fire brigade visits to give advice on fire safety. The Pensioners Group of Grimethorpe was entertained by the school choir at their Christmas lunch, which helped develop the pupils' understanding of the needs of the elderly and how they can care for others. The pupils are involved in raising money for a variety of charities, including the 'National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children' and the 'Heart Foundation'. This also enables them to gain a good understanding of the needs of others. Successful links with the local secondary school effectively prepare pupils in Year 6 for when they transfer there.

43 Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. This is an improvement since the last inspection, although a significant part of the improvement has taken place rapidly over recent months. The carefully planned assemblies, following a two-year programme of themes, have a good and significant impact on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The Foundation Stage gives pupils a very good start through its strong provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the school's youngest children. This is now being built on in a more structured and progressive way through a more planned, whole-school approach.

44 Assemblies allow opportunities for reflection, for example when pupils are invited to think quietly about what sort of neighbour they would like to be, following a dramatised, modern story of the Good Samaritan. Opportunities are taken to encourage pupils to consider the rights and wrongs of different issues, there are high expectations for pupils' behaviour and pupils are often involved in presenting assemblies. For example, pupils from the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 dressed up as emergency services personnel and were involved in presenting a story about people who help us. These opportunities help to develop pupils' speaking skills, which is especially important here because these skills are at a low level. Music is used to develop pupils' awareness of their own and other cultures. During the inspection, music of the Grimethorpe Colliery Band was played and celebrated and later in the week African music was played.

45 Opportunities to promote spiritual development are provided in some lessons, as in a Year 1 science lesson where pupils were thrilled and amazed by the growth of hyacinths. The Nursery teacher conveys a real sense of wonder and excitement about the Nursery activities. Lunchtimes start with all the pupils sitting down and saying grace together, which creates a moment of calm reflection within the lunch break and sets the tone for pupils to eat together sociably. Provision for spiritual development in religious education lessons could be further extended.

46 Classes have developed rules based on the school rules and pupils have an understanding of what is right and wrong. Circle time is well used to discuss issues that arise in school and to raise pupils' self-esteem.

47 Provision for pupils' social development begins as soon as they enter the Nursery, where they quickly learn the routines and begin to gain independence through helping to tidy up after activities. The staff provide good role models, treating pupils and other staff politely and with respect. Pupils are given opportunities to work together in pairs or groups and to take responsibility for small tasks. The social development of older pupils has been slowed by the many changes of teachers and headteachers in the school. There is now a stable, consistent atmosphere in the school that should enable these pupils to be given more opportunities to show initiative and take responsibility.

48 A lot of work has been done recently to improve pupils' awareness of other cultures. Visits and visitors to the school continue to give pupils a good awareness of their own culture. These have now been enhanced by visits introducing other cultures, for example, workshops on Indian dance and African drums. There is also now a greater awareness of other cultures within the classrooms, helping pupils to become more aware of the world outside Grimethorpe.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

49 The school takes good care of its pupils. All staff have good relationships with the pupils and know their needs.

50 Arrangements for child protection are good. The headteacher is the named teacher for the school, she is fully trained and has issued written guidance for the staff and developed good working

relationships with the local Social Services departments. She now plans to organise training for the staff to further enhance the arrangements.

51 All classes have personal, social and health education lessons, often using circle time to discuss issues. There is now a co-ordinator and she has worked hard to set up a personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE) curriculum with the support of the local authority and the Healthy Schools initiative. Although pupils' personal development is currently well supported through existing lessons and through the good relationships between pupils and staff, the new scheme of work and the planned staff training for delivery of PSHCE, will enable the school to look at the development of pupils' personal development in a more effective way.

52 Health and safety procedures are fully in place and staff take good care to ensure that pupils are safe. There is good provision for those pupils with statements of special educational need.

53 Very good systems for monitoring attendance and punctuality are now firmly in place. The school contacts home on the first day of absence and has clear procedures for sending letters home and involving the Educational Welfare Officer. The headteacher works closely with the Educational Welfare Officer to support families. Similarly the procedures for monitoring punctuality involve parents at an early stage. These systems are combined with encouragement, praise and rewards, in the form of certificates, to give very good procedures for monitoring and improving attendance and punctuality. Punctuality has improved and is no longer unsatisfactory and the school hopes the procedures will result in an improvement in attendance in time.

54 The school's discipline policy includes bullying, racist and aggressive behaviour and is applied consistently in school. Most pupils respond well to the rewards and sanctions and are keen to earn points for good behaviour. Pupils in the Foundation Stage are given a good start in the way they are encouraged to behave well and respect others. Now that there is more stability in the school, and following work considering the effect of their behaviour on others, older pupils could be encouraged to take more responsibility for their own behaviour.

55 The school has not successfully addressed the key issue from the last inspection of improving assessment procedures and these remain unsatisfactory. Consequently, there is a lack of an effective system for assessing and recording individual pupils' attainment and the progress that they make in English, mathematics and science. A system is being trialed to track progress in writing but this has not had enough time to improve curricular planning or have a positive effect on standards. The school is aware of the need to make assessment arrangements more focused so that teachers are clearer about what the pupils need to do next to improve, especially in terms of developing their writing skills. It is beginning to use its analysis of end of key stage tests to set targets for improvement in English, mathematics and science for groups and individual pupils, but this is in its infancy and not yet having a positive effect on standards attained. The school is aware of the need to make assessment arrangements more focused, so that teachers are clearer about what the pupils need to do next to improve. Assessment information for pupils with special educational needs is used in a satisfactory way to plan future work. Systems for the assessment of pupils when they start school are in place and the information from these assessments is used appropriately to plan subsequent learning experiences. The school has satisfactory procedures in place to monitor the achievements of different groups of pupils but again, the information from these is not always used effectively to meet the needs of pupils of different abilities.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

56 The last inspection report judged that not enough was being done to encourage and develop the partnership with parents and that the quality of information for parents was, overall, unsatisfactory.

57 There has been a rapid, recent, improvement across the school, building on the good information provided for parents in the Foundation Stage and the very good relationships between staff and parents found there.

58 Less than 20 per cent of parents' questionnaires were returned, and only two parents attended the parents' meeting, giving some indication of how much parents feel involved in the school. From the questionnaires that were returned parents felt that they could approach the school with a concern but did not feel that the school works closely with parents or that they are well informed about how their children are getting on at school. These concerns stem from a longstanding ineffective partnership, which the school recognises will take some time and effort to overcome, before parents feel fully involved in their children's education and fully informed about their progress.

59 The written information now provided for parents is of a good standard. There are weekly newsletters, which keep parents informed about all aspects of school life, and a well-produced magazine that includes pupils' contributions. The content of the prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents has improved since the last inspection but the governors' annual report to parents still does not include all the legally required information, such as details of the special educational needs policy, details of access for pupils with disabilities and the rates of unauthorised absences. Annual written reports are useful in telling parents how their children are progressing but they do not give enough information about what pupils are expected to be able to do. Furthermore the lack of proper annual reports for last year's Year 5 has not given parents confidence that the school keeps them informed, even though this is no longer the case.

60 A few parents help in school and their support is highly valued. Parents have been involved in reading with Year 2 pupils and have been invited into school more frequently. The headteacher has worked hard to build up good relationships with the parents so that they now feel comfortable to approach the school with any concerns. Parents are becoming more involved in their children's education but many feel let down by the system and it will take continuing effort to build a fully effective partnership.

## **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

61 For a number of years the school has suffered as a result of lot of changes in leadership and management. There has been a range of reasons for the changes but all have combined to affect the stability, standards and staff morale within the school. However, since the appointment of the current interim headteacher, there has been a significant and rapid improvement in many areas including leadership and management, teaching, staff morale, pupils' attainment, especially that seen in lessons, and in pupils' personal development. The governing body has changed considerably and now has a substantial core of very resolute and experienced governors who are determined that the school shall succeed and that standards will improve. The formation of the Strategic Planning Group, consisting of three governors, the headteacher and representatives of the LEA, to monitor and evaluate improvement and plan for the future, is a very positive step and is a clear indication of the very strong force for change that is resulting in speedy school improvement.

62 Now, after a period of uncertainty and a lack of forward movement, the school has improved considerably.

63 Currently the school is well led and managed by the headteacher and other key staff. The lack of stability in leadership in the recent past has been addressed. The interim headteacher is providing very good leadership and a clear direction for the school. She leads by example and has excellent personal relationships with staff and pupils. The deputy headteacher is an integral part of the improvement and there is very good teamwork between her and the headteacher. There is a unambiguous plan for improvement, outlined in the School Development Plan (SDP), and swift, practical and very effective action to bring about improvement. The SDP has been completely re-written based on a very clear analysis of the school's needs. Financial planning is now good and is unmistakably matched to the targets for school improvement. The school makes good strategic use of resources.

64 Governors and the LEA are very determined to build on the current good and rapid improvement and stability and are formulating a strategy to secure the long-term leadership and future of the school. This is quite obviously the biggest challenge facing the school as the current headteacher is an interim appointment. All, including the LEA, who have been very supportive and active in the recent developments, are aware of the importance of this and are resolute that they will build on the current school improvement.

65 The school has a good level of teaching and support staff to meet the schools' needs. All staff are well deployed and support staff are an integral part of pupils' learning. Recent instability in staffing has been addressed apart from difficulty in recruiting a permanent teacher for Class 3. However, the governors remain committed to making a good quality appointment at the earliest opportunity. Staff morale has improved considerably as can very clearly be seen from the quality of teaching and teachers' enthusiasm for their job. Improvement in this aspect of the school has been brought about by very good leadership which, besides providing the stability that the school currently enjoys, has carefully monitored and evaluated the school's performance in this area and has taken very effective action.

66 Learning resources are appropriate in most areas of the school and very good for ICT. There has been a considerable improvement in the quantity and quality of resources recently. The accommodation is well used, is bright with good quality display and is well maintained. The school clearly and effectively applies the principles of best value.

67 In summary, the headteacher, very well supported by the governors and other key staff, are providing very good direction and leadership and management. The stability provided in this area is directly responsible for the turn around the school is experiencing.

68      **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

- The school needs to raise standards.

Pupils' levels of achievement in the latest SATs at Key Stage 2 in mathematics, English and science are very low and constitute an area of serious weakness. (paras 1, 90, 99, 111)

- Governors, together with the LEA, should take steps to secure the future leadership and management of the school, building on the very good management of the interim headteacher and the considerable recent improvements. (para 64)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	51
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	20

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	12	20	19	0	0	0
Percentage	0	24	39	37	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. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents almost two percentage points.

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y7
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	50	186
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		91

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y7
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	1	53

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	4
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	9

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	7.4
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	15	18

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	9	8	13
	Girls	17	16	16
	Total	26	24	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	79 (56)	73 (53)	88 (75)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	8	10	11
	Girls	17	18	18
	Total	25	28	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	76 (59)	85 (75)	88 (84)
	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	14	14

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	6	7	8
	Girls	5	3	4
	Total	11	10	12
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	39 (47)	36 (57)	43 (63)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	6	7	8
	Girls	5	3	4
	Total	11	10	12
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	39 (47)	43 (53)	50 (53)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

### ***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	236
Any other minority ethnic group	0

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

### ***Teachers and classes***

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y7**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21
Average class size	27

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y7**

Total number of education support staff	9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	180

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	13
Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	50
Number of pupils per FTE adult	9

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Recruitment of teachers***

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	3
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	1
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	3
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	1

### ***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	24	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.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	2000
	£
Total income	480994
Total expenditure	480530
Expenditure per pupil	1929
Balance brought forward from previous year	39413
Balance carried forward to next year	39877

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## ***Results of the survey of parents and carers***

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	236
Number of questionnaires returned	40

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	60	30	8	3	0
My child is making good progress in school.	38	48	10	3	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	33	43	18	3	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	23	48	18	3	10
The teaching is good.	48	43	8	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	33	38	23	8	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	43	45	5	5	3
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	35	60	3	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	20	48	25	5	3
The school is well led and managed.	28	48	18	3	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	38	53	5	0	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	20	35	38	8	0

Only a small number of parents returned questionnaires and two parents attended the Parents' Meeting. However, from these and discussions with a small number of parents during the inspection week, it is clear that although worried about the instability in leadership and management over recent years, parents are recognising the recent improvements. The inspection team agrees with parents' comments.

## **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**

#### **Introduction**

69 Children in the Foundation Stage, (i.e. the Nursery and Reception years), start school in Nursery at standards that are low in relation to national expectations. As a result of good teaching and good progress, most children begin the National Curriculum in Year 1 having achieved the Early Learning Goals in most areas of learning. A significant number of children, particularly those spending only one term in Reception, need to make further progress in the areas of communication, language and literacy and knowledge and understanding of the world. The school has raised standards of achievement since the previous inspection as a result of improved quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage. Teaching is planned very well and caters well for the needs of all. However, the school is currently planning to implement an improved system of record keeping. Attractive and stimulating displays in both Nursery and Reception make important contributions to learning and reflect staff commitment and understanding of the needs of very young children. Resources are well organised and facilitate the growth of children's sense of independence and responsibility, for example, when tidying up. Communication with parents is very good. Parents are warmly welcomed by staff and are kept well informed about what children are learning.

#### **Communication, language and literacy**

70 Most children begin Nursery with standards that are low, especially in speaking and listening skills. Only a few have developed their speech to a level that enables them to express themselves confidently. Very few can write their own names, though rather more can read their own name. Despite this, as a result of very good teaching, children's linguistic skills develop quickly.

71 They are given a rich and stimulating range of experiences that enable them to develop confidence and competence, for example, in Nursery, when individuals present a 'concert' style recitation of rhyme for their peers, and through the opportunities presented by the puppet theatre. Very good quality classroom support enables the children to have many opportunities for fruitful dialogue with adults.

72 Children begin mark making, as a preliminary stage of writing, in Nursery and further develop these skills in Reception in order to write small but recognisable sentences, for example, in their writing about the 'Three Little Pigs'. Children are introduced to books within Nursery and develop interest and basic skills of early reading. Children are beginning to grasp the rudiments of reading; for example, they are able to recall the key events within the story of Goldilocks'. Children in Reception are beginning to identify unfamiliar words by reference to their initial and final letter sounds. They know about authors and illustrators and the conventions of text, such as capital letters.

73 Children listen well to tapes or to their teachers and talk about their own experiences and important events in their lives. Children in both year groups enjoy singing nursery rhymes and other songs.

#### **Mathematical development**

74 Children start Nursery at standards well below expectations for mathematical development. Most children attain the Early Learning Goals by the start of Year 1. At least good teaching in both classes leads to good gains in knowledge, understanding and skills. The children are provided with a variety of activities and classroom organisation that develop concepts such as number, measurement, time, space, shape and size. For example, the written instruction 'four children can play in the home corner', gives children opportunity to apply number in their day-to-day activities. Activities are well planned and there is suitable emphasis on mathematical vocabulary; for example, in a very good lesson in Nursery, children developed a secure understanding of the words 'behind' and 'next to'. ' Similarly, in Reception, children learned the words 'wide' and 'narrow', and were able to apply their knowledge when building 'bridges' for teddy to pass through.

75 Most children in Reception recognise numbers to ten, recognise and name shapes and explain their differences. Children have secure knowledge of shapes such as triangles, squares, rectangles and circles. They sing number rhymes and make patterns with shapes, and solve shape puzzles.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

76 Children begin school in Nursery with low levels of attainment in terms of their knowledge and understanding of the world.

77 Teaching is very good in this area of learning. Reception children were captivated when their teacher shared a book about a bear, and showed great interest. Subsequently, in the same lesson, children were engaged in a set of highly organised activities, such as observational painting.

78 Teaching in this area aims to foster curiosity, the capacity to persevere and to explore. Staff are sensitive as to when to supply information or when to allow the children's experimentation. Children learn more about their world through the use of natural materials and through small world and role-play activities. They learn about the growth of plants such as bulbs.

79 Children in Reception can use listening centres and learn to use the computer by entering their own user names and passwords and acquire appropriate skill in their use of a mouse.

80 Children learn about healthy living and hygiene, for example when washing hands before icing their buns. They know the names of their external body parts and how to keep clean and healthy, for example by warming up before physical exercise.

### **Physical development**

81 Most children start school below national expectations for physical development. Overall, good teaching develops gross and fine motor skills and the majority of children achieve the Early Learning Goals at the start of Year 1.

82 Children in the Nursery have access to a safe outside environment for which activities are well planned. In Reception classes children use the school hall and playground for physical education lessons. Children in the Nursery learn to use a range of small and large equipment and can build using large or small bricks and construction kits. They learn to use scissors and glue and a large variety of media tools such as pencils and paintbrushes.

83 Teachers plan for activities to develop confidence, control and co-ordination. The children use a range of equipment and develop awareness of space. A good quality movement lesson for Reception resulted in children demonstrating good control when skipping and hopping around their mats. Children

show sensible use of space and play safely with due regard for others, and know the importance of warming up.

84 Gross motor skills are developed by the provision of a variety of equipment that promotes crawling, climbing, balancing, riding, jumping or rolling; for example, Nursery children can walk with good balance along curved lines in the playground, before choosing their own play equipment.

### **Creative development**

85 Standards of development in this area of learning are well below expectations on entry to school. Good teaching has led to appropriate standards of work for the vast majority of this age group by the time they begin Year 1.

86 Few observations were made in this area of learning. However, it is clear from evidence on display, that children are given many and appropriate opportunities for exploration and skill development. For example, the provision of a wide variety of well-organised resources such as masks, hats and clothes enables children to engage in imaginative role-play such as that of a paramedic, subsequently demonstrated in assembly. They are also free to explore the sounds of musical instruments and to use a variety of art media to express their ideas, for example, in glue and sand pictures.

### **Personal, Social and Emotional Development**

87 When they start in the Nursery, children have levels of development that are well below those anticipated for their age. However, as a result of very good teaching, and a consistency of approach from teachers and support staff, children make very good progress in this area so that the vast majority reach the levels expected by the time they begin in Year 1. Throughout the Foundation Stage, children are encouraged to listen, concentrate, persevere and behave socially and with courtesy; for example they are rightly reminded about manners, and the need to care for each other. Even the youngest children in Nursery are beginning to show sociable attitudes and harmonious behaviour when using outdoor play equipment.

88 Children are taught to become independent, as is clear from their ability to dress and undress, with minimal adult help, when changing for physical education, in Reception. Staff ensure that equal opportunities are afforded to all children; for example within role-play there is no gender stereotyping. Children are skilfully encouraged to develop socially, spiritually and morally, for example by prayers and through hearing stories in assembly. Above all, staff set excellent role models for children's personal and social development, particularly through their relationships.

### **Co-ordination of the Foundation Stage**

89 The Nursery teacher, who is also the co-ordinator, together with additional resourcing, has had a significant impact on the work of staff in the Foundation Stage. Classrooms have been enhanced by the introduction of new furniture, carpets and learning resources, such as listening centres and the puppet theatre. The co-ordinator sets a very good example in terms of commitment, high expectations and effective organisation. In summary, the Foundation Stage provision represents a real strength of the school.

## **ENGLISH**

90 Over the last few years the standards attained by pupils in the national tests for 11-year olds have been very low in comparison with all schools nationally and with similar schools. Standards for 7-year olds have also been low, though there was some improvement in the 2001 tests so that results were comparable to similar schools. The school recognises that, although pupils start school with low-level language skills, they are not making sufficient progress and are not achieving the standards of which they are capable. The main reason for this is that the school has been through a difficult period, with a lack of stable and effective leadership and high levels of staff changes. Since the arrival of the current interim headteacher a number of initiatives have been put in place to improve the position and the indications are that pupils are now making better progress through the school because of these. It will take some time for these initiatives to have a positive effect on standards and it is unlikely that the current Year 6 pupils will attain better than previous years' cohorts. However, the picture is one of recent steady improvement in English, with a staff committed to enabling all pupils to achieve to their full potential.

91 The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, with some good and very good teaching in Years 2 and 5 enabling the pupils in these two classes to make good progress. All teachers plan thoroughly to follow the structure of the literacy hour so that there is usually an appropriate balance of activities in lessons. Preparation and organisation is effective so that little time is lost in moving between activities and as a result most children have a satisfactory work rate. In lessons for pupils in Years 2 and 5 there was effective use of questioning to find out what pupils knew and could do before they started the challenging and interesting activities. Teachers make effective use of the introductions in these lessons to develop pupils' speaking skills, which are poor throughout the school, by letting them discuss and explain their ideas. However, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to take part in structured class discussions and role-play activities to more effectively develop their communication skills. The plenary sessions are not always used as effectively as they could be to improve these skills by allowing them to talk about what they have learned in lessons. They are sometimes too brief, as was the case in a session for pupils in Year 3 when they were given only a couple of minutes to discuss and suggest improvements to their partner's 'wanted' poster for a character in a traditional tale. There are times when teachers do not act as sufficiently good role models when their diction lacks clarity or when they do not correct inaccuracies in pupils' speech. The listening skills of most pupils are also poor, which hinders their ability to make relevant answers to the teachers' questions and to gain an appropriate understanding of the work that they are to do. The school recognises the need to provide more opportunities for pupils to listen quietly to the views and ideas of adults and other pupils to better develop these skills.

92 The standards in reading are below average, with most pupils aged five to seven not being able to read accurately and confidently from texts appropriate for their age. They also find difficulty in retelling stories, as was seen in a lesson for pupils in Year 1 on the story of the 'Gingerbread Man'. In this lesson there was good use by the teacher of a puppet to capture the pupils' interest and encourage them to contribute orally to the introduction. By the time that they are seven, few pupils are able to use a wide range of strategies effectively to determine unfamiliar words, including the use of phonics. Pupils who are aged seven to eleven also demonstrate below average reading skills, being limited in their ability to recount stories, express preferences in reading matter and to talk in an informed way about famous authors. To improve the pupils' reading skills the school has timetabled guided reading sessions outside the literacy hour. In such a session for Year 4 pupils the teacher effectively helped them to read expressively and the work she set enabled pupils of different abilities to make good progress. A range of strategies is being explored to develop pupils' ability to answer complex comprehension questions, which the school has identified as an area for improvement. The library area and some classrooms do not provide stimulating environments for pupils to foster an enjoyment of reading. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to effectively develop their library and individual research skills.

93 The quality of writing has been identified as a priority area for development, especially in terms of improving pupils' story writing skills. Few pupils aged five to seven show the ability to use an interesting range of vocabulary or show an awareness of the reader in their writing. Most pupils are unable to write a sequence of sentences and punctuate them accurately, with simple words spelled correctly. This was evident when pupils in Year 2 were writing profiles of characters in 'Little Red Riding Hood'. There is an emphasis on developing the story writing skills of pupils aged seven to eleven, as was seen when pupils in Year 4 were learning how characters and events in stories can be influenced by settings. Pupils in Year 6 do not show appropriate ability to identify the difference between biographical and autobiographical writing or how to change from active to passive tense. They also needed a lot of support from the teacher in a lesson when they were learning how to plan a balanced argument using emotive and technical language. The standards of handwriting and presentation are poor, with words often spelt incorrectly through carelessness. Teachers realise the need to have greater expectations of what pupils can do and to ensure that pupils take more pride in their work. The marking of pupils' work is satisfactory, with constructive and encouraging comments, and is now beginning to tell them how to improve their writing. Appropriate use is made of ICT when pupils word-process their stories and poems.

94 The quality of the individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs has been improved since the last inspection, which is enabling them to make better progress towards the targets in writing that have been set for them.

95 Most of the pupils have positive attitudes to their work, being well behaved and showing interest and enjoyment in what they do. They are willing to listen to and appreciate the views and ideas of other pupils and can work well collaboratively in small groups. There are a significant number of pupils in each class who have short concentration spans and this hinders their work rate. There are also a number of pupils with behavioural difficulties that adversely affect their work but teachers usually deal them with in a firm but sensitive manner.

96 Pupils have opportunities to use their literacy skills to support their work in other subjects such as in mathematics when they read questions and then discuss strategies for finding solutions. Pupils label diagrams in science, and in geography and history record their ideas in a variety of written formats. However, these opportunities are not always effectively planned by teachers to target an improvement in specific skills, such as the accurate use of precise subject vocabulary

97 The leadership of the subject is satisfactory, with the recently appointed co-ordinator already having a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses enabling him to prioritise improvements in provision. The long and medium-term planning for English follows the framework of the National Literacy Strategy and is effective in supporting progression and continuity of pupils' learning through the school. This shows improvement since the last inspection. The school is beginning to develop procedures for recording individual pupils' attainment and the progress that they make but currently these procedures are unsatisfactory. A system is being trialed to track progress in writing but this has not had enough time to improve curricular planning or have a positive effect on standards. The school is aware of the need to make assessment arrangements more focused so that teachers are clearer about what the pupils need to do next to improve, especially in terms of developing their writing skills.

98 The curriculum is enhanced by involvement in the Barnsley EAZ. This has enabled extra support to be provided for pupils in Years 2 and 6. This support is of a high quality as was seen in a lesson in Year 2 when pupils were effectively helped in how to use a writing framework to compose a character description. The pupils also benefit from the good quality work of members of staff who are funded to provide additional literacy support. The school recognises the need to make the library areas

more stimulating environments in which to develop pupils' library and independent research skills. There is a satisfactory range of fiction and non-fiction books in classrooms and there are shared areas for pupils to develop an enjoyment of reading.

## **MATHEMATICS**

99 The school's 2001 national test results for 11-year-olds are low (in the bottom 5 per cent) when compared to all schools nationally and well below average when compared to schools of a similar nature. However, scrutiny of work completed by the present Year 6 pupils, and lesson observations, indicate that these pupils are attaining higher standards than those of last year, but these standards are well below the national average. Nevertheless, this represents a significant achievement when taking into account the very low standards that pupils have on beginning school in Nursery. Recent and rapid changes brought about in leadership and staffing are now beginning to improve standards.

100 The school's 2001 national test results for 7-year-olds are average when compared to all schools nationally and well above average when compared to similar schools. Scrutiny of work from Year 2 pupils and lesson observations suggest that standards match those of last year's Year 2. This represents very good achievement for these pupils.

101 The school has been reasonably successful in introducing the National Numeracy Strategy, but recognises that more needs to be done. As a result of recent changes referred to above, teaching and learning are very good in Key Stage 1 and good in Key Stage 2. Overall, teaching is at least good in more than half the lessons, and very good in almost half of lessons. As a result of good teaching, pupils make equally good gains in their acquisition of knowledge, skills and understanding. In virtually all lessons, pupils' behaviour and concentration are good.

102 Good teamwork between teachers and classroom assistants ensures a consistency of approach within class, which, allied to good relationships with pupils, provides a positive climate for learning in lessons. Pupils clearly enjoy mathematics and respond well to both the work they are set and the adults with whom they work. Such enjoyment was especially evident in a lesson involving Year 5 pupils learning about angles and in two lessons involving Year 2 pupils.

103 In Key Stage 1 keen emphasis is given to basic number facts and operations, such as addition and subtraction, and to the concept of place value. Pupils are given good opportunities to sharpen their mental skills, for example in Year 2 when counting in 10s to 100, and they develop their mathematical vocabulary by learning words such as 'rotation'. Some very good teaching in Year 2 lessons, involving learning about tessellations and relational operator signs, resulted in pupils' very good learning. The teacher's excellent relationships and management of the pupils were well rewarded by their very good response to the lesson. Her enthusiasm and use of mathematical language contributed significantly to the successful outcomes.

104 Pupils in Key Stage 2 continue to develop their mental and written skills in computation and extend their knowledge of shape, space, measures and data handling. Some very good teaching in a Year 5 lesson resulted in pupils making very good gains in their knowledge of right angles. The teacher sustained pupils' attention and pace of working and kept a close check on pupils' learning during the course of the lesson. A notable feature of this lesson was the extent to which high attaining pupils were challenged to think for themselves in solving problems involving the sum of angles on a straight line. In another successful lesson, involving pupils in Year 3, the teacher's very good deployment of classroom assistants resulted in the needs of all, especially low attainers, being met. The teacher

encouraged pupils to explain their strategies when performing mental calculations. Such practice both reinforces learning and boosts self-esteem.

105 Numeracy standards are below average at the later stages of Key Stage 2, but broadly average elsewhere in Key Stage 2 and throughout Key Stage 1. The impact of the National Numeracy Strategy is enabling pupils throughout the school to make good progress in developing their recall of number facts and in mental manipulation of number. They are becoming adept at using correct terminology when explaining their methods of performing mental calculations. However, very few pupils in Year 6 have reached average levels of skill in written calculations and in mental calculations mainly because this group of pupils has only experienced the for the relatively short period of two years and they have had many teachers during this period. Pupils are able to use and apply their numeracy skills in other subjects, for example the use of measuring skills in design and technology and in science.

106 Throughout the school, pupils with special needs are well supported and are making good progress. There are occasions, however, when all pupils and especially those with special educational needs would benefit from greater emphasis on the linguistic elements of mathematics. Once new words have been introduced in lessons, additional strategies need to be devised to assist pupils to retain knowledge and understanding of such mathematical vocabulary. Areas of weakness in pupils' reading skills do not impair their progress in mathematics. This is because teachers make judicious use of mathematics textbooks and ensure that the required tasks are understood by the pupils.

107 Teachers mark pupils' work accurately and positively, giving praise where appropriate and, in best practice, indicating where improvements are needed. The requirements of the National Curriculum are met. Homework is set appropriately and supplements class work.

108 Insufficient improvement has been made in the subject since the last inspection, because standards, measured by test results for 11-year-olds, have declined. However, the recently appointed co-ordinator is very enthusiastic and has a clear picture of where there are strengths and areas for improvement, as reflected in the good quality action plan. The action plan identifies key areas for development such as: raising standards for 11-year-olds; record keeping and assessment; and opportunities for the co-ordinator to check and advise upon the work of colleagues.

109 The school is at least adequately resourced for mathematics. However, the school recognises the need to provide more software in order to provide greater opportunities for pupils to use classroom computers.

110 The school acknowledges the need to maintain its efforts to bring older pupils' standards closer to national figures and has in place clear plans to bring about such improvement.

## **SCIENCE**

111 By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils' attainment in science is well below the national average but is not as low as the standards achieved in the SATs of last year where standards were amongst the bottom five per cent nationally. In Key Stage 1, although standards are below the average for all schools, they are in line with those attained by pupils in similar schools. Overall this is an improvement on previous results and the signs are, based on observation of pupils' work in lessons, that the improvement is continuing, especially in their investigative work. A good example of this was seen in Year 6 where pupils were mixing and separating solids. The key concepts were well developed and most pupils could explain how they would separate different materials after they had been mixed, what they expected to happen and why they had chosen their particular method. The majority of the class

recorded what they had found carefully. In this lesson the pupils' lack of scientific language, and their overall more limited speaking and listening skills, inhibited some of their scientific understanding. The school is clearly aware of this and anxious to develop this aspect of pupils' skills as well as their investigative skills. In a Key Stage 1 lesson where pupils were learning about plants, attainment was average, showing that the level of attainment is improving in many areas of science. In this lesson pupils knew that grass grows as a result of watering, they were able to tell the difference between plant growth over time and they are beginning to learn about the importance of environmental care.

112 In one of a series of Year 4 experimental lessons investigating keeping warm, pupils know about the term 'control' and what it means, can explain what is meant by a fair test, compare their melting ice cube with the control, made accurate observations and drew conclusions. Attainment in this very well taught lesson was clearly in line with the national average.

113 Learning is now good in science. Despite the difficulty with language development, pupils are keen to tell what they have observed and are developing accuracy in their observations. Many are clearly able to adapt and use their previous scientific knowledge and understanding and, especially in Key Stage 2, apply it to new situations.

114 Pupils are mainly well behaved and very interested in their science lessons and in many lessons they concentrate well and listen carefully to their teachers. Pupils enjoy the lessons, especially where there is more investigative and experimental science, although, for a considerable number, prolonged periods of concentration are difficult and they wander off task.

115 The teaching of science is good in both key stages. Teachers' confidence has developed considerably and lesson planning is good and thorough. Lessons are well resourced, carefully set up and build on pupils' previous knowledge, understanding and skills. The best lessons ensure that each step develops these skills in a structured way and teachers are careful to remind the class, at frequent intervals, what they are learning. Relationships between teachers and pupils are good and ensure that the pupils feel confident, for example when they are attempting to answer a question or explaining to the teacher, and to the class, about what they expect to happen in an experiment.

116 The co-ordination of science is good. The recently appointed co-ordinator is very enthusiastic and has a clear picture of where there are strengths and areas for improvement. The co-ordinator has a very good personal expertise in science and uses this very effectively in supporting teachers and in providing advice. There has been a lot of recent improvement in the way in which science has been organised, based on whole school discussions and on the evaluation of the monitoring and sampling of pupils' work carried out by the co-ordinator. As a result the school has increased the amount of investigative work that pupils do, there has been a considerable improvement in teachers planning, based on the introduction of an improved scheme of work and teachers are more confident in their own knowledge and understanding of the science topics.

117 The school has made satisfactory improvement since the last inspection and in some aspects of science, for example the development of practical investigation, a good level of improvement.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

118 The school has not successfully addressed the last report's key issue of improving standards and consequently by the time they are eleven most pupils do not achieve appropriate standards. One of the main reasons for this has been the lack of a programme of work to give teachers guidance on how to set challenging activities that enable pupils to develop their skills as they pass through the school. Such a programme, based on the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's guidelines, has recently

been introduced but has not yet had time to positively affect standards. However, it has led to an improvement in the quality of teaching, which is now satisfactory, with an emphasis on the development of pupils' basic skills so that they are able to build upon their prior attainment.

119 Teachers show a secure subject knowledge that enables them to explain and demonstrate the various techniques to be used. This was evident in a lesson for pupils in Year 5 when the teacher effectively showed pupils how to improve their sketching skills. Pupils aged five to seven are now able to develop their skills in using a range of media. They learn how to make close observational drawings, as was seen in the work of pupils in Year 1 who have used charcoal to draw portraits of their classmates. These pupils are also able to experiment with different techniques, such as when using a variety of dyes, including fabric dye and food colourings, on different materials. In a Year 2 lesson the pupils showed satisfactory skills when etching patterns onto polystyrene blocks and then using them to make prints with paint. Pupils aged seven to eleven now have opportunities to develop their artistic skills by the use of sketchbooks, though the quality of their sketches is not yet of an appropriate standard. In a good quality lesson for pupils in Year 3 they made good progress in their skills of using different pencils to sketch patterns based on the work of William Morris. The teacher's expertise enabled the pupils to make simple evaluations of their work and, in the light of these, make improvements to it. The pupils in Year 4 showed that they are beginning to develop their understanding of perspective when making three dimensional drawings of a chair. The paintings of pupils in Year 6 show an immaturity for their age and, in a lesson on making containers out of card and paper, they needed a lot of support from the teacher to complete their task.

120 The pupils obviously enjoy their art lessons and respond in an enthusiastic and positive manner. They use equipment and materials with care and can work well collaboratively when required to do so. Art contributes in an appropriate way to pupils' cultural development, with pupils having experience of a range of artists, as is seen in the work of pupils in Year 3 who have created patterns in the style of Kandinsky.

121 The co-ordinator has only recently taken over the role and already has a clear picture of where there are strengths and areas for improvement. There is satisfactory leadership of the subject that has identified areas for development. Monitoring of standards and progress in the subject is at an early stage of development and the school is aware of the need for this to be further improved. The accommodation is satisfactory but resources are barely adequate to support the demands of the National Curriculum in the subject.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

122 During the inspection it was not possible to observe any lessons in Key Stage 1. Therefore, there is insufficient evidence to make secure judgements about teaching and pupils' learning in Key Stage 1.

123 Standards attained by eleven-year-olds are below those expected for their age. Examples of work indicate that Year 6 pupils are unable to plan, make and evaluate their products to the level expected. In particular, many pupils have insufficient skills in written language to express their ideas appropriately.

124 Standards attained by seven-year-olds match those expected nationally. This reflects the good progress made from their low starting point when they begin school. Their limited skills in language also impact upon their attainment, for example, when required to explain how they might improve features of their work. However, they are able to explain how they set about planning and making, for example, when referring to bridges, made from re-cyclable materials in the previous term.

125 Despite the fact that pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding have not been sufficiently developed in previous years, there is now satisfactory teaching in Key Stage 2, resulting in pupils making satisfactory gains in learning. In a Year 6 lesson the teacher's good planning and preparation, allied to clear explanations, enabled pupils to distinguish between functional and decorative features, and criteria, such as texture and cost, that are used when designing a product such as a slipper. In a Year 5 lesson, pupils made good gains in their knowledge and understanding of the structure and function of a range of musical instruments. This lesson was successful because it was well planned and prepared and pupils responded well when given the opportunity to investigate. By the end of the lesson they were able to give brief descriptions using a well-structured prompt list. Another positive feature of the lesson was the opportunity for pupils to use the classroom computer to research the Internet for information. Pupils enjoyed this lesson, were keen to learn and behaved well.

126 Teachers make good links to other subjects of the curriculum, thus providing additional relevance for pupils' learning. An example of this was seen when pupils in Year 5, in their design of moving monsters, made good use of their scientific knowledge and understanding of pneumatic systems. Pupils in Year 2 have studied various bridges before planning, constructing and evaluating their own artefacts. Design and technology work clearly provides opportunities for pupils to use mathematical skills such as accurate measuring, for example, when Year 6 pupils used tools and resistant materials to make solid structures using a special jointing technique.

127 Effective subject leadership, from the recently appointed and enthusiastic co-ordinator, has resulted in satisfactory improvement being made since the last inspection. There is now a secure basis for long and medium-term plans ensuring a consistent and cohesive approach to lesson planning and that the requirements of the National Curriculum are met. On the basis of the very limited amount of work displayed around the school, considerable photographic evidence and teachers' plans, it is clear that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, are provided with suitable opportunities to learn about design and technology. The school acknowledges the need to implement a simple but effective system for recording the progress pupils are making in their learning.

## **GEOGRAPHY and HISTORY**

128 During the inspection there were only limited opportunities to observe geography and history lessons and as a result there was not sufficient evidence to make judgements on the quality of teaching and learning in lessons. As the school places a considerable emphasis on the development of standards and skills in numeracy and literacy the time allocation for history and geography is limited, although both subjects are still secure in the school timetable. A review of planning supports this with clear coverage of the topics and schemes of work.

129 A review of pupils' work in books and on display shows that standards are below average but that pupils do cover topics, especially in history.

130 The history co-ordinator has only recently taken over the role, but has ensured that there is a policy and scheme of work and an action plan in place. These will clearly need time to be effective in helping to develop the quality of lessons. All staff have the section of the scheme of work which is appropriate to their pupils' age and level of attainment and as a result history is secure in the school curriculum. There is no co-ordinator for geography.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

131 There has been a recent and considerable development in the provision for ICT and, as a result, while standards at the end of both key stages remain below average, a significant number of pupils are attaining standards which are in line with those expected nationally.

132 Teaching is good with a significant amount of very good teaching provided through the EAZ. Specialist teaching in the ICT suite is very effective with well-paced and expert demonstration motivating the pupils. In a Year 5 lesson, the teachers' very good relationships with the pupils, his professional and very confident demonstration and clearly made teaching points resulted in a very high level of pupil motivation and interest. They were eager to answer questions, very well behaved, and listened attentively to the teacher. As a result their attainment in this lesson was at the expected level and learning was very good. This standard is not in every lesson, but is having a profound and significant effect on the overall level of attainment, and on pupils' and teachers' expectations of what can be achieved.

133 Co-ordination is good. The co-ordinator is well established and has a good level of personal expertise. Planning and schemes of work are in place and this is clearly having an effect on the level of teaching. The influence of the EAZ is clearly an important factor in raising pupils' levels of attainment and the school's expectation of what pupils can achieve when using ICT. The school has an ICT technician who provides a considerable level of support across the school as well as ensuring that the suite is well ordered and maintained. The support she provides for staff is very good, further developing their confidence and personal expertise.

134 The level of provision is very good. The ICT suite is very well equipped with up-to-date computers, a projector for large display and demonstration, is completely networked and has new and suitable furnishings. The Year 6 classroom has an interactive white board and all classrooms have a computer. The level and quality of software have been improved with most areas of the curriculum having appropriate packages.

135 The school has made very good improvement since the last inspection. ICT now has a high profile, is well resourced and all the component parts are well co-ordinated and complementary: for example, the involvement of the EAZ and specialist teacher, the commitment of resources, the development of the ICT suite and the careful planning to improve teachers' skills and expertise. The school is aware of the need to make more use of computers in classrooms as these are not currently used consistently and effectively across the school.

## **MUSIC**

136 There was opportunity to see only limited aspects of the subject and consequently there is insufficient evidence on which to make a secure judgement on the standards that pupils attain by the time that they are eleven. However, it is evident that pupils are enthusiastic in singing and are confident when performing in front of an audience.

137 The quality of teaching is satisfactory with teachers having secure subject knowledge enabling them to use correct musical terminology when explaining to pupils what they are to do. This was evident in a lesson for pupils in Year 6 when they were learning about the structure of music hall songs. During this lesson the pupils showed that they could focus on control and diction when performing a song and use their voices expressively. In a Year 4 lesson the teacher used questioning effectively to encourage them to discuss how they felt after listening to a musical composition entitled 'Albatross'. Teachers make effective use of resources to capture the pupils' interest as was seen in a Year 2 lesson when the teacher used a video recording to stimulate discussion about music played in

the 'Emperor's Garden'. In both lessons the pupils showed that they could listen carefully and appreciate the music being played.

138 In school assemblies the pupils sing tunefully and with enthusiasm and obvious enjoyment. Pupils are given opportunities to take part in the school choir and in a range of musical performances such as at the Christmas and end of term concerts. The Pensioners Group of Grimethorpe was entertained by the school choir at their Christmas lunch. This helped develop the pupils' understanding of the needs of the elderly and how they can care for others. Music makes a good contribution to the pupils' cultural development, as they are able to listen to and appreciate music from other countries. The provision is enhanced by visitors. A good example of this was when a professional drummer worked with all pupils to develop their knowledge and understanding of the skills needed in playing percussion instruments. Satisfactory leadership is provided by a co-ordinator who has good subject expertise allowing her to effectively support and advise her colleagues. The monitoring of standards and progress in the subject is at an early stage of development and the school is aware that these assessment procedures are unsatisfactory. The school is keen to supplement the adequate resources by more tuned instruments and instruments from other countries to further pupils' cultural development.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

139 Pupils nearing the end of Key Stage 2 attain standards that are below those expected of 11-year-olds. This is especially so in the area of dance where very few are able to perform appropriate movement to musical stimuli. In most cases, pupils have a poorly developed repertoire of movement skill and have clearly not gained the necessary knowledge, understanding and skills during Key Stage 2. However, on the positive side, pupils are aware of the need to warm up before physical exercise and the effect of exercise on the body. Almost all pupils have learned to swim to at least the standard required by the National Curriculum and a few exceed this standard. The school is committed to the aim of getting all pupils to this basic standard in swimming.

140 Pupils nearing the end of Key Stage 1 attain the standards expected of seven year olds. They show appropriate ability in dance movement to express feelings such as 'happy', 'sad' and 'lazy'. In performing movements they show control in their actions and in maintaining stillness. They use space sensibly and with due regard for the safety of others.

141 Teaching in both Key Stages 1 and 2 is good overall. In a Year 2 dance lesson, very good teaching resulted in pupils making rapid progress in their ability to express their feelings. They were able to demonstrate increasing awareness of their actions, with many pupils beginning to enhance their performance as a result of observing the teacher's well-chosen exemplars. She was enthusiastic in making key teaching points, using the correct vocabulary, significantly contributing to pupils' learning. They behaved well and showed perseverance in their efforts to fulfil the teacher's high expectations of what they could achieve.

142 Good teaching of games skills was observed in lessons involving Year 4 and Year 5 pupils. In each case the fact that teachers changed into appropriate dress provided a good example for pupils. A notable feature of teaching in one lesson was the effective way in which evasion skills were taught, enabling pupils to learn the skill of a sidestepping action that was then applied within a 2 v 1 practice activity. Similarly, effective teaching with Year 5 pupils focused pupils' attention on accurate aiming and catching a small ball. The teacher ensured that the needs of higher attainers were well met by sufficiently reducing the size of their target area. These pupils rose to the challenge and showed good skills when working as pairs. In drawing pupils' attention to key aspects of technique for example.

“What do you notice about the movement of feet?” the teacher enabled pupils to develop a more effective throwing stance.

143 Pupils with special educational needs are fully integrated within lessons. They achieve at a similar level to their peers and are justifiably expected to conform to the rules of safety that apply to all pupils.

144 On the evidence of almost all lessons it is clear that there are good and often very good relationships between adults and pupils. These underpin the good control teachers have of their classes. In these lessons, good contributions are made to pupils’ social development and pupils demonstrate sensible behaviour and good attitudes and achieve well. One exception was that of a Year 6 dance lesson where pupils’ behaviour was rather immature and inappropriate, mainly because boys and girls were inhibited in performing in front of their peers.

145 There has been satisfactory improvement in the subject since the last inspection, especially in the quality of teaching, resources and planning. Planning documents provide evidence that National Curriculum requirements are met and there is an even provision of lessons throughout the school, some of which are enhanced by the involvement of outside coaches, for example, in cricket. The subject co-ordinator, appointed very recently, is enthusiastic about her role. She has a clear view of how the subject needs to be developed, especially the need for a simple and effective system for recording pupils’ progress in the subject.

146 The school has ample indoor and outdoor space, but the teaching of games skills in the hall would be improved by the provision of permanent line markings. Extra-curricular activities such as football and line dancing and a particularly valuable residential experience enrich pupils’ lives and contribute significantly to their personal and physical development and bear testimony to the staff’s commitment.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

147 Until recently there has been little improvement in the provision for this subject since the last inspection and as a result by the time that they are eleven most pupils do not meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. There is now a satisfactory curriculum with opportunity to study Christian beliefs and the other major world religious beliefs, such as Judaism, Hinduism and Islam. Whole school assemblies provide pupils with appropriate opportunities for quiet personal reflection to develop an understanding of an inner self. However, standards are inhibited by the pupils’ poor literacy skills, which result in unsatisfactory presentation of work and an inability to communicate their ideas and feelings to others in an appropriate manner. As a result, by the time they are eleven, pupils do not show more than a basic understanding of Christian beliefs and values nor an appropriate awareness of the traditions and customs of other major world faiths.

148 The quality of teaching is satisfactory with teachers having secure subject knowledge and being familiar with the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. The planning for lessons is appropriate with clear learning objectives that are aptly linked to pupils’ abilities. Pupils aged five to seven are taught about aspects of Christian belief and that Jesus is the Son of God, as well as being able to celebrate and learn about a range of religious festivals such as Christmas, Diwali and Easter. They are able to learn about the life of Jesus and have compared their lives with those of children in Jesus’ time. As pupils pass through the school the teachers continue to use religious education lessons to foster pupils’ social and moral development as was seen when pupils in Year 3 were discussing and sharing with the rest of the class a time when they helped someone. They are able to learn about the

life of Jesus and study parts of the Bible, such as the events of Palm Sunday. This was seen in a lesson for pupils in Year 4 when the teacher's exciting presentation enabled them to gain a good understanding of how it felt to be a member of the crowd on that day. The personal development of pupils in Year 6 was enhanced when they had the opportunity to rewrite the story of the revelation the Qur'an in a form that could be understood by pupils in the infants.

149 The pupils' attitudes to learning are positive and their behaviour in lessons is good. Pupils show respect for the feelings, needs and beliefs of others as well as demonstrating that they can reflect on the consequences of their own actions. In assemblies, they show that they can pray with reverence.

150 The leadership of the subject is unsatisfactory as there is insufficient opportunity for the co-ordinator, who has only recently taken over management of RE, to gain an effective overview of the quality of teaching and education in the subject, and to identify areas for improvement. Assessment procedures are also unsatisfactory and as a result teachers do not have a clear view of pupils' attainment or the progress that they make. There is a limited range of resources including artefacts and reference books. The current provision shows unsatisfactory improvement since the last inspection.