

INSPECTION REPORT

BIRKBY INFANT & NURSERY SCHOOL

Huddersfield

LEA area: Kirklees

Unique reference number: 107601

Headteacher: Mrs A Jones

Reporting inspector: Mr D Speakman
20086

Dates of inspection: 12th – 15th March 2001

Inspection number: 194963

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant & nursery

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 to 7

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Blacker Road
Birkby
Huddersfield
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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Ms Alison Stopher

Date of previous inspection: 3rd March 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
20086	Mr D Speakman	Registered inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Equal opportunities Provision for pupils with special educational needs	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
19374	Mrs W Sheehan	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?
8316	Mrs J O'Hare	Team inspector	English Music Religious education Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	
8839	Mr M Egerton		Geography History Physical education The Foundation Stage	
4350	Mr R C Whittington		Science Art and design Design and technology	How good are curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Birkby Infant School is larger than other infant and nursery schools, with 245 pupils in reception to Year 2, and a further 120 children part time in the nursery. It serves an area of social need close to the town centre of Huddersfield, and the percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals, at just over 40 per cent, is above the national average. Two-thirds of the pupils come from a Pakistani background and there is a small proportion of other minority ethnic groups including Black Caribbean and Indian. A fifth of the pupils are of a white origin, and the remaining pupils are from other ethnic backgrounds, including three from refugee families. One hundred and thirty six pupils have English as an additional language, which is very high, and 162 pupils are supported through ethnic minority achievement grants. Pupils come into school with standards of attainment well below those expected for three year olds, especially in English and personal and social development. There are 74 pupils on the school's register of special educational needs, which is above the national average, mainly for specific learning difficulties, emotional and behavioural problems or physical disabilities. Two of these have statements of special educational need, which is broadly in line with the average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very effective school providing a good all round education overall, and a strong foundation on which pupils can build for the future. The leadership and management of the school are excellent, and there is a shared commitment to continuous development and improvement. The quality of teaching is good throughout the school, and as a result, pupils make good progress. There are good relationships between pupils, and between pupils and adults and the school operates as a harmonious community. Pupils develop good attitudes to their learning. The school has significant strengths. Setting these factors against the average cost of educating each pupil, the school provides very good value for money.

What the school does well

- The leadership and management of the school are excellent.
- The quality of teaching is good throughout the school and promotes the good quality learning.
- The curriculum for pupils at Key Stage 1 is good, and very good for children in the Foundation Stage.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs, and for pupils with English as an additional language, is good.
- The school achieves good standards in behaviour and in pupils' attitudes.
- Procedures for the assessment of pupils' work are very good, and data is used well. The quality of care for pupils is good.
- The school promotes good links with parents and makes a valuable contribution to the community.

What could be improved

- Standards of attainment in English, science, and in aspects of mathematics involving English.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in March 1997. Since then there has been a good level of improvement. The school has made good progress in meeting the key issues recommended in the previous report. The governors are now clear about their responsibilities, and they effectively monitor and review the work of the school. Assessment procedures are now very good. Provision for pupils' spiritual development, religious education, and assemblies are better. There has been a good level of improvement in maintaining standards in pupils' academic progress and in their attitudes and behaviour. The quality of teaching, which is now effectively monitored, has improved since the previous inspection, particularly the amount of good and better teaching. The school's links with parents and the community are better than

before, and there has been a very good level of improvement in all aspects of leadership and management. The improvement in provision for children in the Foundation Stage is significant. The school has a good capacity to improve even further.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by seven year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	Compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
reading	D	E	E	C
writing	D	E	E	C
mathematics	C	E	D	B

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

Children enter the Foundation Stage with standards well below those expected for children of this age. They achieve well, but their attainment remains below the level required for them to meet the Early Learning Goals. In the national curriculum assessment tests in 2000, seven year old pupils attained well below the national average in reading and writing, and below average standards in mathematics. However, when compared with similar schools, standards were average in reading and writing, and above average in mathematics. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 in reading, writing and mathematics has risen in line with the national trend since 1997. Standards are currently below national expectations in English and science, but are in line in mathematics and all other subjects. The below average standard in literacy limits pupils' achievement in all subjects. By the time pupils leave the school, standards in information and communication technology and in religious education are as expected for seven year olds.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have good attitudes to school. They enjoy their lessons and other learning opportunities offered by the school. They are keen to achieve.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour in classrooms is generally good. Some inconsiderate behaviour was seen during the inspection, when pupils constantly called out during lessons. Behaviour in the playground is good.
Personal development and relationships	The personal development of pupils is satisfactory. Relationships between pupils and adults, and between pupils themselves, are good. Pupils work very well in class with others from different backgrounds and of different gender. Pupils' show too little care about the tidiness of the dining room.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory. It is below average.

The behaviour of pupils is good overall, and pupils are keen to achieve. However, this enthusiasm sometimes results in pupils calling out answers to teachers' questions in an uncontrolled manner. This makes concentration for other pupils difficult and sometimes the response of more self-controlled pupils is missed. Relationships between pupils of different ethnic backgrounds, and between boys and girls, are good. They work well in partnership with each other and the school operates as a harmonious community.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Good	Not applicable

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.

Teaching throughout the school is good, and promotes the good quality learning. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen during the inspection, and the vast majority of lessons seen were of a good, or better, quality. In 75 per cent of lessons seen, the quality of teaching was good or better. Teaching in nine per cent of lessons was very good and in a further nine per cent, it was excellent. Teachers have realistically high expectations of pupils' achievement. The needs of all pupils are well met through teachers' very good use of assessment. Teaching for pupils with special educational needs, and for those pupils with English as an additional language, is of a good quality. Basic skills are taught well across the curriculum including literacy and numeracy. A significant strength in teaching is the very good use teachers make of all available time, of the accommodation, and of the resources available to them. Good relationships between teachers and their pupils effectively build pupils' self-confidence and enable them to learn effectively. Some teachers' ability to manage discussions is less satisfactory and in these lessons pupils are often allowed to call out answers in an uncontrolled manner.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	This is very good for children in the Foundation Stage and good for pupils at Key Stage 1. All subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education are well provided within the school. Whole-school curriculum planning is very good and this supports teachers in providing a curriculum, which is highly relevant for all pupils. The school has very effectively implemented the national strategies for literacy and numeracy, enabling pupils to make good progress.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. It is well managed by the coordinator, and all teachers and support workers are aware of pupils' needs. This enables the identified pupils to learn well, make good progress, and meet the standards set in their individual targets.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Support for pupils with English as an additional language is well managed and effectively supports their progress. Planning of provision for identified pupils is very good and responsible teachers and support workers operate very closely, ensuring good, relevant and appropriate support is available.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for pupils' personal development is good. Provision for their spiritual, moral and social development, are all good, and very good provision is made for their cultural development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school's care for its pupils is good. The procedures for supporting the development of individual pupils academically are very good and are well used by teachers in their planning. Procedures for supporting and monitoring their personal development are satisfactory. The schools procedures for improving attendance are excellent. Very good attention is paid to the health and safety of all pupils, both when in and out of school. The quality of lunchtime supervision is unsatisfactory.

Parents' views of the school are very good. The quality of information provided by the school for all parents is of very good quality. The learning opportunities for pupils in the Foundation Stage are very good. The school has been working on developing this area of the school for some time and the Foundation Stage is now very well developed along nationally recommended lines. The school views support for pupils with English as an additional language and for those with special educational needs, as an integral part of their education, and not "added on" support. Planning, guided by this view, ensures good quality provision.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	This is excellent. The headteacher works very effectively with her senior managers, and together they have established a very clear vision regarding the development of the school. This is clearly communicated to, and shared by, all members of staff, and the work of subject coordinators is well developed.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors have high levels of involvement in the school. They are conscientious, well organised and generally fulfil their statutory responsibilities well.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Excellent. The headteacher, key staff and governors work very well together to identify the school's strengths and areas for development. The headteacher and senior managers rigorously monitor teaching, and know their staffs' skills well.
The strategic use of resources	The financial management of the school is very good. The school takes great care to ensure that money is well targeted. Spending is well linked to priorities in the school development plan. The school carefully considers the impact of their financial commitments on standards.

The headteacher shows excellent leadership qualities. Key staff provide excellent support for the headteacher, and their work is highly significant in school improvement. Subject coordinators manage their subjects very well, and they also work well to ensure good levels of achievement for all pupils. The headteacher has successfully built a capable team. Since the school has had its own governing body, rather than having combined responsibility with the neighbouring junior school, governors have become more involved in the development of the school. They work conscientiously and support the headteacher and her staff well. Very good attention is given to ensuring that the best value for spending is achieved. Although governors generally fulfil their statutory responsibilities well, a few items are missing from their annual report to parents and there is a need to clarify school policy in an important area.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children like school and make good progress. • Behaviour is good. • Children are given the right amount to do at home. • The teaching is good and teachers expect children to work hard and do their best. • They feel comfortable about approaching the school with concerns, and that the school works closely with parents, informing them about how their children are getting on. • The school is well led and managed. • Children are helped to become mature and responsible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extra-curricular activities.

The inspection team agrees with the positive comments made by the parents. The inspection team does not agree with the parents' view that there is insufficient provision of activities outside of lessons. There is an appropriate range of extra-curricular activities, both after school and during the lunch break effectively supporting pupils' learning.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

- 1 In the National Curriculum assessment tests in 2000, the standards attained by seven year old pupils in reading and writing were well below average, and below average in mathematics when compared to all schools. When compared with similar schools, standards in reading and writing were average and above average in mathematics. Although results have remained below average since 1997, the rate of improvement has been consistent with the national trend. Standards of literacy and numeracy in other subjects are below those expected for pupils of this age. Inspection evidence shows that pupils achieve below average standards in English and science and in some aspects of mathematics that rely heavily on pupils' knowledge of English. By the time pupils are seven, standards in other aspects of mathematics and all other subjects are as expected for pupils at this age. As they progress through the school, all groups of pupils, including pupils with English as an additional language, and those with special educational needs, make good progress.
- 2 Assessments completed within the first few weeks of starting school indicate that the overall attainment on entry to the reception class is well below average. The majority of children have poorly developed English language skills especially those for whom English is an additional language. Their speaking and listening skills are poor. Personal and social development is below that expected and children find it difficult to share activities with each other or to be considerate to the wishes of others. Physical skills are not well developed. Because of the very good provision in both the nursery and the reception classes, and the good quality teaching, the children make good progress. By the time they reach the end of the reception year many of them will have achieved the Early Learning Goals in personal and social development, creative and physical development and aspects of knowledge and understanding of the world and communication, language and literacy. Children will have achieved the goals in speaking and listening, but will still have some ground to make up in reading and writing. Similarly in mathematics although good progress has been made in the acquisition of numerical skills children will still be just below the required standard.
- 3 Pupils' communication skills are weak when they start school. Many start school with very little knowledge of English. The school focuses on developing speaking and listening skills and pupils make good progress. By the time pupils are seven, most confidently participate in class and small group discussions. The listening skills of some pupils are weak. This is shown when they call out without waiting to hear what others have to say and when they do not fully listen to questions. In some mathematics lessons, pupils tend to answer what they think they hear, rather than what is actually asked. On these occasions, the progress of pupils slows down. When pupils listen carefully, their progress is good and they learn new vocabulary quickly. For example, pupils remembered correct terms such as 'phonemes', 'digraphs' and in the small support group for pupils with English as an additional language, the pupils remembered words such as 'ingredients', 'salsa' and 'tortilla', when sequencing instructional writing.
- 4 By the time the pupils are seven, their standards in reading are below average, with a significant number of pupils who attain well below average standards. However, these pupils, including those who learn through English as an additional language, and those with special educational needs, achieve well, when compared with the low starting point in reading. Through a range of initiatives aimed to improve standards in reading, pupils' progress is being effectively accelerated. As a result, the pupils in Year 1 are set to attain the appropriate levels in reading, by the time they leave.
- 5 Standards in writing are below average by the time the pupils are seven. However a small proportion of pupils achieve the appropriate levels for their age. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, and those for whom English is an additional language, make good, and often, very good progress in the acquisition of writing skills. Pupils write for different purposes, including stories, poems and instructions. They are beginning to use a good range of punctuation

marks, such as speech marks, the apostrophe for missing letters, question and exclamation marks correctly. Their writing is becoming increasingly imaginative. Spelling is becoming increasingly accurate. Handwriting by Year 2 shows greater control, through specific and strongly focused teaching of these skills.

- 6 In mathematics and science, standards of attainment are limited by the pupils' ability to think clearly about questions and their knowledge of subject specific vocabulary. This is mainly because of many pupils' low level of English. Too often pupils do not think clearly about what is being asked, but give the answers to what they think they hear or read. For example, pupils see mathematical symbols and automatically look for the obvious answer. When answering a question such as $6 + ? = 13$ they automatically link the 6, +, and 13 and give the answer as 19. Their thinking skills are insufficiently developed to deal with questions that are out of the ordinary.
- 7 Standards in information and communication technology are in line with national expectations for pupils by the time they are seven. They are beginning to use simple word processing packages to produce free writing, showing a satisfactory knowledge of the keyboard. Some higher attaining pupils accurately locate their work from the previous session and bring it back onto the screen. About a half of pupils use editing procedures and they use the backspace and delete keys well to correct their mistakes. They know how to give accurate instructions to a floor turtle to make it move forward and to change direction. Pupils produce computer generated artwork at the expected standard.
- 8 By the time the pupils are seven, they have developed a good understanding of Christianity and of Islam and they appreciate that religion can guide people's lives. They are aware of some similarities and differences between different faiths. Pupils understand that Christians worship in a church and that Muslims visit the mosques for their prayers and that all places of worship have areas that are very special and spiritual. They know about the Bible and the Qu'ran, and understand that these are special books for Christians and for Muslims.
- 9 Standards of literacy across the curriculum are below those expected for pupils at this age. Skills in speaking and listening, reading and writing all remain below average. There are satisfactory standards in numeracy in other subjects and in mathematics, but when pupils have to interpret questions involving English, standards are unsatisfactory. The school has implemented the National Literacy Strategy well in literacy lessons. The effectiveness of the implementation of this strategy is good. The effect of the school's implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy is very good and this has a very positive impact on pupils' skills with number. Information and communication technology is used satisfactorily in other subjects, but the impact of this is limited by many pupils' weak keyboard skills.
- 10 Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards achieving the targets set for them through the high quality support from the staff. The school makes good use of its baseline assessment and other assessments to clearly identify pupils who require additional support. Work is very well matched to pupils' needs, which ensures good progress.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

- 11 Children in the Foundation Stage show very good attitudes to learning. They work well with each other, share resources and help each other. Children concentrate well on completing activities. High levels of concentration stem from the very good levels of praise and support they receive from the adults working in the classes. In all Foundation Stage classes children behave very well and are kind and considerate when working together. In the nursery and in reception they are friendly and eager to talk about what they are doing. They listen carefully to their teachers and they are becoming increasingly responsible for their own actions. When it comes to tidying up at the end of a session they all take part and take the task seriously. They are eager to be helpful to the teachers and other adults in their classes and want to please.

- 12 Pupils demonstrate good attitudes to their work and are keen to achieve. The good standards highlighted in the previous report have been maintained. Pupils are enthusiastic, they like coming to school and this is endorsed by the results of the parental questionnaire. In the excellent and very good lessons observed, pupils have very positive attitudes, and are keen to produce good work. In a Year 1 literacy lesson pupils were so involved in their work they didn't want to stop for the plenary. In an information and communication technology lesson a pupil mentioned how much they enjoyed the computer suite and all the different activities. In a Year 2 mathematics lesson pupils settled to independent work without fuss. They were keen, alert and full of excitement and enthusiasm. However, in some classes where teachers' management of pupils is less effective, this enthusiasm results in pupils calling out answers in an uncontrolled manner. This makes the concentration of other pupils difficult and the response of more self-controlled pupils is sometimes missed.
- 13 Pupils generally behave well in and around school. They show respect for staff and visitors, relate well to each other and work and play in harmony. Classroom rules are on display in each classroom. The class pupils often individually endorse these displays. This supports their good understanding and commitment to achieving them. Pupils strive hard to achieve the rewards whether individually or as a class. There has been no exclusion of pupils during the last year.
- 14 Pupils' understanding of their impact on others and their ability to show initiative and personal responsibility are satisfactory. Relationships between adults and pupils of different ethnic backgrounds and between boys and girls are good. In lessons pupils demonstrate a growing respect for others. A Year 2 religious education lesson showed very good examples of how well pupils are able to explore their own feelings in response to religious art. They work well in partnership with each other and the school operates as a calm integrated community. However, at lunchtime there is little rapport between lunchtime supervisors and pupils, and this causes some pupils to feel uncertain about where to turn for help in the playground if they need to do so. Social skills are sometimes poor. After lunch the state of the dining hall reflects a lack of care and understanding of their surroundings and little personal responsibility.
- 15 Pupils' standards in personal, social and health education are satisfactory. They respect other pupils very well and a harmonious atmosphere exists. Pupils show a developing personal responsibility particularly for their learning where they work closely with the teacher to set targets for improvement. In a Year 1 circle time, pupils who had achieved targets celebrated their success with the rest of the class and this raised their confidence and self-esteem. When setting new targets for improvement these pupils showed good skills to assess their own work. They are learning to appreciate their role as a citizen by gaining an understanding of other cultures and understanding the needs for rules in a school. A healthy safe lifestyle is encouraged, for example, through the purchase of fruit at afternoon playtime, and topics on road safety.
- 16 Attendance is unsatisfactory as the rate of authorised absences is well below the national average. A significant number of pupils take extended holidays back to their country of origin during school term time. These extended absences affect the learning and make progress in their speaking, listening and understanding of English more difficult.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

- 17 Teaching is good and promotes the good quality learning. The vast majority of lessons seen were of a good or better quality. Of the 67 lessons seen, the quality of teaching in 51 was good or better, in 12 it was very good or better, and the teaching in six lessons was excellent. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed during the inspection. Teaching effectively enables all pupils to achieve well and develop good attitudes. This represents an improvement on teaching at the time of the previous inspection when the teaching in about one in ten lessons was unsatisfactory and was very good or better in only one in twelve lessons.
- 18 Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subjects that they teach and of their pupils' learning needs is good. Teachers appreciate the learning needs of these pupils, in particular those pupils

with English as an additional language, and those with special educational needs. Lessons are planned so all pupils, including those at different levels of attainment are given work at an appropriate level, ensuring that pupils' learning is securely based upon what they have already learned, and therefore effective. Planning is based on reliable assessment of standards and pupils' needs. The good targeting of work extends to oral sessions, when questions at appropriate levels and phrased in specific ways are directed to different pupils, giving them confidence. Lower attaining pupils, and those with special educational needs, are well supported by their class teachers and the effective work of the support assistants.

- 19 Basic skills are taught well across a wide range of subjects. The development of literacy and numeracy skills plays an important part in the school and all adults promote this effectively. Teachers' lesson planning is good. Activities are appropriate and effectively enable pupils to achieve the intended learning outcomes of lessons. Interesting activities stimulate pupils, establish their attention at the beginning of lessons and encourage their participation. High interest levels also ensure that pupils sustain concentration and that they work hard to make good progress in acquiring good levels of skills, knowledge and understanding. High levels of motivation and interest are achieved through teachers' enthusiasm and evident enjoyment in teaching their classes. In an excellent Key Stage 1 mathematics lesson, the pupils' interest was immediately captured and subsequently sustained throughout the lesson, through the teacher's own enthusiasm. Teachers' expectations of their pupils are high. They are fully aware of the levels that their pupils are at and plan appropriately demanding exercises. They mostly expect high standards of behaviour in lessons. Pupils are generally managed well and high standards of behaviour are established and maintained in class. However, the ways in which teachers deal with the high levels of enthusiasm and lack of self-control from some pupils in shouting out answers in some of oral sessions is inconsistent. In some lessons it is clear that this is not tolerated and pupils respond. In others, teachers talk over the calling out of some pupils. Pupils who occasionally present instances of inappropriate behaviour are dealt with appropriately and effectively in a respectful, non-confrontational but firm manner. Expectations of behaviour are generally made clear and pupils are aware of how they should behave in class to enable lessons to progress appropriately.
- 20 Teachers use good methods in lessons and ensure that pupils' gains in knowledge and understanding are good. They use a good balance of teacher-led and pupil activity. In better lessons a good range of effective teaching strategies is used. The use of focused questions is effective in ensuring that all pupils are involved and that they feel confident to answer questions directed to them. Teachers often use the tone of their voice effectively and a lively approach to teaching in order to stimulate enthusiasm, through effective role model. Clever use of pauses and the timing of questions allows pupils time to think about their responses, but also ensures that lessons move at a brisk pace and sustain pupils' interest and concentration well. Pupils respond well by being very enthusiastic to achieve and make good progress. Consequently, pupils' learning is effective and they learn at a good pace.
- 21 Support staff are effective in their work in class and they make a positive contribution to the learning of the pupils in their care. They are fully involved in the planning of the lesson and are well aware of their specific responsibilities in class. They know the pupils well and have good relationships with them, providing sympathetic but firm guidance. Support staff effectively support the teachers in their work and work confidently and competently either along side them or with groups of pupils as directed. Resources are used to good effect and provide interest and variety in lessons.
- 22 Teachers are very aware of pupils with special educational needs in their classes. They are skilled at rephrasing questions to ensure that pupils have understood lessons, although pupils do not always understand what they are being asked, despite the best efforts of the staff. Pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties are handled sensitively and effectively. Pupils are placed in sets for literacy and numeracy work in Year 2, according to their levels of attainment, which is very beneficial, for special needs pupils. Teachers write pupils' individual education plans in conjunction with the special needs coordinator. Pupils receive good support from the classroom support assistants who are well briefed and competent to meet pupils' needs.

- 23 The quality of teaching of pupils for whom English is an additional language is good. Appropriate and specific tasks are carefully planned to meet these pupils' needs. For example, in a very good lesson in Year 1, the bilingual curriculum support worker read the story to a group of pupils in both Punjabi and English. There is a strong focus on the speaking and listening aspect of English in lessons. Teachers provide their pupils with good opportunities for involvement within group activities involving speaking. These opportunities effectively encourage the pupils' confidence. Teaching is effective because of the good level of small group support and through the appropriate pace of learning.

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

- 24 Both the overall quality and range of opportunities and the breadth, balance and relevance of the whole curriculum offered to pupils are very good, providing high quality learning experiences. There are many strengths within the curriculum, in that it is planned to be relevant to all groups of pupils in the school. There are good quality policies and programmes of work in all subjects. The cooperation between staff in planning the curriculum has a positive impact on its quality. Year group leaders meet together regularly and class teachers plan together within their year groups, to ensure that what they are going to teach is similar.
- 25 Following the previous inspection four years ago, there was one key issue associated with the curriculum. This was to 'review and evaluate the teaching from class to class to ensure that all subjects, but especially mathematics, humanities and religious education, receive sufficient attention and so provide a more balanced curriculum.' This key issue has been addressed fully.
- 26 The school meets all statutory requirements. The strategies for teaching literacy skills are good and those for numeracy are very good, and these are helping to raise standards. There is a very comprehensive Curriculum Development Plan, which sets out priorities for all areas, and covers the process of self-evaluation and development. Very good use is made of resources within the community to make the range of learning experiences more interesting. There are a good number of extra-curricular activities provided to enrich the pupils' learning. These include sporting and other activities, a wide range of visitors to the school and visits to places of educational interest. Pupils have good equality of access and opportunity within the curriculum. Provision for personal, social and health education, including sex education and drug misuse at an appropriate level, is satisfactory.
- 27 The curriculum is enriched by good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and this represents a marked improvement since the previous inspection. Collective worship, which was judged to be in need of improvements, has also been well addressed.
- 28 The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Pupils' needs are identified at an early stage and very good support is provided throughout their time at the school. Individual Education Plans contain very specific targets for pupils to achieve. These targets are reviewed regularly. The pupils have full access and entitlement to the National Curriculum. Very careful consideration is given when adapting the curriculum to meet the specific needs of pupils.
- 29 Curriculum opportunities for pupils who learn through English as an additional language are good. All pupils have equal access to all aspects of learning in the school. Planning of lessons is undertaken collaboratively and carefully targeted to ensure that these pupils receive an appropriate curriculum to meet their needs. The aim of the curriculum is to provide challenging learning opportunities for these pupils.
- 30 There is good provision for the pupils' spiritual development. Pupils take part in a collective act of worship each day, in which the staff create a quiet, reflective atmosphere through appropriate music and clear expectations of good behaviour. For some pupils, it is difficult to have an inner stillness. Nevertheless, the school works very hard to ensure that the pupils learn to be quiet,

reflective and still. Towards this purpose, the pupils are provided with numerous opportunities to reflect upon the important issues of life in sessions such as the end lessons, where they celebrate their successes and evaluate what could be improved. However, not all teachers provide their pupils with opportunities for awe and wonder, as yet. The headteacher is working hard to ensure that every opportunity is taken for this development to take place. Nevertheless, during the inspection, there were some outstanding examples observed in some classes. In the nursery unit, the teacher, working with a group of children in the water tray, produced from the sand, a piece of coral. The children were amazed at the delicacy and immediately started to ask questions about it. Later in the morning, the children were looking at a snakeskin, stroking it and comparing it to the touch of their own skin. They did this in complete silence, absolutely engrossed in the activity. In Year 2, in an outstanding lesson in religious education, the teacher effectively engaged her pupils' feelings and emotions through a variety of strategies, including reflection upon a piece of African sculpture. The pupils were absolutely enthralled by its beauty.

- 31 Provision for moral development is good. Teachers take every opportunity to emphasise right from wrong and the pupils have clear understanding of what is acceptable in the school, from their first day in the nursery. Through religious education lessons, the pupils become familiar with how both Christianity and Islam guide people's lives. Taking this a step further, each class has devised its own code of behaviour. Moral questions are discussed in sessions, called Circle Time, which successfully promote pupils' understanding of the impact of their behaviour on others. Through literature, the pupils are provided with opportunities to reflect upon moral issues and dilemmas, and through drama and role-play, they learn at first hand to resolve problems and to think about others. The theme for assemblies this week is 'Caring'. The pupils consider the need to look after the countryside and to avoid throwing litter to despoil it.
- 32 Provision for social development is good. Pupils are encouraged to show concern for others, less fortunate than themselves. Towards this end, they willingly support charitable collections, such as Red Nose day, for which they were preparing during the inspection. The school encourages their pupils to ensure that everyone feels included by introducing a 'Friendship Stop', where they can stand, if they feel lonely. As soon as anyone appears at the 'Stop', several pupils immediately invite that pupil to participate in a game or to come to talk to them. This is a very good example, whereby the pupils learn from their earliest entry into school, to feel welcome and to welcome others, and to show generosity of spirit.
- 33 The provision for cultural development is very good. There are attractive displays that celebrate the rich diversity of the local community. Pupils study both Christianity and Islam, and are knowledgeable about the way both groups of people worship. Teachers celebrate the cultural diversity in the school and the pupils are beginning to be aware of the many traditions that make up our society today. Cultural development is promoted through a wide range of visits and visitors. For example, the vicar of the local church makes regular visits. He has also visited the local mosque, as part of the close cooperation between the school and the wider community. The school celebrates the richness of the English language, as observed in the literacy lessons. Teachers seize opportunities to widen their pupils' awareness of other cultures. In a very good lesson on instructional writing in Year 2, the two teachers made very good links to a project on Mexico, when the pupils learned to sequence instructions for making tortillas.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

- 34 The school provides a secure and caring environment for all its pupils and this has continued since the last inspection.
- 35 Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are excellent. The school recognises that their attendance rate is well below the national average and is constantly striving to improve attendance with a wide variety of effective strategies that are leading to gradual improvement. A significant number of pupils take holidays during school term time and return to their country of origin. These pupils are taken off the register after the authorised time limit is reached. The

governing body is also supporting the school on a new initiative of working alongside the community to make parents aware of the detrimental effect of long-term absences on pupils' learning during these crucial early years of education. The school has very good links with the educational social worker that visits weekly. Registers are checked weekly and where concerns arise, a file is kept to effectively monitor these pupils. Good attendance is celebrated weekly in the Friday assembly, where a class trophy is awarded. Every morning registers are checked thoroughly and where no reason for an absence has been received, the secretary telephones parents. Bilingual support is included when necessary.

- 36 Procedures for child protection and for the safety and welfare of the pupils are in place and are of good quality. The school has appropriate policies and all members of staff follow procedures to ensure a safe environment for pupils. Staff, support staff and lunchtime assistants have received appropriate training on child protection procedures and have a good level of awareness. First aid facilities are focused in the central small hall and sufficient staff have first aid training and know the procedures to follow. The headteacher, caretaker and Health and Safety governor carry out regular six monthly risk assessments and together with regular repair and maintenance meetings, and discussions on health and safety issues at staff meetings, there exists a safe working environment for all. Procedures for the care of pupils during lunchtime are unsatisfactory. Pupils show poor social skills in the hall when eating their lunch. During play there is too little interaction between supervisors and pupils leading to poor relationships. Pupils only approach adults when upset, and there is little evidence of social interaction. Lunchtime supervisors do not encourage pupils to play appropriate games and this results in pupils becoming restless and sometimes upsetting other pupils. At the shorter playtimes during the day behaviour is much better.
- 37 Procedures for monitoring and promoting positive behaviour are good overall. Good links exist with the educational psychologist who works closely with the school to promote positive behaviour strategies. The school has a well-written behaviour policy based on positive praise and rewards with appropriate graded sanctions for poor behaviour. Where any pupils' behaviour is a cause for concern, a system for recording their behaviour is swiftly implemented. There are some inconsistencies in behaviour between classes. For example, in some classes too much calling out is permitted which leads to high levels of noise and a concern that the responses of more self-controlled pupils are overlooked. The school does not have the required policy on the use of physical contact with pupils.
- 38 Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are satisfactory overall. In the nursery and reception classes, where pupils' social development is part of the Foundation Stage curriculum pupils' personal development is monitored to a good standard. In Years 1 and 2, personal development is effectively promoted through religious education, collective worship and circle time. There are currently no written assessments to monitor pupils' personal development, although there are plans to develop these in the near future.
- 39 The school's procedures for assessing the attainment, development and progress of individual pupils are very good. There is a very effective coordinator who has responsibility for assessment and she is making a strong impact in developing very thorough procedures for monitoring, tracking and supporting pupils' academic progress through the school. Teachers use these in their planning to ensure that work is matched appropriately to each pupil's abilities. Test results are analysed to check for potential weaknesses in curricular areas. However, procedures for assessment and recording are not yet in place for all areas, such as personal, social, health and citizenship development. Assessments for pupils with English as an additional language are carefully gathered and maintained in all classes. Their performance is carefully monitored, including personal development and attendance.
- 40 Following the last inspection, a key issue was to 'agree and implement a comprehensive whole school assessment policy as soon as possible to help inform teachers' planning and provide better information in order to raise standards'. This has been addressed very effectively. Pupils are supported very well, and targets are beginning to be set which cover individual and whole-group objectives for the lessons. The school is developing very effective procedures, such as 'chances' charts, to indicate the likely test scores and show those borderline pupils who, by being

specifically targeted, may reach the next level. Test results are analysed by gender, and comparisons are made with baseline and yearly assessments to ensure that each pupil makes good progress.

- 41 Good procedures are in place for assessing pupils with special educational needs and work is planned carefully to meet their needs. Individual Education Plans are well written and contain realistic targets so that pupils' specific learning needs are met and their learning is built on step by step. The plans are reviewed very regularly and are shared with all staff, parents and pupils.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

- 42 The partnership between the school and parents has improved since the last inspection and is now very good. Parents have very positive views about the school. They are extremely pleased with the school's expectations for children to work hard and achieve their best. Most parents feel that the school works closely with them, it is well managed, and the quality of teaching is good.
- 43 The school is very active in promoting links with parents and adopts an energetic and enthusiastic approach to getting parents involved. Very good quality information is provided. Parents are well informed about school activities and pupils' achievements, through letters home and regular personal contact at the end of the school day. The school also ensures bilingual support is always available at the beginning and end of each day should it be required. Yearly reports give clear concise information about pupils' progress, attainment and their personal development. Clear targets for improvement in numeracy and literacy are included. Parents are fully informed when new targets are set for pupils in literacy, and are informed when each target has been achieved. The governors' annual report to parents is in an eye catching informative style. Homework is provided regularly for pupils, and the innovative use of dual language games in English, mathematics and science, further promotes pupils' learning. The involvement of parents in the formal work of the school is limited although a small number of parents give support in particular with reading.
- 44 Links with parents prior to children starting in the nursery are well established. Nursery staff visit children at home and this helps children feel secure and safe from the beginning. It also enables the school to foster a strong relationship with parents. In the nursery, parents are invited to select books, including bilingual books, and toys in order to share in their child's early learning. The school has also successfully organised parental courses, which included courses on "supporting your child's learning at home", "basic information technology skills" and "first aid", to help parents support their children's learning. Parents have been actively consulted and informed on the recent initiative to introduce a school uniform.
- 45 The school keeps good links with those parents who have children with special educational needs. Parents receive early notification of their children's needs and are kept fully informed from stage one of the Code of Practice. Regular meetings are held to ensure that parents are kept aware of all aspects of their children's needs, and are encouraged to be fully involved in their learning. Parents at the parents' meeting felt that children with special educational needs are supported very well.
- 46 Parents, whose children learn English as an additional language, are regularly and frequently informed about their progress. Parents are invited to discuss their children's progress and through informal meetings, when the pupils leave at the end of the school day, there are ample opportunities for a close liaison between school and home. An open-door policy is another factor in the school's care for these pupils.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

- 47 The headteacher's clear vision regarding the development and work of the school is excellent and effectively implemented. This has led to the high standards of provision and the good levels of

achievement by all pupils. This vision is clearly communicated to, and shared by, all members of staff and governors and together they are committed to improving provision constantly and raising standards. Governors, staff and parents express great confidence in the leadership of the headteacher.

- 48 The headteacher and other staff with management responsibility work very well together to ensure effective provision and they accurately identify the school's strengths and weaknesses. The deputy headteacher is currently out of school, but the headteacher is very ably assisted and supported in school management by enthusiastic senior members of staff. Together they make up the senior management team, which works effectively to lead and develop the high quality education provided by the school. They maintain a high level of morale within the teaching and support staff, and all adults say they feel they play an important part in the work of the school. All aspects of school provision are carefully and regularly monitored and reviewed. Outcomes are considered in great detail, and appropriate courses of action are decided upon and implemented. Subject coordinators work effectively to ensure high standards in their own subjects. They monitor teachers' planning files, check standards of pupils' work, and some coordinators have observed teaching in other classes. Again, the information gained is used to good effect in identifying strengths and areas for development, and this aspect of the work of coordinators has a positive impact on the good standards achieved.
- 49 The special educational need coordinator is very conscientious and carries out her duties efficiently. She has good levels of contact with teachers and pupils and she is able to monitor pupils' specific learning needs and progress. Systems and procedures are well established and are effectively implemented by the coordinator and staff. The leadership and management of provision for pupils with English as an additional language are good. The headteacher is pivotal in these arrangements. She keeps an overview of these pupils' progress and discusses any concerns with staff, parents and the pupils themselves. The school is allocated a grant which is well used to ensure the pupils receive suitable help.
- 50 The headteacher effectively monitors the performance of teaching staff and knows their strengths and development needs well. The outcomes of teaching observation are used effectively in continuously seeking improvement, and achieving best quality teaching possible through supporting teachers' training and development needs.
- 51 Members of the governing body are fully involved in both strategic planning and in the daily life of the school. At the time of the previous inspection, criticisms were made of the governing body's involvement in the work of the school. Governors were hard working, supportive and met their statutory requirements. However, the committee structure was not sufficiently developed because not all committees had a clear remit, and although the curriculum committee had been active in the development of information and communication technology, they did not have a clear oversight of the whole curriculum. At that time the governing body had the joint responsibility of both this school and a nearby junior school. Since then, each school has formed its own governing body, and the governors of Birkby Infant School are now more able to focus on managing their school more effectively. They have re-formed, and there is now an established committee structure, with clear terms of reference. Each of these works effectively and the criticisms made at the time of the previous inspection have been fully addressed.
- 52 Governors are fully involved in policy making. They are well informed about what is happening in school through newsletters, headteacher's reports at meetings, through the work of the committees, and through much informal contact with the school. Their work is highly valued by the school, and work of the committees is supportive. The premises committee, for example, has completed all necessary risk assessments, and this helps support the health and safety of the pupils. The finance committee works closely with the headteacher to ensure that any grants available are obtained and used to the benefit of this school. The governors are conscientious, well organised, and fulfil their statutory responsibilities well, including the setting of relevant and clear performance criteria for the work of the headteacher. There is a need however to ensure that all necessary policies are in place, such a policy to guide the staff when dealing with certain instances of inappropriate behaviour. A few items are missing from their annual report to parents.

- 53 Governors have been very active in the development of the school's life in and contribution to the community. They are currently working closely with the school in developing the local park grounds to improve the outdoor environment for the community. In planning this, the governing body sought the views of a wide range of people and they incorporated these into their environment development plan.
- 54 The financial management of the school is very effective. Care is taken to ensure that the funds available are well targeted, and that the best value for spending is achieved. Spending is well linked to priorities in the school development plan. These are costed carefully, and spending is effectively monitored throughout the year. Before major spending is confirmed, the governors ensure that they are getting the best value for money. A number of quotations are obtained for major investments, and these are carefully analysed before agreement. The school also looks carefully at the impact of their financial commitments on standards to ensure value for money is achieved.
- 55 Day to day administration of the school is good. All budgets and overall financial matters are well managed throughout the year, and the school uses a computer program effectively to support its financial commitments. The school administration officer provides very good support for the headteacher in running the school and organises the work of the office very efficiently. She keeps the headteacher and governors well informed about the status of the budget at appropriate intervals throughout the year. Computers are used very well to monitor finances, but the school is waiting for an upgrading of their system so that the use of information and communication technology in the office may be extended to add further efficiency.
- 56 The staff are fully qualified, have a good range of professional experience, and are of sufficient number to meet the full demands of the curriculum. There is an effective match between their qualifications and subject responsibilities. Staff responsible for the provision for pupils with English as an additional language, and those with special educational needs, are well experienced and qualified. Staff development is planned very carefully and is well balanced between individual professional needs, the school's own priorities, and the implementation of new national initiatives. There is a good level of supervisory staff at lunch times and of adults to support teachers in their work and pupils in their learning.
- 57 There is very good accommodation for the delivery of both the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 curriculum. All classrooms are of a good size and in good decorative order. The small hall is used continuously through the school day for small group work and some dance lessons, and contributes to giving pupils good opportunities for focused learning. The main hall is in use frequently during the school day for collective worship, lunchtime meals, physical education lessons, and at break times for activities suitable for certain pupils with special educational needs. The use of the fenced outdoor play area for nursery and reception children is very effective in supporting their early years' development. Nursery children were observed making a range of creative constructions in the outdoor area. The playground has an interesting range of activities as well as quiet seating areas that help to promote social development at playtimes. The information and communication technology suite is well equipped and enables the effective teaching of computer skills to classes.
- 58 Resources for learning are satisfactory in all the subject areas. In maths, science, design technology and religious education they are good, and in information and communication technology they are very good. There are good resources to promote multi-cultural aspects and the use of adults as 'reading friends' helps to promote a culture of books and reading. White boards and marker pens are used creatively to promote literacy and numeracy, and pupils enjoy the opportunity to use these. The creation of a computer suite has significantly improved resources for information and communication technology and is very well used by all the pupils in both the Foundation Stage and at Key Stage 1. The school is fortunate to have the services of an able technician who can give good support to both teachers and pupils. Resources are constantly monitored and where improvements are identified they are quickly put in place.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

To maintain the quality of education and promote further development, the governing body, headteacher and the staff should address the following issues:-

1. Raise standards in English, science and aspects of mathematics by:

- improving pupils' listening skills
- fully implementing the initiatives aimed at improving standards in reading
- improving pupils' knowledge and understanding of the technical language and vocabulary of mathematics and science
- creating further opportunities to encourage and improve pupils' thinking skills in mathematics and science.

(Paragraphs 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 9, 67, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 87, 88, 96, 97, 110)

The governors should also consider the following minor issues when compiling their action plan:

1. Ensure a consistent approach throughout the school to the way teachers manage classroom discussions and accept answers from pupils.

(Paragraphs 12, 19, 81, 91)

2. Improve lunchtime arrangements by:

- improving the quality of midday supervision, and the supervisors' involvement with pupils
- having higher expectations of pupils' behaviour and attitudes in the dining room.

(Paragraphs 14, 36)

3. Ensure that the governing body meets all statutory requirements with regard to the Annual report to Parents and to school policies.

(Paragraphs 37, 52)

PROVISION FOR AND STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS WITH ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE

59 There are 136 pupils who learn through English as an additional language, 3 refugee pupils and 162 who receive support through ethnic minority grants. These pupils make good and often, very good progress, through the effective teaching that they receive. Careful assessments of their need are undertaken as soon as these pupils are admitted into the school, in collaboration with the local authority. The information from these assessments is carefully recorded and used to group pupils into appropriate sets and to provide programmes of work, which addresses the precise needs of the pupils effectively. Through these careful arrangements, pupils achieve well and their attainment is commensurate with their abilities.

60 The quality of teaching of pupils for whom English is an additional language is good. Appropriate and specific tasks are carefully planned to meet these pupils' needs. For example, in a very good lesson in Year 1, the bilingual curriculum support worker read the story in Punjabi and in English to a group of pupils, before allocating the task of sequencing a story. There is a strong focus on the speaking and listening aspect of English in lessons, where the teachers give pupils good opportunities to discuss activities and agree ways and means of completing a task. In the final session of lessons, the pupils report back to others on what they have achieved. These opportunities effectively encourage the pupils' self-esteem and confidence.

- 61 Teaching is effective because the staff provide these pupils with small group support and step by step learning programmes. While the tasks are modified to meet these pupils' needs, nevertheless, the teachers make demands on their pupils to give of their best. These arrangements result in the pupils' good progress in language acquisition. A particular strength of these arrangements is the emphasis on early language acquisition through effective bilingual support in the Foundation Stage.
- 62 The pupils are very well integrated into the school through the warm and welcoming environment that the staff provides. Notices, labels and displays are in English and Urdu, so that the pupils and their parents can understand more clearly, the messages and the work that has been achieved by all pupils. These arrangements indicate how the school values all its pupils and effectively shares the rich diversity of the school community.
- 63 Curriculum opportunities for pupils who learn through English as an additional language are good. All pupils have equal access to all aspects of learning in the school. As a result, there are no barriers to these pupils' full participation in learning. Planning of lessons is undertaken collaboratively and carefully targeted to ensure that these pupils receive an appropriate curriculum to meet their needs. The aim of the curriculum is to provide challenging learning opportunities for these pupils.
- 64 Assessments are carefully gathered and maintained in all classes. The performance of pupils with English as an additional language is carefully monitored, including personal development and attendance. A strength of these arrangements is the welcome that these pupils and their parents receive. This helps their confidence and assists them to learn and to make progress. Assessment information is gathered and shared between all parties. The teacher for refugee pupils has praised the school for the efforts and hard work that are put into this area of the pupils' development. She has recognised the effect of the school's arrangements for these pupils.
- 65 Parents, whose children learn through English as an additional language, are regularly and frequently informed about their children's progress. The parents are invited to discuss their children's progress and through informal meetings, when the pupils leave at the end of the school day, there are ample opportunities for a close liaison between school and home. An open-door policy is another factor in the school's care for these pupils.
- 66 The leadership and management of provision for pupils with English as an additional language are good. The headteacher is pivotal in these arrangements. She keeps an overview of these pupils' progress and discusses any concerns with staff, parents and the pupils themselves. The school is allocated a grant to help the pupils receive suitable help. During the inspection, for example, the project worker for Afro-Caribbean pupils was observed giving encouragement unobtrusively to a group of pupils sitting close to him. Later in the lesson, in a group activity, he concentrated on discussion of the activities, and, as a result, pupils' interest and engagement were sustained. These strategies effectively enabled the pupils to make good progress.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	67
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	21

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
9	9	58	24	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	60	245
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	75

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	55

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	136

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	27
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	39

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	7.6
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.3
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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2000	64	44

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	43	46	56
	Girls	31	34	40
	Total	74	80	96
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	69 (66)	74 (70)	89 (75)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	46	50	50
	Girls	32	34	37
	Total	78	84	87
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	72 (66)	78 (72)	81 (71)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	6
Black – African heritage	1
Black – other	2
Indian	5
Pakistani	128
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	38
Any other minority ethnic group	20

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y2

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	19.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	18.6
Average class size	25.4

Education support staff: YR – Y2

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	120

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	30

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	78

Number of pupils per FTE adult	8
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	642006
Total expenditure	623551
Expenditure per pupil	1646
Balance brought forward from previous year	12205
Balance carried forward to next year	30660

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	305
Number of questionnaires returned	74

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	81.1	17.6	1.4	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	58.1	36.5	2.7	0	2.7
Behaviour in the school is good.	51.4	41.9	0	0	6.8
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	40.5	41.9	79.5	1.4	6.8
The teaching is good.	73	23	1.4	0	2.7
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	59.5	32.4	5.4	1.4	1.4
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	77	16.2	2.7	1.4	2.7
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	73	25.7	0	0	1.4
The school works closely with parents.	63.5	32.4	2.7	1.4	0
The school is well led and managed.	70.3	25.7	2.7	0	1.4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	71.6	24.3	2.7	0	1.4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	41.9	28.4	9.5	4.1	16.3

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

- 67 Attainment for the majority of children on entry to the nursery is well below the national average. The majority of children have poorly developed English language skills especially those for whom English is an additional language. Many of the children have difficulty making themselves understood, and their listening skills are poor. Personal and social development is below that expected for children of this age. Children find it difficult to share activities with each other or to be considerate of the wishes of others. Physical skills are not well developed and children find handling tools and materials a problem. Due to the very good provision in both the nursery and the reception classes, and the good quality of the teaching, the children make good progress. By the time they reach the end of the reception year many of them will have achieved the Early Learning Goals in personal and social development, creative and physical development and aspects of knowledge and understanding of the world and communication, language and literacy. Children will have achieved the goals in speaking and listening, but will still have some ground to make up in reading and writing. Similarly in mathematics although good progress has been made in the acquisition of numerical skills children will still be just below the required standard.
- 68 A major strength of the Foundation Stage is the stimulating environment that is created for the children. It is rich in the range of exciting experiences it provides in all the areas of learning from language to creative work. Teaching and support staff work wonderfully together to provide a caring environment for all children. All children, including those with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs, receive top quality care and attention and as a result of this they make good progress and feel valued. The weekly visits to and from Highfields Special School give opportunities for children to meet and share activities with children from the wider community.
- 69 The school has a very clear policy for the education of children in the Foundation Stage and this can be clearly seen at work in the nursery and reception classes. All the teachers work together very successfully to plan and implement a broad and balanced curriculum, which is geared not only to the Early Learning Goals but also to providing each child with success and a feeling of self-esteem and confidence. High expectations of children's performance, allied to constant praise and encouragement from all the staff, enable children to develop a feeling of real security and belonging. Day to day monitoring of children's progress is excellent and procedures for assessment are very thorough. The staff know each child extremely well and use this knowledge to provide for all their needs.
- 70 The most significant improvement since the time of the last inspection is the creation of a united Foundation Stage where staff work well together and have a shared vision for the future, a future where all children will find success.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

- 71 Children settle quickly into the nursery and the care shown to them by the staff soon makes them feel confident and relaxed. Through the good teaching and careful planning of activities they soon develop independence and are able to choose their own tasks when they arrive at the beginning of the sessions. The nursery programme is carefully designed to encourage choice and independence and as a result, children make good progress in their personal and social development. Throughout the Foundation Stage all the staff work closely together to ensure that the transition from nursery to reception is smooth and consistent. In the reception classes children find themselves in the same stimulating and caring environment with a similar range of activities that they have become accustomed to in the nursery. This helps them to continue to grow in confidence and to develop very good relationships with each other and the adults who look after them. In both the nursery and the reception classes there are very clear areas set out for different activities and children show growing independence by making use of this arrangement to choose

where they want to work. When choosing an activity they show very good attitudes to learning and with very good support and intervention from the teachers they work well with each other, share resources and help each other. A marked feature throughout the Foundation Stage is how well the children concentrate on completing an activity they have chosen. In the reception class, a girl who had chosen to use materials to make an elephant, worked quietly on her own carefully cutting and sticking a variety of materials for well over half an hour. These high levels of concentration stem from the very good levels of praise and support they receive from the adults working in the classes. In all the classes the children behave very well and are kind and considerate when working together. In the nursery and in reception they are friendly and eager to talk about what they are doing. They listen carefully to their teachers and they are becoming increasingly responsible for their own actions. When it comes to tidying up at the end of a session they all take part and take the task seriously. They are eager to be helpful to the teachers and other adults in their classes and want to please.

Communication, Language and Literacy

- 72 The provision for the development of language and literacy is very good throughout the Foundation Stage. A significant majority of the children will be well on course to achieve the Early Learning Goals in speaking and listening and in the acquisition of early reading skills by the end of the reception year. In writing, however, although they will be able to recognise their own name and write some words many children have not yet become independent writers. In the nursery and the reception classes the teachers and support staff use every opportunity to develop the children's spoken language. In the nursery during the final session the teacher talks to the children about skin and how it covers our bodies and then gives them a snakeskin to touch and feel. The experience of holding and touching the snakeskin is used to introduce and talk about a variety of new words such as texture, silky and fragile. The children remember words, which are directly linked to an experience.
- 73 The teachers in all classes are highly skilled in intervening in children's play to take opportunities to develop language. In a reception class where the role-play area is a veterinary surgery children bring in animals to be treated. The teacher takes on the role of the vet and is very skilled in getting the children to explain why they have come in and to answer the questions she asks them. In doing this she makes them develop their one word answers into sentences. Early writing often takes place in the role-play area. In the nursery the teacher is working in the writing corner with a group of children writing an invitation to a Tiger tea party. Although the children are making squiggles with their pencils the teacher is showing them the correct way to hold a pencil and giving them a feeling of being real writers. This approach of working in activities alongside children, almost in a one to one situation, is used very effectively throughout the Foundation Stage and is one of the reasons children make such good progress. By the time they reach reception the children have developed a real interest in books. This is due to the emphasis placed on the enjoyment of books. In the nursery, after tidying up children can be seen sitting quietly looking at the pictures in books in the reading area. In the reception classes they are making good progress in developing the early skills of reading. Children can recognise letters and the sound they make. They can explain how to use the content page in a book and they are developing an obvious enjoyment in books. The emphasis on the development of phonic skills is beginning to have an impact on the development of reading skills. Good provision is made for parents to borrow books to share with their children.

Mathematics

- 74 By the time they reach the end of the Foundation Stage children will have reached the required standard in number work but will be below the standard in solving problems. This is due to the fact that for many their confidence and ability in using the English language is not as advanced as their skill in using numbers. In the nursery and reception classes children make good progress in counting and many of them by the time they enter Key Stage 1 can count to 20 and above with some confidence. In the nursery the number games help them to recognise and name numbers up to five and in the outdoor area, beanbags and hoops are used to devise a target game. A teacher, who quickly has the children counting their hits and calculating how many they have scored,

supervises the target game. In all the classrooms there is a good range of number games many of them made by the teachers. These games are used very effectively because the teaching or support staff are usually part of the game and use their intervention skills to develop children's learning. As well as helping children to count, teachers introduce them to correct mathematical terms, help them to sort and match objects, and understand such concepts as 'bigger than' and 'smaller than'. In every classroom there is a strong emphasis on displays relating to mathematics and whenever an opportunity arises to develop mathematical work, it is seized upon by the teachers. For example, good use is made of the registration period in reception as a time to calculate how many children are away and how many are still in the class. The quality of teaching in mathematics is good with lively lessons capturing the interest of the children and bringing enthusiastic responses from them when they answer questions.

Knowledge and Understanding of the World

- 75 In all the practical aspects of knowledge and understanding, such as science, the majority of children will have reached the Early Learning Goals. In those aspects where the children need to have well developed language skills in order to respond to questions they will be below the required standard. The quality of teaching is good. In the nursery, opportunities to use clay, water and sand help the children to understand the different properties of materials. Through their topic they learn about different animals in the world and where they live. As they move on into the reception class they learn about people who help us and as part of this widening of their understanding of the world they live in they meet the police dog handler who talks to them about his work and his dog. Throughout the Foundation Stage very good use is made of visits and visitors. Children visit the local shops and are involved in the regeneration of the local park, Norman Park. They visit Eureka, an interactive science museum for children. As part of their topic work, they often have interesting artefacts in the classroom such as printed fabrics which reproduce animals' skin patterns. Children are developing an awareness of the passing of time as they talk about the days of the week and how things change over time. They use the computer with confidence and are able to use the mouse to click on different icons. Most children know where they live and can talk about features in their environment.

Physical Development

- 76 Children make good progress in their physical development and are well on course to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the reception class. In the nursery they have many well-planned opportunities to develop their physical skills through a wide range of climbing blocks, wheeled cycles and bats and balls. Good intervention in these activities by the teachers encourages confidence and exploration. In the reception class these opportunities continue to be available for a limited number of children only. This is useful for these children, who become more confident in controlling their movements. They become much more aware of space and of the need to consider each other. Children in the Foundation Stage love to dance and the corridor in the nursery can often become an impromptu dance area. Children of all abilities learn to handle tools and materials well when engaged in construction of creative activities. The youngest children can hammer nails into wood keeping control of both the hammer and the nail. They use scissors with confidence to cut different materials and they can control the glue when joining things together and the paint when working on the easel. The good quality of the teaching encourages children to be imaginative in their physical play and to enjoy new challenges.

Creative Development

- 77 Standards in creative development are good, and by the end of the Foundation Stage children will have easily attained the Early Learning Goals. In the nursery, the provision of a wide range of high quality materials and very good teaching enables children to be confident to express themselves. A group of nursery children worked hard to produce a collage picture of an imaginary animal called Humpy Lumpy. Humpy Lumpy now decorates the whole of the cloakroom wall along with captions telling people about him. Not only did the children gain enormous experience in using a wide range of materials but also an additional bonus was the composing and singing of a Humpy Lumpy song at the end of the session. In the Foundation Stage there are many good opportunities provided for

the children to sing songs and rhymes together. Children learn how to play percussion instruments, and in the reception class they have become quite skilful in picking up the beat made by an instrument and being able to repeat it. In all areas of their creative work children gain confidence and are able to make statements that their limited language prevents them from making in using the spoken or written word.

- 78 A considerable strength in the Foundation Stage is the way all staff work hard together to provide a caring and supportive environment. This clearly results in good progress being made by every child, including those with special educational needs. This is highly appreciated by the parents and carers of the children who always receive a warm welcome when they come to the school.
- 79 The quality of assessment and record keeping is very good. High quality home visits give staff a clear insight into some of the children's needs and this information is then built on using very detailed and perceptive observations during the child's early days in school. Profiles develop as the child moves through into the reception class and as these build up they provide an excellent bank of information on every child that is used to plan for their individual needs.

ENGLISH

- 80 The national test results for 2000 show that in reading and in writing, standards were well below average. When compared with similar schools, standards were average. Attainment has risen at a rate comparable with the national trend, since the previous inspection, in 1997. Inspection evidence indicates that standards are below average in all elements of the subject. Starting from a very low point in their language development on entry into school, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, and those who learn through English as an additional language, make good progress and achieve well in the subject. Good progress in the Foundation Stage is now beginning to impact upon standards at Key Stage 1 and standards are rising.
- 81 When the pupils enter school, they show weaknesses in their communication skills. Through careful provision and strong focus on speaking and listening, the pupils make good progress. They participate in class and small group discussions, through appropriate and relevant activities that meet their needs well. The teachers work hard to ensure that the pupils are engaged in discussions and that they acquire new words and correct expressions. For example, the teachers provide their pupils with opportunities for articulating their views and observations, and by creating a climate, where the pupils feel that their contributions are valued by the teachers. As a result, they make good progress in acquisition of speaking skills. However, there are occasions in some classes, where the pupils call out without waiting to hear what others have to say. On these occasions, the progress of all pupils slows down, because the teacher has to remind the pupils of what is expected of them. In good and the very good lessons, teachers swiftly and efficiently stopped calling out of answers by pupils, without slowing the pace, nor breaking the encouraging atmosphere of the lessons. This was observed in Year 2, where the pupils instantly responded to the teachers' high expectations. In addition, the brisk pace, the clear outline of learning targets for the lessons, stimulating activities, all resulted in sustained interest by the pupils and very good learning gains. For example, the pupils remembered correct terms such as 'phonemes', 'digraphs' and in the small support group for pupils with English as an additional language, the pupils remembered words such as 'ingredients', 'salsa' and 'tortilla', when putting a set of instructions into order. The pupils learned here by example from their teachers, who whispered instructions in order to encourage their pupils to go their group tasks quietly. This was successful. The pupils settled promptly and eagerly to their work, without interrupting anyone around them, nor calling out.
- 82 By the time the pupils are seven, their standards in reading are below average, with a significant number of pupils who attain well below average standards. However, these pupils, including those who learn through English as an additional language, and those with special educational needs, achieve well, when compared with the low starting point in reading. Moreover, all pupils make good progress. In recent months, pupils' progress has accelerated through a stronger focus on phonics in each lesson and improvements in teachers' expertise of how to teach reading. In addition, the school has set up a number of strategies to address reading standards. These include

participation in 'Fastlane' reading project, where the pupils receive specific and extra help with their reading. Through sessions with "Reading Friends" the school has also organised another successful Reading Friend group from the local community, who regularly and effectively give assistance to a number of pupils who have been targeted in Year 1 to help improve reading. The new coordinator has also successfully applied to the local authority to set up an Early Bird reading group, specifically to assist pupils to read. Early in the year, the coordinator held a meeting for parents to raise their awareness of the importance of books in their children's lives. A series of workshops, in partnership with Fastlane is planned to help parents to develop skills and strategies to help their children to read. This list of initiatives is not exhaustive: the coordinator, who knows how the subject should be developed, has since planned to hold a 'book week', to encourage a love of literature. All these initiatives are beginning to pay dividends. Pupils' progress is being effectively accelerated. As a result, the pupils in Year 1 are set to attain the appropriate levels in reading by the time they leave Birkby Infant School.

- 83 Standards in writing are below average by the time the pupils are seven. However, there are a few pupils who achieve the appropriate levels for their age. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, and those for whom English is an additional language, make good, and often very good progress in the acquisition of writing skills. This is due to the school carefully analysing standards, identifying weaknesses and putting into effect action plans to address them. There is a whole staff determination to succeed. For example, all teachers in Year 1 are targeting the middle ability group. Their chief aim is to raise standards for their pupils.
- 84 Pupils write for different purposes, including stories, poems and instructions. They are beginning to use a good range of punctuation marks, such as speech marks, the apostrophe for missing letters, question and exclamation marks correctly. Their writing is becoming increasingly imaginative as stories on displays indicate. For example, stories entitled 'The Magic Day' show that some of their work is now beginning to be well extended and using increasingly complex sentences to clarify the meaning. Teachers seize opportunities for consolidation and practice to improve pupils' writing. In Year 1, there are displays, showing literacy skills being successfully used to label 'everyday materials'. In Year 2, the pupils pose questions about 'The Great Fire of London'. Spelling is becoming increasingly accurate. Handwriting by Year 2 shows greater control, through specific and strongly focused teaching of these skills. In addition, there is a very good literacy environment in every class. There are attractive displays showing pupils' work, notices, labels and sentences abound on every available space in classrooms and corridors. Books, which have been carefully audited for bias or stereotyping, are invitingly displayed for the pupils to enjoy. These features result in good progress.
- 85 The quality of teaching is good. Out of 11 lessons observed, three were very good, seven good and one satisfactory. Since the previous report, when teaching was judged to be satisfactory, there has been good improvement. The quality of teaching is a major, contributory factor to pupils' making good progress and achieving well. Particular strengths of teaching are infectious enthusiasm, the procedures and use of assessments and the collaborative planning. These arrangements ensure that pupils' learning is planned on the basis of what has been learned before in progressive, step by step manner. There is very close liaison between all staff, and through the good relationships between them and between their pupils; a very good climate for learning is created by the staff. As a result, the pupils feel confident to contribute to class discussions and to be involved in their learning. All teachers outline targets for each lesson, and most check with their pupils whether these have been achieved during the final session. Teachers manage their pupils well and encourage them to give of their best. They modify their pupils' learning, as necessary, to meet their specific needs, but, nevertheless, they make demands on them in terms of levels of tasks. As a result, the pupils learn at their own pace, with appropriate challenges. Marking is regular and generally meaningful. Teachers acknowledge their pupils' efforts, but give them guidance as to how they may improve it further. There are comments such as '*Good story, but don't forget your full stops and capital letters*', or, '*Super story, but try to use some describing words*'. The pupils are given homework to consolidate and to extend learning further. There are good examples where information and communication technology is used to practise writing skills. As yet, not all teachers seize opportunities for this extension of pupils' skills.

- 86 The curriculum for English is good. The school has sensibly adapted and customised the literacy strategy, specifically to meet the needs of the pupils at Birkby School. This is achieved without losing the rigour or the requirements of the National Curriculum for the subject. The school is set, therefore, to make continuing and greater improvements in standards year by year.

MATHEMATICS

- 87 Standards in the National Curriculum tests in 2000 taken at the end of Key Stage 1 were below average when compared to the schools nationally, but above average when compared to similar schools. The proportion of pupils gaining the nationally expected Level 2 was comparable to the national figure, but slightly fewer gained the higher levels 2a and 3. Standards in National Curriculum tests of attainment have varied but the overall rate of improvement since 1997 is about the same as the national rate of improvement. Year 2 pupils are currently working at the level expected for pupils of this age, but there is a weakness in standards in aspects of mathematics that involve language because of many pupils limited skills in English. This is about the same as judgements made on standards at the time of the previous inspection, when they were judged to be average.
- 88 In Year 1, pupils consolidate basic number skills, knowledge and understanding. This is demonstrated when all pupils confidently count backwards and forwards up to ten, some to 20, and all pupils, including those pupils with English as an additional language, read and write numbers accurately. Most are beginning to develop an accurate recall of simple addition bonds to ten, but lower attaining pupils have to calculate by counting on their fingers or using counting blocks. Pupils apply basic number knowledge satisfactorily to different types of questions. More able pupils are beginning to recognise double as adding the same number twice and that they can use this to simplify the addition of three numbers. They also recognise pairs of numbers that add up to ten, and look for these patterns when adding two or three numbers. Average and lower attaining pupils still mostly rely on counting equipment to answer their sums. Again, a few more are able to link together addition and subtraction of number and use this link to find the missing number in a number sentence. This all shows that pupils are gaining an early understanding of number, but some do have difficulty when English language is introduced to questions, or they are presented with problems that may be written in another way. Here, most pupils do not initially understand what is being asked of them and answer what they think is wanted, or what is familiar to them. An example of this occurs when they are asked find the missing number in a number sentence such as $3 + \# = 7$. Many pupils automatically link 3, 7 and + and give the answer of 10. This shows that they fail to appreciate that questions can be asked in more than one way.
- 89 Year 2 pupils demonstrate a good knowledge of place value and they use this well to further develop their skills in number. By the end of the key stage, higher attaining pupils add numbers up to a hundred accurately, multiply numbers together and they are beginning to understand how to share numbers into a number of equal parts. They use their knowledge of place value to subtract large numbers mentally, by counting on in units and then tens. These pupils are effectively developing a range of strategies to deal with number problems and there is no evidence that higher attaining pupils experience the difficulties in number linked to English language that some other pupils have. These pupils competently apply their acquired skills to practical situations by pretending they are shopkeepers giving change to customers. They tell the time well and measure length and weight accurately using appropriate standard units and reading dials and scales accurately. Higher attaining pupils are developing a sound understanding of fractions and accurately calculate or draw halves or quarters of quantities and shapes. They have a good knowledge of shapes and they successfully preserve shape when copying onto squared paper. They have a good understanding of balance in shape and complete symmetrical shapes when given one half of the shape.
- 90 Pupils of average attainment achieve standards that are appropriate in all aspects of mathematics. They readily and accurately recall addition and subtraction facts to ten and confidently sequence numbers to a hundred. However, not all pupils are yet able to apply their knowledge to more complex questions, to choose appropriate methods for subtraction, or to cope with number

problems that involve English or are asked in a different way than usual. These pupils are developing suitable place value understanding and many are able to recognise that 79 comes after 80 when counting backwards for example. Lower attaining pupils are competent in counting in ones, twos, fives and tens. They add and subtract small numbers by counting blocks or fingers, but they have not yet moved onto counting in their minds without the help of counting aids. They also experience some difficulty in using different words. They understand “take away” but have some problem with “how many less than” for example. Their retention span of learning is also short and they have often forgotten much of what they have learned when they come back for the next lesson.

- 91 Good progress at both Years 1 and 2 is well supported by the attention pupils give to their teachers. Pupils respond well to interesting activities and challenge. They show very positive attitudes, and eagerness to participate in question and answer sessions. Sometimes it is difficult for the teacher to contain this enthusiasm and pupils too often call out answers. This draws attention away from quieter pupils and interrupts the concentration of others. Otherwise, behaviour is generally good, and pupils remain on task throughout lessons and they are attentive. They work well together in pairs and small groups, exchanging ideas and support each other well, learning well through discussion. There are very good relationships between pupils and between pupils and adults.
- 92 During the inspection the quality of teaching ranged from satisfactory to excellent. It is good and promotes the good levels of achievement made by pupils. Teachers give good clear instructions and lesson objectives are clearly stated in planning and made clear to pupils. This ensures that pupils are aware of what they have to do and learn and they only occasionally have to waste time asking what they have to do. Teachers make good use of resources and classroom helpers so pupils are well supported in their learning. Assessment is used to good effect in planning of lessons to ensure that pupils at different levels of attainment are given appropriate tasks. This also ensures the progressive development of skills and knowledge and appropriate reference to pupils' prior attainment. Teachers' intervention is appropriate, and pupils are generally allowed to work and solve their own difficulties, but support is given when necessary. Teachers are good at questioning which they use well to probe and develop pupils' knowledge and understanding. Most classes are well managed, partly through strategies and partly through very good relationships. Some teachers however, permit too much calling out of answers. Teachers' subject knowledge is good and they are able to discuss and answer questions well. In the very best lessons, pupils are bombarded with number from the beginning to the end of the lesson and they are expertly guided through different number experiences that build a very secure understanding of the aspect they are learning. Expectations are high and clearly stated.
- 93 The school has made the transition to the National Numeracy Strategy well in terms of planning, teaching, development of resources, and the introduction of planning to match pupils' levels of attainment. Although the coordinator is currently not in school, very high levels of guidance and advice have been provided that is enabling staff to provide well for these pupils and consequently standards are high. Coordination of the subject and its development over recent years are very good and currently the headteacher is looking after the subject's development along the set, secure plans already made. There is a well-constructed policy and meticulous planning to support teaching. Teachers plan lessons in year groups so that all pupils have full access to the numeracy and mathematics curriculum. The school currently places pupils in Year 2 in teaching groups that are based on their prior attainment. This is effective, and enables teachers to focus closely on the level of work appropriate to their pupils. This helps pupils at all levels of attainment to make good progress. This is also helped by the good use teachers make of analysis of assessments to monitor pupils' performance and to guide future planning. The school has good, well-organised resources to effectively support teaching.

SCIENCE

- 94 The teacher assessments for seven year olds show that standards of attainment are well below the national average. Although the last inspection reported that standards were in line, the teachers'

assessments for that year show that they were actually well below the national average. Teacher assessments for 2000 show that, although the percentage of pupils reaching Level 2 or above is still well below the national average, the percentage reaching Level 3 is now above. Evidence from lesson observations and an analysis of pupils' work during this inspection show that, although overall standards are below the national average, they are now higher than at the time of the last inspection, and are still rising.

- 95 The previous inspection found that there was 'no common assessment policy to check the development of pupils' skills and knowledge.' The report stated that 'a system for monitoring teaching is needed to ensure continuity and progression between and across year groups.' This is no longer the case, and these areas of weakness have been very effectively improved.
- 96 All areas of the National Curriculum are covered thoroughly, and investigative methods are used effectively in many lessons to give a practical basis to learning. Pupils with special educational needs receive good levels of support, and make good progress. The poor speaking and listening skills of many pupils handicap their learning.
- 97 By the time they leave the school, pupils have a sound knowledge of how they grow, sequencing their developments from childhood to old age. They use adjectives to describe materials (a useful link with literacy), and recognise which different materials give protection: for example, shiny material helps you to be seen. However, a significant number of pupils still experience difficulty in understanding the language of science and in sorting out appropriate responses in class discussions. Many do not think carefully enough before answering. Pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of electricity, including the dangers and give specific advice, such as 'Don't pull the wire,' and 'Don't get the wrong plug.' They have looked at instructions for medicines and are aware of what makes a healthy meal. Much of the work covered is practical, and pupils are encouraged to research using library books. In all classes, there is evidence that the same topic is covered by all with different levels of work set for each level of ability. This often includes extension activities available for those pupils who need them.
- 98 There are high quality displays in most classrooms, which reinforce and celebrate what is learned. In Year 1, these include the movements of pushing and pulling, which are illustrated from physical education lessons and a visit to the park. Pupils have looked at the way they have changed since they were babies and have sorted, classified and used different materials. In Year 2, displays of work show the different aspects of electricity: words, where electricity is used, and a graph of electrical items found in school. The study of different food groups is illustrated by graphs of favourite foods.
- 99 Standards of teaching and learning are good overall, with around one fifth satisfactory, and a tenth very good lessons seen during the inspection. Specialist teaching in Year 2 ensures that the subject is covered effectively, and the teamwork between the specialist, the class teacher and other supporting adults has a very positive impact on learning. Teachers' questioning skills are particularly effective in building on what the pupils already know, and making them think. Assessment tasks are set at the end of each unit studied to show where more reinforcement is needed. Much of the written work is marked alongside the pupil, so that what the teacher says is relevant and understood. The behaviour and attitudes of the pupils are generally good, and this contributes very positively to their learning. They are enthusiastic, listen carefully and work happily together.
- 100 The coordinator for science is very effective. She is developing the subject thoroughly and this is having a direct impact on the rising standards. Scientific ideas are developed further by the use of an excellent range of games (put together by the coordinator). These cover all units of study, have multi-lingual instructions and pupils borrow them to take home. Lessons are planned by year group teams to make sure that all pupils cover the same work. The coordinator has observed lessons, and has discussed these with the class teachers. A useful portfolio of work is being developed, containing samples of a range of pupils' work. The quantity and quality of resources are very good and pupils use these responsibly.

ART AND DESIGN

- 101 Standards in art and design are generally in line with what would normally be expected of pupils of this age. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make sound progress throughout the school. This reflects the findings for the subject during the last inspection.
- 102 All areas of the curriculum are covered, and art is used well within various topics. Computer programs are used to draw pictures. Examples of three-dimensional art throughout the school include weaving, collage, and faces, masks and hedgehogs made from clay. However, sketchbooks introduced in the reception class are insufficiently used through the rest of the school, and the design aspect of the subject is underdeveloped. Artwork is effectively displayed, showing richness in artistic culture, and highlighting the high level of influence that art has across the curriculum. Those specifically related to art include a portrait gallery and pictures in the style of Archimboldo from Year 1, Mexican masks from pupils in Year 2 and a mural in the hall entitled 'Come back, Hercules'.
- 103 Few lessons were seen during the inspection and the quality of teaching during these was good. Teaching is satisfactory overall and promotes the sound quality of pupils' learning. Resources were prepared well, ensuring that all pupils had what they needed. Pupils enjoy their lessons, and they work cooperatively, sharing tasks and appreciating the efforts of others. This has a direct impact on the quality of work produced. The overall quantity and quality of resources is satisfactory. The previous inspection found that there was 'little monitoring of the levels achieved by pupils.' This is still the case.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

- 104 Standards in design and technology are in line with what would normally be expected of pupils of this age. They generally make sound progress throughout the school. This reflects the findings for the subject during the last inspection.
- 105 There is evidence throughout the school to show that all aspects of the curriculum are covered, though not equally. Opportunities are provided for pupils to work with a good variety of materials. They plan and construct, but there are too few opportunities provided for all pupils to evaluate and refine their designs, in order to further improve the quality. In Year 1, they have used natural dyes, made from onion skins and beetroot. They construct pivots, sliders and levers to make models, such as the Enormous Crocodile. In Year 2, pupils design and make model skateboards, have learned appliqué and created Joseph's Coat of Many Colours: displays show the various stages, from planning to evaluation. They use their skills and techniques satisfactorily to create and produce artefacts at standards that are appropriate to pupils of their age.
- 106 Although few lessons were seen during the inspection, evidence suggests that the overall quality of teaching is sound. Lessons are planned carefully to ensure that all pupils have appropriate work. Generous levels of good quality support from a variety of adult helpers ensure sound progress; and the pupils' interest and enthusiasm also contributes to the quality of work seen. There is an effective temporary coordinator, and although the policy is somewhat outdated, this is due to be reviewed next year. The overall quantity and quality of resources are satisfactory. They are readily available and are used with care. There are assessment systems linked to the scheme of work, to record the various levels achieved by the pupils.

HUMANITIES

- 107 Although the term humanities is used throughout the key stage, the school clearly identifies the different strands of history and geography, and teaches them as distinct areas of learning. In both subjects standards are appropriate to the ages of the children and have been maintained since the time of the last inspection. Although few lessons were seen during the inspection, a scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' planning indicates that the quality of teaching is satisfactory.

- 108 A strength of the work in both subjects is the emphasis teachers place on basing activities on direct experiences, or using interesting artefacts and exhibits, to bring the topics/subjects alive. Eddy the fictional character in Year 1, paid a visit to Blackpool and the children looked at the kinds of things Eddy saw, how he spent his time and what he chose to spend his money on. This kind of work is already developing the children's ability to compare and contrast places with the part of Huddersfield they live in. They are able to make these observations as they have already looked at their own locality and some of its features and are able to talk about things they see on the way to school. Through following the exploits of Barnaby Bear they learn about different forms of transport and how people travel to different countries. They are able to talk about and identify types of weather in different places and how Barnaby would need different clothes for different climates. By the end of the key stage pupils are studying places in other parts of the world and contrasting life on an island with the kind of lives they lead in a large town. Being a multi-cultural school, teachers are able to use the diverse geographical and cultural backgrounds to provide familiar starting points.
- 109 In the early stages of the key stage the emphasis in history is on looking at how things have changed so that the children can develop an understanding of the passage of time and how to put in order a series of events. By looking at how they have changed since being babies they can talk about grandparents and parents and begin to understand phrase such as 'a long time ago'. In looking at different kinds of houses they can begin to compare old and new and see how change has taken place both inside and outside the home. Pupils quickly begin to understand things that are in the past and those that are in the present. By the end of the key stage they have learnt about important characters in history such as Florence Nightingale and are able to understand significant events in people's lives.
- 110 Although the pupils have sound knowledge and understanding in both history and geography their language often limits them when it comes to writing. For many pupils they are often able to express ideas more successfully through their drawings and diagrams.
- 111 The subject has a new coordinator who is full of enthusiasm for the subject and is keen to review the school's approach to humanities and to improve the range of artefacts that are available to interest and inspire the children.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

- 112 Standards in information and communication technology are in line with national expectations for pupils at the end of Key Stage 1. When measured against their low starting base, few pupils have computers at home and the fact that many pupils are using keyboard in a language other than their first, their achievement is good. This standard has been maintained since the last inspection.
- 113 Pupils show their routine information and communication technology skills in work that also supports their literacy development. They are beginning to use simple word processing packages to produce free writing. Most pupils can use computers to write simple stories, accurately, although some pupils, who are not fully familiar with the keyboard, are sometimes slow. They select pictures from a picture bank linked to their reading scheme, and because they recognise the characters, they create simple stories about these characters, supported by their choice of pictures. Whilst doing this, some higher attaining pupils accurately locate their work from the previous session and bring their text and pictures back onto the screen. Most are familiar with the keyboard and locate the upper case letters with satisfactory speed. About a half of the pupils in each session seen are familiar with editing procedures and they use the backspace and delete keys well to correct their mistakes. Many can write a simple sentence using capital letters and spaces where necessary. They are beginning to make appropriate choices and choose their options carefully, for example a scene and a character chosen from the picture bank. This activity demonstrates that routine skills are developing well and enabling pupils to use information and communication technology to support work in other subjects.

- 114 Higher attaining pupils at Key Stage 1 demonstrate their awareness of how information exists in many differing forms. Some pupils talk about their use of computers and can explain how they use them to support their work in literacy and in numeracy. They use a range of computer-based activities appropriately to support learning. They are beginning to make a choice and show clear evidence of enjoyment. Almost all pupils in Year 2 know how to use a range of different programs.
- 115 The main emphasis during the inspection was on the development of word processing skills. However, through discussion with pupils and from looking at work displayed around the school, it is evident that pupils have full access to all areas of the Key Stage 1 National Curriculum for information and communication technology. All pupils have the opportunity to use control technology. They describe, for example, how to give accurate instructions to a floor turtle to make it move forward and to change direction. They are aware of the need to give these instructions in a certain way to ensure that the robot moves as they intend. Computer generated art work is displayed in classrooms. Younger pupils use “drag and drop” techniques to assemble pictures of different objects into a complete scene of a town. Older pupils use an art package effectively to make colourful and interesting patterns. Some pupils’ work in making bar charts from simple data samples is evident. Although no work related to the use of a computer to develop referencing skills was seen during the inspection, it is planned for older pupils later in the year.
- 116 The quality of teaching and learning in information and communication technology is good. There is a new computer suite and this is used to good effect by all teachers. Working with another teacher, they take half a class into the suite to teach skills. Planning is good. All pupils in year groups, and in the two halves of each class, have the same opportunities. All pupils, those with special educational needs, and those with English as an additional language, have full opportunities to improve their skills. Teachers have secure knowledge of what pupils are learning and they are able to provide good levels of support if pupils have difficulty. They use the resources and time well. Lessons move at a brisk pace and pupils have the maximum time for using computers, rather than watching a teacher demonstrating. A good computer club helps to improve skills and knowledge. Teachers use computer systems in lessons wherever possible to help pupils improve their literacy skills.
- 117 Pupils’ attitudes to using information and communication technology and to learning information technology skills are good. They are interested and they stay on task and show pleasure in their achievements. Some pupils, whose first language is not English, find added difficulty when dealing with the upper case letters on the keyboard. However, they persevere and, with the cooperation and help of other pupils, they generally succeed in completing their tasks.
- 118 The school has identified information and communication technology as an area for development. Significant development has taken place, but has been slower over the last twelve months. Coordination of the subject is currently good. There is a new temporary coordinator who is a senior member of staff and is having an impact on development, which is now back on course. There are good plans to improve resources even further through specific funding and to further develop teacher expertise by continuing whole-staff training. Development of monitoring and assessing standards of pupils’ work more closely is identified for improvement. Resources are good and are used to good effect.

MUSIC

- 119 By the time the pupils are seven, the standards in music are similar to those found in most schools. Since the previous report, the school has maintained its standards in the subject. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, make good progress in the school.
- 120 Overall, the quality of singing is satisfactory, but this is the weakest area of the subject. This is because many pupils do not have sufficiently developed singing skills by the time they start school. Teachers make good efforts to encourage singing from memory a variety of songs and nursery rhymes. In assemblies, the pupils join in with the hymns, but often find it hard to sustain notes

and to sing tunefully. Teachers have been trying to address this weakness through various strategies such as 'call and response' games, using two notes, and by singing simple nursery rhymes. This was observed in Year 1, where the pupils sang favourites such as 'The Grand Old Duke of York'. The teacher varied the speed of various nursery rhymes, in order to teach the pupils to control beat and pulse. Through practice, they improved their performance and their control. They used a variety of percussion instruments to accompany their singing, generally managing to sustain their beats. In Year 2, the pupils build on this learning and show that they understand how symbols are used to represent sounds. They read these and play their instruments accordingly, when the teacher holds up cards representing the instruments to be played. Teachers explain to their pupils the role of the conductor, and by undertaking the role of teacher-conductor, the pupils learn from first hand, what they need to do while playing in a group or class.

- 121 There are opportunities for the pupils to learn composing and performing. While this was not seen during the inspection, there are records to show that pupils are provided with the full range of the music curriculum programmes of study. The school invites musicians to extend the pupils' experiences. An experienced Caribbean musician performed for the pupils, using music and drama, at the school's Caribbean carnival. The pupils entertain the local Senior Citizens at Christmas. They take part in the inter-school music festival organised by the local education authority. This is a good opportunity to participate in a repertoire of songs from different cultures and traditions, to mix socially and to take up interests.
- 122 The quality of teaching is good. Teachers plan their music lessons progressively and, while the majority of them are not music specialists, through carefully planned in-service training, teachers have gained sufficient expertise to teach the subject well. The coordinator has recently purchased some good quality percussion instruments, which the pupils enjoy playing. These are carefully stored and handled sensibly by the pupils. As yet, there are insufficient tuned instruments for the size of the school.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

- 123 Physical education is in line with national expectations at the end of the key stage. Standards have been maintained at the level reported in the last inspection. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, and English as an additional language, make good progress overall in developing their skills and in all the lessons seen the pupils were full of enthusiasm and thoroughly enjoyed the lessons.
- 124 Pupils throughout the key stage have good knowledge of the need to do warm-up exercises before beginning the main activity. They can talk about their hearts and why they beat faster after exercise and also about the need to get their muscles working in order to avoid injury. Pupils know how to find spaces in the hall and how to be aware of each other and be considerate to where other pupils are moving. Teachers give them very clear instructions and they listen to these carefully and in the majority of cases follow them. At times however they are so enthusiastic that they shout out and forget the main purpose of the task. In the best lessons the teachers contain this exuberance and constantly remind them of the need to work calmly and quietly. In a minority of cases, for example, when playing a competitive game pupils generated so much excitement that they found it difficult to abide by the rules.
- 125 By the end of the key stage pupils are gaining much more control over their movements. They are able to roll a ball accurately and stop it using both hands. Their throwing skills are showing considerable improvement, and by use of good demonstration, the teachers are able to show them how to improve their skills and make good progress in the lessons. In a dance lesson based on using rocket shapes, pupils are able to create movements that represent Catherine wheels and rockets going off. They are beginning to use their bodies imaginatively in response to tasks and during the dance movements they can create a sequence where they change speed and direction. Teachers make good use of pupils demonstrating their movements so that they can evaluate each other's performance and suggest ways of improvement. This enables pupils to learn from each other and improve the quality of their own work within the lesson. When making these

demonstrations the pupils are confident and proud of their work. Lessons have good links with English language development and with the development of social skills. Teachers introduce pupils to the correct terminology when describing activities, and encourage them to appreciate each other's efforts. In one lesson a pupil who experiences difficulty with mobility skills was very well supported both by the teacher and fellow pupils.

- 126 The quality of teaching is generally good. The pace of lessons is brisk and the tasks given to pupils are often very challenging but within their scope. After a period of activity with balls the pupils are challenged to create a game with rules. They have to decide how many pieces of equipment they need, discuss what the rules are going to be and at a later stage explain to the whole class how the game is played. This activity not only extends the earlier work with balls but also helps to promote social skills such as fair rules and gamesmanship and also the pupils' speaking skills by having to explain the game to the rest of the class. At times the teachers had to work hard to contain the pupils' exuberance.
- 127 The coordinator for the subject is new and very enthusiastic about the development of physical education in the school. She has already started an extra curricular club for football and is keen to involve pupils in other activities in the future.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

- 128 By the time pupils are seven, standards in religious education are in line with the Agreed Syllabus for Kirklees. Since the previous report, when it was judged that standards were below average, the school has made very good improvements. These are due to the effective management of the subject by the coordinator, and through careful in-service training undertaken by the staff. In addition, there is now an excellent scheme of work to guide the teachers' planning of the subject. The coordinator has worked very hard to address all the issues outlined in the previous report, with considerable success.
- 129 All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for who learn through English as an additional language, make good progress. By the time the pupils are seven, they have developed a good understanding of Christianity and of Islam. They are beginning to appreciate that religion can guide people's lives. In an outstanding lesson in Year 2, the pupils learned how Christians show feeling and emotions through art. This was a difficult idea for such young pupils to understand. However, through sensitive and well-planned discussions and by exploring a variety of religious pictures by artists through the ages, the teacher successfully helped her pupils to observe how feelings and emotions were being portrayed. The teacher asked challenging questions, such as *'Why did this icon make you feel happy?'* or *'How does the artist make you feel?'* to elicit, *'Mary loves him', 'she is holding him close to her.'* The pupils understand that Christians worship in a church and that Muslims visit the mosques for their prayers and that all places of worship have areas that are very special and spiritual. They know about the Bible and the Qu'ran, and understand that these are special books for Christians and for Muslims.
- 130 The quality of teaching is good throughout the school. Teachers plan thoroughly with clearly defined learning targets. They show understanding of different religions and their sensitive questioning helps the pupils to develop a deep understanding of the needs and feelings of others. Pupils' attitude to their learning is good. They enjoy their work and are keen to participate in discussions, confident that their contributions will be valued. Religious education embraces pupils' personal and social development in terms of their understanding of fairness and respect for others and makes a positive contribution to all aspects of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. It prepares the pupils well for life in a multi-cultural and multi-faith Britain. It is suitably enhanced by the carefully considered themes for collective worship so that topics can be usefully developed over time.
- 131 The good leadership and management of the subject are effective in terms of supporting teachers, reviewing teachers' planning and giving guidance as required. She has monitored teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2, and will shortly include the Foundation Stage in this development. The

coordinator has collated all resources, which are now well catalogued, and labelled for easy access. Religious education fully meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus and is well enhanced by visits to the local church and visiting speakers.