

INSPECTION REPORT

ST NICHOLAS CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

West Tanfield, Ripon

LEA area: North Yorkshire

Unique reference number: 121524

Headteacher: Mrs Julia Bailey

Reporting inspector: Mr Paul Nicholson
25406

Dates of inspection: 18-20 June 2002

Inspection number: 195153

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

© Crown copyright 2002

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Mowbray Terrace West Tanfield Ripon North Yorkshire
Postcode:	HG4 5JN
Telephone number:	01677 470329
Fax number:	01677 470329
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Dr David Lightowler
Date of previous inspection:	June 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
25406 Paul Nicholson Registered inspector	Foundation Stage curriculum Mathematics Art and design Design and technology Information and communication technology Physical education	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? 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?
10173 Catherine Hinds Lay inspector		How high are standards? 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?
25802 Agnes Patterson Team inspector	English Science Geography History Music Religious education Special educational needs Equal opportunities	How good are the curricular and other learning opportunities offered to pupils?

The inspection contractor was:

TWA Inspections Ltd
5 Lakeside
Werrington
Peterborough
PE4 6QZ

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Complaints Manager
Inspection Quality Division
The Office for Standards in Education
Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	10
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	13
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	14
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	17
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	19
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	20
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	22
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	23
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	27

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Nicholas CE Primary School is a very small rural school in the village of West Tanfield, which is seven miles north of Ripon. Pupils come from the village and other surrounding villages, an area with a range of social backgrounds and housing that includes mainly rented with some owner-occupied homes. Currently, there are 39 pupils on roll (16 boys and 23 girls). The school is under-subscribed. Less than 6 per cent of the pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is below the national average. None of the pupils are from ethnic minority groups or speak English as an additional language. The school has identified 15 per cent of the pupils as having special educational needs, which is broadly similar to the national average. Three pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Need, which is well above the national average. When children enter the reception year, their attainment varies, but overall it is typical for their age. The school has had a high turnover of headteachers during the past four years.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school gives an acceptable education to its pupils. Standards by the time pupils leave the school are average. Overall, pupils make sound progress and achieve satisfactory levels of personal achievement. The quality of teaching is satisfactory and is at times better. The school is soundly led and managed and it provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Good teaching ensures that the youngest pupils make good progress.
- The school takes good care of its pupils so that they feel secure and happy.
- It fosters good behaviour and positive attitudes so that pupils behave well, enjoy school and relate well to others.
- The headteacher provides good leadership of the school.

What could be improved

- The leadership and management of the school could be further improved by having a clearer focus on school improvement and by continuing to develop the role of governors.
- The planning of activities, particularly in the juniors, so that the skills the pupils need to learn are more clearly identified, taught and assessed.
- The standards achieved by Year 6 in art and design, design and technology and information and communication technology.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Overall, the school has made satisfactory progress in addressing the issues raised in its last inspection in June 1997. It has improved the teaching of mathematics and the support it gives to pupils with special educational needs. Procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare have improved. Teachers' planning in literacy and numeracy has improved. The school has not fully addressed elements of planning, teaching and learning in the juniors because of the high turnover in teachers. Standards in information and communication technology remain an issue for the school. Since the appointment of the new headteacher, significant improvements have been noted in the administration of the school and pupils' attitudes and behaviour.

STANDARDS

Tables showing the pupils' performance in national tests for 11-year-olds have been omitted from this report. Annual comparisons with national averages and with similar schools are statistically unreliable because of the very small numbers in each year group. However, an analysis of the results over recent years (1999-2001) and inspection evidence indicate that, overall, pupils achieve average standards.

Children in reception make good progress, and exceed many of the early learning goals set for children of this age, particularly in literacy, numeracy and their personal and social development. Pupils build on this good start and, by the end of Year 2, they achieve above average standards in literacy and average standards in numeracy and science. Pupils in Year 2 achieve the expected standard for their age in art and design, design and technology, geography, history, information and communication technology, physical education and religious education. Overall, pupils make sound progress in the infants.

By the end of Year 6, pupils reach satisfactory levels of personal achievement. Over recent years, over three-quarters of pupils have achieved the expected standard for their age (Level 4) in national tests in English, mathematics and science. About a quarter went on to achieve the higher standard (Level 5). These are broadly similar to the proportions found nationally. Pupils in Year 6 achieve the expected standard for their age in geography, history and physical education. However, standards are below average in art and design, design and technology, and information and communication technology. Over recent years, pupils have not been progressively developing their knowledge and skills in these subjects. It was not possible to make a judgement on standards in music at the ends of Years 2 and 6.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	All pupils like school and they have positive attitudes to their learning. Younger pupils show high levels of enthusiasm and interest.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Overall, behaviour is good and pupils are polite. The behaviour of the younger pupils is very good.
Personal development and relationships	Overall, pupils' personal development is satisfactory. There are good relationships between pupils and very good relationships between pupils and staff.
Attendance	Good. The pupils' rate of attendance is above the national average. Pupils are punctual.

Overall, pupils' attitudes and values are good. However, they are markedly better among the younger pupils, who have benefited from more stable staffing. The high turnover in teachers has had a negative impact on the attitudes, behaviour and relationships of the older pupils. These are now beginning to improve.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Good	Good	Satisfactory

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

Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory and, at times, it is better. It was satisfactory in half of the lessons observed and was good and occasionally very good in the other half. All teachers have a caring, calm approach and they manage the pupils well. This fosters pupils' positive attitudes and behaviour. Teachers make very effective use of the support staff, who make an important contribution to pupils' learning, particularly those with special educational needs and in reception.

Teaching in reception and Years 1 and 2 is good and this results in above average standards in literacy, very good progress in pupils' personal and social development and sound progress in all other subjects. These younger pupils benefit from a consistent, well-developed approach to the planning of activities.

Currently, teaching in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory and at times good. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is satisfactory but in some subjects, there is insufficient guidance to help teachers plan suitable activities for all ages within the class. The inconsistencies in teaching, expectations and planning over recent years have had a negative impact on pupils' learning. This has resulted in below average standards in some subjects. The school is addressing these issues but it is too early to judge the impact on pupils' progress.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides pupils with a suitable range of broadly based learning activities, though these are not always relevant for all groups in the mixed-age junior class.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The school provides effective support for these pupils, which ensures that they make good progress towards their individual targets.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Overall, the school makes good provision for pupils' personal development. Their spiritual, moral and social development is good. However, cultural development, including multicultural education, is unsatisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school takes good care of its pupils. There are effective procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare and promoting good behaviour.

The school successfully promotes the inclusion of all its pupils. It has satisfactory links with parents and after a period of turbulence is working hard to regain the confidence of all parents.

The school has satisfactorily implemented the national strategies for literacy and numeracy. It has recently introduced national guidelines to support teachers' planning in other subjects but it has not yet adapted these to meet the needs of a mixed-aged class. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress in these subjects are unsatisfactory. This means that teachers are not as effective as they could be in planning future work.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The new headteacher provides good leadership through her enthusiasm and commitment. Together with her small staff team, she manages the school satisfactorily.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are supportive and carry out their statutory duties satisfactorily. Their understanding of the work of the school and their role in shaping its development are limited but are improving.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has a satisfactory approach to monitoring teaching and learning. It is now beginning to evaluate its own performance.
The strategic use of resources	The school makes satisfactory use of its financial resources. It uses grants effectively for their specific purposes. The school is beginning to apply the principles of 'best value' by ensuring it spends money wisely.

Overall, the school is soundly led and managed, though there are weaknesses that the new headteacher and governors have yet to address. There is a shared commitment to school improvement and a capacity to succeed. The school has sufficient, appropriately qualified staff. Its accommodation is good and resources are adequate, except for outdoor activities in reception.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Fifteen parents (41 per cent) completed questionnaires and five parents attended a meeting with inspectors. Additional parents were spoken to informally at the school gate at the start and end of the school day.

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children like school. • The school has high expectations. • The staff are approachable. • Children make good progress. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children's behaviour in school. • The quality of information they receive about their children's progress. • The school working more closely with parents. • The amount of homework given. • The range of activities outside of lessons.

While the majority of parents were supportive, a small but significant minority had concerns about all aspects of the work of the school. Inspection evidence found that many of their concerns were unfounded as:

- children like school, their behaviour is good and they make sound progress;
- staff are approachable and their expectations are high;
- for a small school, staff offer a good range of extra-curricular activities;
- the school's links with parents are satisfactory but given the large number of parental concerns, the school should look to develop even closer links.

However:

- the quality of annual reports on children's progress could be improved;
- homework supports children's learning but not all parents are clear about the school's routines or expectations.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. At the time of the last inspection (June 1997), overall standards for children under the age of five and by the age of 7 were average and met national expectations. By the age of 11, overall standards were broadly in line with national expectations, except in art and science, where they were above average, and in information technology, where progress was slow throughout the school. Overall, the school has maintained average standards. Currently, standards by the end of reception and by the ends of Years 2 and 6 are similar to those expected at these ages. There have been improvements in some subjects, most notably in English by the age of 7, but others have declined slightly.
2. Early assessments of children's attainment on entry to reception show that they have skills that are broadly in line with expectations for their age in language and number. Many of the children have had little or no pre-school or nursery experience. Their personal and social skills on entry are therefore underdeveloped. Reception children are taught alongside older pupils from Years 1 and 2 in the infant class because of the very small numbers of children entering the school each year. Overall, reception children make good progress because of good teaching and the capable support given to them by a qualified classroom assistant. Children make very good progress in their personal, social and emotional development and by the end of the end of reception have reached, and in many cases, exceeded the early learning goals¹ for this area of learning. Children also make good progress in the areas of communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world. They exceed the early learning goals in each of each of these areas of learning. Children achieve the goals set for them in creative development but progress in their physical development is unsatisfactory. However, teachers give children too few regular opportunities to explore and experiment with a range of resources and equipment, both indoors and outdoors. The school is aware of this and is developing an outdoor area for children in the Foundation Stage.
3. Reliable comparisons of the school's annual results in National Curriculum tests for 7 and 11-year-olds with national averages and the results of similar schools is difficult because of the very small numbers of pupils taking the tests each year. However, the combined results for the period 1999-2001 indicate that the school's performance at ages 7 and 11 is average. Most pupils by the end of Year 2 achieve Level 2, the expected standard for a typical 7-year-old in reading, writing and mathematics tests, and in teacher assessments in science. The proportion going on to achieve the higher standard, Level 3, was average in reading but lower than that normally found in writing, mathematics and science. By the end of Year 6, the proportions of pupils achieving Level 4, the expected standard for a typical 11-year-old, in English, mathematics and science tests are broadly average. The proportion achieving the higher standard, Level 5, is broadly average in English and mathematics but slightly low in science.
4. Inspection evidence indicates that pupils in the current Year 2 have made satisfactory progress overall and good progress in English. Comparisons with pupils' attainment on entry to the school show that, because of good teaching, they have reached good levels of personal of achievement in English, particularly in reading, speaking and listening, and satisfactory levels in mathematics and science. By the age of 7, standards in art and design, design and technology, geography, history, information and communication

¹ Early learning goals - these are expectations for most children to reach by the end of the Foundation Stage. They refer mainly to achievements children make concerning the following six areas of learning: communication language and literacy; mathematical development; personal, social and emotional development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical development; and creative development. There are many goals for each area of learning, for example, in language and literacy pupils should be able to write their own name and other things such as labels and begin to write simple sentences.

technology, and physical education meet national expectations for pupils of this age. Pupils make satisfactory progress in these subjects. It was not possible to make a judgement on pupils' standards in music.

5. Evidence from the inspection indicates that over time pupils have made satisfactory progress in Years 3 to 6. By the age of 11, they have achieved satisfactory personal levels of achievement in English, mathematics and science compared with their individual test results when in Year 2. Pupils' achievements in other subjects by Year 6 are more varied. In geography, history and physical education, pupils' progress is satisfactory and standards meet national expectations. However, pupils' progress is unsatisfactory in information and communication technology, art and design, and design and technology. Standards in these subjects are below those expected by the age of 11 years. Pupils have not progressively built up the skills required in these subjects. In the main, this is because of the lack of clear guidelines to help teachers plan activities and the high turnover of teachers in recent years. The school has begun to address this weakness by adopting national guidelines for each subject but has yet to adapt these to the specific needs of the mixed aged classes within the school.
6. Pupils' achievements in religious education at both 7 and 11 meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus for this subject. Pupils gain a satisfactory understanding of Christianity and knowledge of other world religions, including Judaism and Islam.
7. Pupils make some effective use of their literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects. In science, for example, they present their work using a variety of styles of writing and use charts and graphs to record their measurements, though opportunities in other subjects are often missed. Younger pupils make effective use of their skills in information and communication technology to support their learning in other subjects. They use the computer to draw pictures in art, write lists in literacy and print graphs in science. The use of computers to support pupils' learning in the juniors is less well developed.
8. The school successfully promotes the inclusion of all its pupils. There are no significant differences between the performance of girls and boys. Pupils with special educational needs, particularly those with a Statement for Special Educational Need, make good progress in relation to their individual targets. They receive good levels of support from class teachers and classroom assistants. Higher-attaining pupils make satisfactory progress. The new headteacher is raising the expectations of both staff and pupils and the school is now setting targets that are more challenging for its pupils. This has had a positive impact on standards in English by the age of 7 where higher-attaining pupils are successfully challenged by working alongside older pupils.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. Pupils have good attitudes, a feature of the school that has improved since the previous inspection. Parents report that their children are keen to come to school, a view confirmed by the inspection team. Pupils' happy faces as they join classmates in the playground before the morning bell reflect their pleasure in their life at school. They say they like their school and enjoy the activities open to them. Shouts of glee could be heard from the youngest class as the visiting policeman shut them up in the back of his van. The joy and pride on the faces of the older children as they mastered walking on stilts or spinning plates to the encouragement of the demonstrating clown was a pleasure to behold.
10. The attitudes of pupils, including those with special education needs, to their learning are equally good and contribute to the progress pupils make. During lessons, pupils are willing, interested and work hard. Boys and girls enjoyed contributing their ideas in a Years 5/6 English lesson where the class was looking at the style of different writers. They carried on working hard throughout the lesson, commenting on their enjoyment of the lesson when it

finished. The younger pupils have very good attitudes to their lessons. Pupils gasped in delight when presented with a treasure chest of surprises. They were then completely engrossed in thinking about and sharing their ideas for describing words for the contents.

11. Attitudes are only occasionally less positive. In a few lessons, some pupils are unsettled, mainly older boys, neither listening to the teacher nor participating fully in the tasks provided for them. This reduces the pace of their learning.
12. Another improvement since the previous inspection is the good behaviour of the pupils. This reflects the care taken by all staff to promote good behaviour throughout the school. In lessons, pupils usually respond to the clear expectations of the teacher. Younger pupils always behave very well. Their very good response stimulates their desire to do their best and leaves no time for inappropriate behaviour.
13. Behaviour is also good in the playground where pupils play well together with evident enjoyment and vigour. They thoroughly enjoy using the new play equipment chosen by the recently introduced School Council. Older and younger pupils join in the skipping games as the classes merge at break times. Pupils are usually kind to one another and are careful to not just notice but also accommodate the needs of others as they move around the school. They behave very well in the hall during lunch and respectfully wait until everyone has finished before going outside. They are careful with property, treating their own and the school's equipment with due consideration. They hang up their coats and put their lunch boxes away sensibly. Pupils giving out hymnbooks or exercise books are careful when handing them to their classmates.
14. A few of the older boys have difficulty conforming to the school's high expectations of their behaviour. The school handles the minor disturbances that occur sensitively and does not allow disruptions to the learning of others. There have been no permanent exclusions from the school. Reports from pupils and parents indicate that bullying rarely occurs and staff manage incidents well.
15. Relationships in the school are also good. Boys and girls, younger and older, enjoy being with one another whether in the classrooms or around the school. They usually offer each other good support in lessons. Pupils in Class 1 relate very well with each other. They automatically and modestly help each other in lessons. Offering a helping hand comes naturally to these pupils. One child noticed her neighbour struggling to spell 'no-one' on the computer. She carefully inserted a hyphen not only explaining how to insert it on a computer but also the purpose of a hyphen.
16. A significant feature of these warm relationships is the natural ease with which all pupils are included in school life. Those pupils who have special education needs or are older or younger are totally involved with their friends in work and leisure activities. No-one is left out of the activities or the fun in the playground. Older pupils joined in with the younger ones as they rolled down the slope. Pupils are considerate of others who have particular challenges because of their individual circumstances. They accept that some children have problems always behaving properly and make allowance for these children. They also accept that some children have particular medical needs and make no fuss about the implications of these situations.
17. The school is a harmonious community where pupils relate very well with adults. Pupils are friendly and always eager to share a smile, a word or a story with an adult. Shared humour is evident in many of the interactions between pupils and adults. This community has fun together. Much laughter accompanied the adults' attempt to walk on stilts and many hands stretched out to hold the teachers' hands and help them balance. Pupils value the feelings and experiences of others. They listen attentively when teachers share stories about their own particular circumstances. The oldest children were very interested in their class

teacher's descriptions of a scan of her baby before it was born. They show good levels of interest in, and compassion for, the lives and needs of others.

18. The school acknowledges the importance of each pupil's personality. It is increasingly ensuring that each pupil, including those with special education needs, makes at least satisfactory gains in their personal development. This judgement is currently the same as at the previous inspection but the school has recently improved the opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for themselves and others. Pupils enjoy their involvement, for instance, in the recently formed School Council and take this involvement seriously. They are currently busy organising a disco for later in the term. Older pupils tend carefully for younger children, one boy commenting that supporting the little ones with their reading is important because they need to learn.
19. Children in the youngest class develop good levels of self-confidence and self-esteem. They take real ownership of any jobs they volunteer for or are given. From a young age, pupils are expected, and many offer, to carry messages to others or do jobs to help keep the classrooms in good order. Pupils sit up straight in the hope that they will be chosen first and glow with pride when chosen to give out the books. Staff very quickly recognise the children's emerging personalities and nurture their development carefully. This ensures that the pupils are friendly, sensible, responsible and very responsive.
20. The school is small so any particular and individual circumstances such as illness or extended family holidays have a major impact on school attendance. Last year's figures for attendance were therefore well below the average for primary schools. This year, however, pupils have attended regularly and figures are therefore above the national average. Unauthorised absences are average for this type of school. As at the time of the previous inspection, the majority of pupils arrive in time so that lessons start promptly.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

21. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory, and at times it is better. It was satisfactory in half of the lessons observed during the inspection. In the remaining half, teaching was good and occasionally very good. There was no unsatisfactory teaching, which is an improvement on the last inspection. However, the quality of teaching and learning are not consistent across the school.
22. The teaching of children in reception and pupils in Years 1 and 2 is good. Since the last inspection, the younger pupils have benefited from consistency in staffing and planning that has developed over the years to meet their needs. This helps the reception children make good progress, particularly in their personal and social development and in their early literacy and numeracy skills. The teacher integrates these children well into their mixed-age class. The teaching of basic skills in Years 1 and 2 is effective, particularly in English. This was evident in a very well planned literacy lesson looking at ways to write the 'e' sound within a word. The teacher had clearly identified what it was pupils were to learn and the brisk pace with good opportunities for discussion resulted in very good learning.
23. In Years 3 to 6, teaching is satisfactory overall and at times good. The school has satisfactorily implemented the national strategies for literacy and numeracy. It makes effective use of a part-time teacher to support the teaching of these subjects. Consequently, learning in the core subjects of English and mathematics is sound and pupils gain satisfactory levels of attainment for their age. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in some but not all of the other subjects. Learning is unsatisfactory in art and design, design and technology, and information and communication technology. A major factor in this inconsistency in teaching is the long-term planning of what it is children are to learn in subjects other than English and mathematics. The high level of turbulence in staffing has resulted in little development in teachers' planning and few records of what it is pupils have

learned and what they need to learn next. Consequently, pupils' learning has not been as good as it could have been. The new headteacher has begun to address this issue but her planning for Years 3 to 6 is still at an early stage of development.

24. All teachers have a caring, calm approach and have developed good relationships with their pupils. Throughout the school, teachers' expectations of behaviour are high and their management of pupils is good. This, coupled with the good relationships, ensures that pupils are attentive and respond well. Occasionally, when introductions to lessons are too long, a small number of older pupils become easily distracted and this lessens their pace of learning. Teachers make very good use of classroom support staff, who play an invaluable role. Teachers brief and involve them well in lessons and in checking on pupils' progress. The partnership between the teachers and all support staff is strong and is having a positive impact on pupils' learning, particularly in reception and for pupils with special educational needs. Their impact is greatest when they are fully involved in all sections of the lesson, for example, during the opening mental mathematics sessions in numeracy lessons. In one lesson, the assistant operated a glove puppet that responded to the teacher's questioning and in another lesson, an assistant ensured pupils with special educational needs had mental questions appropriate to their needs.
25. In the better lessons, teachers begin lessons with a quick recap of pupils' previous learning using careful questioning that helps to develop pupils speaking and listening skills. It is clear what it is pupils are to learn, there is a brisk pace and teachers match the activities well to the needs of the different ability and age groups within the class. Teachers assess the pupils' responses well to check for understanding before moving on to the next point. This is particularly well done in Class 1. Teachers have high expectations of pupils and resources are well chosen and well used. They make effective use of classroom displays, including artefacts, pictures and lists of suitable subject vocabulary.
26. When lessons are satisfactory rather than good or very good, teachers' do not clearly identify exactly what they want the pupils to learn or which skills they want them to develop. The activities do not always sufficiently challenge all groups of pupils and time is often not used efficiently. Introductions are too long and so pupils have insufficient time to complete their tasks.
27. A small number of parents expressed concern over the use of homework. Its use to extend or reinforce pupils learning is satisfactory. However, there is no published homework policy to explain clearly to parents its frequency and use, and how they may support their children's learning at home.

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

28. The school provides a range of broad and balanced experiences that fully reflect its aims and values. This matches the findings of the previous inspection. These experiences contribute to the pupils' positive attitudes and to their enjoyment of learning. It meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage is satisfactory as the school bases it on national guidance. It covers all areas of learning effectively and provides smooth transition into the National Curriculum subjects for pupils in Year 1. The school has improved its procedures for the personal development of the pupils particularly with reference to their moral and social understanding. These procedures, together with those for spiritual development, are now good. However, procedures for pupils' cultural development are unsatisfactory.
29. The headteacher has recently put into place a clear programme for the development of pupils' personal, social and health education. Pupils now have planned opportunities where

teachers give them every opportunity to develop their confidence and self-esteem. The curriculum includes appropriate provision for sex education and issues relating to drugs awareness. There is appropriate emphasis placed on the teaching of literacy and numeracy through the extra allocation of time and resources. For example, the headteacher has already appointed an extra part-time teacher so that pupils in Years 3 to 6 are taught as two separate classes each morning in order to raise standards. This emphasis on the development of literacy and numeracy skills is clearly reflected in some other subjects such as science and history where suitable links are made. These effective links between the different subjects bring an added meaning and purpose to pupils' work and this has a positive impact on pupils' learning. Most parents are pleased with their children's progress.

30. Planning for literacy and numeracy is satisfactory throughout the school. The new headteacher and staff have worked hard to systematically review the school's policies and schemes of work for all other subjects. They have only recently introduced nationally approved guidelines to support teachers' planning for each subject. Because of the small size of the school with its mixed-year classes, these schemes of work cover a two year cycle in Years 1 and 2 and a four-year cycle in Years 3 to 6. However, there are shortcomings in how the teachers plan the curriculum from Year 3 to Year 6. This is because there have been several changes of staff in recent years. Newly appointed staff have not yet had the opportunity to become familiar with these guidelines so that they have not yet had any substantial effect on pupils' attainment and progress. They have not yet thought through how they are to plan the curriculum effectively for pupils in the four-year mixed-age class. In subjects such as history and geography, for example, the work planned is taught as a block of work to all the pupils in this class. In science, pupils undertaking a unit of work may not be given the opportunity to explore that unit again at a later stage. Consequently, opportunities are not always available for pupils to make the progress that they should, particularly in their investigational skills. In addition, teachers' planning for Years 3 to 6 does not yet include sufficient details of how they will teach particular skills to each year group. It does not show how teachers will systematically build on these skills from year to year to ensure that pupils make the progress that they should. This remains an issue from the previous inspection.
31. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and is an improvement since the previous inspection. The school provides a good range of support to meet the various needs of individual pupils. The most effective is the class support from classroom assistants. Although pupils are sometimes withdrawn from lessons for additional help, they fully participate in all learning activities provided for their class. Teachers regularly update and fully evaluate these pupils' individual work plans and ensure that they closely match the work to that of their class as a whole. This good practice ensures that all pupils have full access to the curriculum
32. The evidence gathered during the inspection about the quality and range of extra-curricular activities does not support some parents' views. Extra-curricular activities provided by this small school are good and both boys and girls take part. The school organises various activities for pupils during the lunch break and at the end of the school day. These include chess, sewing or knitting clubs, country dancing, rounders and recorder playing and a newly formed school council. There are visits to places of interest such as Fountains Abbey for a science day and Northallerton to view the work of a visiting author and have their books signed. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 enjoy annual residential visits and take part in swimming galas. All these experiences provide further opportunities for pupils to develop their personal, social and cultural skills.
33. The school has established good links with the community. These make positive contributions to pupils' learning in a number of areas. It maintains a close link with its own church and the local Methodist church. There are regular visitors to the school such as the

local clergy, the local policeman and other adults. All provide valuable support in classes. Pupils take part in school productions, which parents and other members of the community enjoy. The school welcomes many parents and other adults who make a positive contribution to the school. Links with the secondary school are satisfactory. For example, Year 6 pupils visit in their autumn and summer terms and they take part in swimming galas and other sporting activities. These experiences help to develop pupils' perception of what it means to be a member of a wider community.

34. Overall, the school makes good provision for pupils' personal development. As soon as visitors enter the school, they are aware through the smart presentation of the school and the calm and dignified demeanour of the community that this is a caring school. Most parents, particularly those spoken to informally by inspectors, regard St Nicholas School highly because they recognise that it helps their children, including those with special education needs, become responsible young people. They recognise the improvements in behaviour and rightly attribute this to the care the school takes to promote the pupils' respect for others. Parents also rightly recognise the way the school promotes the good personal development of the youngest children in particular. In all lessons seen in Class 1 staff constantly encourage, inspire and recognise the individual contributions of all the children. Pupils relish the chances given, for instance, to share their own experiences and feelings with the class as a whole or with their neighbour or a visiting adult.
35. The pupils' spiritual development is well promoted. The school helps pupils experience feelings beyond their own particular knowledge and understanding through the assemblies and many of the lessons. Local clergy visit the school every week and lead assemblies ensuring the strong links with the church observed during the previous inspection are maintained. All the assemblies have a genuine community feel and everyone listens carefully. Even the youngest sat in stunned silence as their teachers donned waterproofs and boots, pretending to be hill walkers. Genuine reflection greeted the emergence of a stone from a boot exemplifying the unexpected challenges which life can offer. Teachers give pupils good opportunities in lessons to consider spirituality and examples were seen in pupils' work of their growing understanding of this. One child wrote during a religious education lesson that 'you could pray in a peaceful place like on the hills'.
36. Pupils' moral development is now well promoted. The school carefully and deliberately nurtures the rights and responsibilities of every member of its community. Pupils are encouraged to collect newspapers, cans and bottles for recycling. Staff accompany the youngest pupils on weekly trips to local collection centres. The good relationships fostered within the community and the clear expectations of correct behaviour create a secure framework for moral development. Pupils are learning to respect themselves and others and to think about the needs and feelings of others. Pupils are encouraged, for example, to think about the life of orphans as they study the Victorians in history.
37. The school now has good arrangements for promoting the social development of all pupils. It encourages pupils to take responsibility for themselves and others through, for example, developing the School Council, a new initiative which the pupils enjoy and the parents applaud. Staff regularly encourage pupils to work individually or in groups. These strategies are particularly obvious in Class 1. Even the very youngest are given gentle encouragement to work as a group when they are pretending to be hairdressers in the home corner. This encouragement was enough to ensure that one became the hair-washer, one the cutter, one the client and the fourth the receptionist. A full twenty minutes passed as these four gainfully occupied themselves learning about co-operation.
38. Cultural development is not as well promoted. The school has unsatisfactory arrangements and this is a deterioration since the previous inspection. Pupils enjoy the occasions when the school introduces them to aspects of British cultural heritage. Older pupils, for instance, talked eagerly about a recent trip to a local bookshop to meet the author Jacqueline Wilson.

The school does not ensure that the pupils are learning enough about their own culture or other cultures. Pupils have satisfactory opportunities in religious education to consider the world's major religions and to understand the importance of other faiths' major celebrations. The school successfully draws pupils' attention to other cultures through the photographic display of life in an African village. The school is not providing regular opportunities for pupils to learn about other cultures and societies, including those found within Britain. The school is not yet deliberately planning for, checking and increasing the occasions when pupils can gain these insights into their own and other cultures.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

39. Parents recognise that the school takes good care of all its pupils. Some of the arrangements have improved since the previous inspection and only the procedures for assessing pupils' work and using the results to guide future activities have deteriorated.
40. The school fosters very good relationships between adults and children. This ensures that pupils feel safe and secure and always have someone to turn to comfortably for help and support. Parents and pupils say that all staff know the pupils, including the youngest, very well and are instantly prepared to attend to individual needs as they emerge. They provide comfort to troubled or worried children and very good help and consolation to any who are sick or injured. The building is in very good condition and it is kept very clean. Teachers and well-trained support assistants supervise the pupils carefully during playtimes and lunchtimes. These features successfully reduce the risk to the health and safety of pupils and staff. The school is aware that it still has not secured regular and systematic risk assessments. The school is alert to child protection issues and procedures and carefully ensures that staff are confident in their approach. Child protection procedures, however, do need to be underpinned by thorough training of the named person. All the other health and safety issues mentioned in the previous report have been suitably addressed.
41. Support staff make very significant contributions to pupils' welfare and their learning. They ensure not only that all children are well supervised at lunchtimes but that they are ably helped in the classrooms. They also ensure that information flows speedily and efficiently between office, classrooms and homes.
42. Attendance at the school is good because the pupils enjoy school and because the school has good procedures for promoting the importance of regular attendance. Teachers are vigilant about recording absence and requesting absence notes on the pupils' return. Staff carefully monitor the registers and conscientiously send out letters to parents or make telephone calls reminding them of correct procedures.
43. The school has good procedures for promoting good behaviour. Staff have high expectations of the pupils' behaviour and are increasingly gaining a consistency of approach. This is a recent improvement. Staff now expect pupils to take responsibility for themselves and encourage pupils to recognise when these high standards are not maintained. One look or raised eyebrow is often enough to divert a possible deterioration, particularly with the youngest children. The dignity of all pupils as they enter the hall for lunch and assembly is a direct result of their understanding of correct composure. This composure adds significantly to the success of these sessions as positive social occasions.
44. Pupils' good behaviour in the playground demonstrates the care which staff take to teach and reinforce good behaviour. Staff, including support staff, constantly and deliberately praise good behaviour and reward pupils who experience difficulty but who try hard to conform. Merit marks play an important part in school life and staff use them constantly to encourage pupils to behave well and work hard. The school has not used exclusion in recent years. Parents and pupils recognise that the school promotes an environment where the rare incidence of bullying or any form of harassment is handled quickly and sensitively.

In their returned questionnaires, some parents expressed concerns about behaviour. Inspectors recognise that the behaviour of some of the children has only recently improved due to the introduction of fairer and firmer discipline.

45. Overall, the school has unsatisfactory procedures for assessing the pupils' work because they are inconsistent and informal. This is a deterioration since the previous inspection. The school has not yet introduced a whole-school approach to assessment.
46. Procedures for assessment are satisfactory for English and mathematics because the school has appropriate systems for keeping track of pupils' progress as they move through the school. Satisfactory use is made of national assessment results and other tests from previous years and these are analysed carefully to identify any areas of weakness. For example, there are booster classes for pupils in Year 6 to provide extra support in literacy, numeracy and science to raise standards. The school provides extra support for pupils with special educational needs to promote higher standards. Teachers monitor selected pieces of pupils' work and match them carefully against National Curriculum standards to ensure consistency and accuracy. Assessment arrangements in the Foundation Stage are good and are used carefully to monitor children's progress through the six areas of learning.
47. In other subjects, however, teachers use informal assessments to guide their planning and this is still at the early stages of development and not closely linked to the school's new schemes of work. It is often based on a general evaluation of the lessons rather than on what pupils know, understand and can do. As a result, teachers' planning does not provide a sufficiently clear picture of what pupils achieve at the end of each topic or any indication of how they may improve so that standards may be raised. This was not an issue in the previous inspection. The quality of teachers' marking is inconsistent and is not as good as it was at the last inspection. It does not always inform pupils of what they have achieved or what they need to do next to improve or of their progress compared with national standards.
48. Procedures for assessing the progress of pupils with special educational needs are good. The newly appointed co-ordinator and the governor who oversees this area work closely with teachers and monitor carefully the individual education plans for pupils. Targets are very precise and so enable an effective assessment of pupils' progress to take place. The school makes good use of outside agencies in the assessment of these pupils. Consequently, they make good progress within the targets set for them. The school makes good efforts to involve parents in the assessment and review of their children's progress. These arrangements are a marked improvement since the previous inspection.
49. The school helps pupils learn well by providing satisfactory support for their academic and personal development. Staff know their pupils very well and carefully encourage them to try harder in areas of weakness. Teachers give higher-attaining pupils suitable challenges, including working with older pupils in literacy and numeracy groups. They share targets for improvement with the pupils in English and mathematics and review these targets termly. Target setting is not so formal or deliberate in the other subjects. Annual reports contain clear descriptions of what pupils can do and where improvements are required in English, mathematics and science. The school does not provide detailed information about individual pupil's progress in subjects like art and music.
50. The school has a good informal understanding of pupils' personal development but has not formalised this into a deliberate recording system. Annual reports contain good descriptions of pupils' attitudes and efforts and these help teachers to track and share with pupils and parents particular aspects of a pupil's personal development. Teachers also help pupils work out their own termly targets for their personal development.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

51. The good links that the school had with its parents at the time of the previous inspection had deteriorated during the period of leadership turbulence. The new headteacher has quickly gained the confidence of most parents. The school now has satisfactory links with parents and is working hard to gain the confidence of all parents.
52. Parents, in response to informal discussions and the formal meeting with inspectors say that this is a good school. They recognise the progress their children are making and applaud the care which staff take to identify and accommodate the needs of their children as individuals. They recognise that the school is well led and, as parents, they feel comfortable about approaching the school with any problems or queries. They applaud recent improvements, mentioning the behaviour of the children in particular. The inspection team endorses these parental views.
53. The inspectors appreciate the parental concerns raised about homework at the pre-inspection meeting and in questionnaires. The school makes satisfactory use of homework. The school has not, however, ensured that all parents completely understand its approach to homework or their role in supporting their child's learning at home. All pupils have home reading books but these are not always completed sufficiently to help parents encourage their children to read at home every night.
54. A few parents expressed concerns about the information that the school gives them about the progress their children are making. Annual reports are satisfactory and give detailed information about improvement and areas of weakness in English, mathematics and science. However, they give little more than a description of the topics and areas covered in the other subjects. Reports do not give a clear picture of how well the pupils are doing for their age. The reports for children in the Foundation Stage record progress in the National Curriculum subjects for older pupils rather than the recognised six areas of learning for younger children.
55. Other concerns raised by a few parents in the questionnaires are mainly unjustified and to some degree reflect the parents' reticence about coming into school and seeing for themselves the impact of recent leadership changes. These concerns centred on the behaviour of the pupils, the range of extra-curricular activities and the way the school works with parents.
56. The school now welcomes and embraces its parents. The presentation of the school is pleasing and the stimulating displays not only please parents and visitors but also give good insight into the range of activities that occupy the pupils. Staff commit significant time and energy to communicating with parents. All teachers accompany their class into the playground at the end of the day seeking to engage parents in discussion at the school gates. The school provides a good range of general information to parents. The school prepares, for instance, a weekly newsletter 'Postbag', which includes details of school life including recognition of star pupils for the week. The school has also re-established a parents' association as a thriving organisation, which is already busy planning future social and fundraising events.
57. A few parents have time to help in school. They do so in areas such as listening to reading or helping with arts and crafts. The school rightly values this help and recognises the important part parents play in the life of the school. Parent governors are active in the school and offer good support. The majority of parents are happy to support the school from afar, valuing the school, but not committing themselves to active involvement.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

58. At the time of the last inspection, the then newly appointed headteacher provided the school with good leadership. New initiatives, such as a review and the identification of priorities for

development were beginning to improve the management of the school. Since then, the school has had a turbulent time in relation to leadership and management. In a period of four years, the school has had four head or acting headteachers. The current headteacher has been in the school for less than two terms. There has also been a large turnover in the membership of the school's governing body. These events have led to an inconsistent approach to leadership and management as well as to teaching and learning. This has had a negative impact on the development of the school since the last inspection. Pupils make satisfactory progress and achieve average standards by the age of 11 years. Consequently, the school provides satisfactory value for money. Currently, the school is soundly led and managed, though there are weaknesses that the new headteacher and governors have yet to address.

59. The headteacher, through her enthusiasm and commitment, provides good leadership and has achieved much in a short time. With the support of the staff, she has made good progress in improving the standard of pupils' behaviour and their attitudes towards school, which was a concern of many parents. Initial guidance for teachers in the juniors is now in place for each subject, although further development is required in adapting this to identify the specific skills pupils in each year group are to learn. The headteacher has gained the confidence of governors, staff and most parents.
60. The headteacher, staff and governors manage the school satisfactorily, though there are weaknesses in long-term strategic planning and the role of governors is not yet fully developed. However, there is a shared commitment to school improvement and a capacity to achieve the necessary developments. The teachers share the responsibilities for managing each subject and they are beginning to develop their role as subject co-ordinators. This is an improvement on the last inspection, when delegation was not effective. Teachers have satisfactorily begun to monitor teaching and learning across the school, though currently this is mainly informal and focused on literacy. The school has an appropriate ethos statement that it publishes in its prospectus. It satisfactorily includes a broad and balanced education within a happy environment that reflects the Christian values of the school. The work of the new staff team clearly reflects these aims.
61. The governing body is supportive of the school. It fulfils its statutory responsibilities by ensuring that all legally required documents and policies are in place, including its annual report to parents and a policy for special educational needs. The governing body meets regularly and has an appropriate structure that includes a finance committee. Governors satisfactorily apply the principles of best value by carefully monitoring spending. They have maintained a high staffing level to support the teaching of smaller groups in literacy and numeracy. The school makes satisfactory use of specific grants, including government funding for school improvement initiatives and effective use of funding and resources for pupils with special educational needs. The staff efficiently run the various functions of the school's office. The school makes satisfactory use of new technology, for example, to store financial data.
62. Governors have been active in seeking to improve the school's accommodation through the planned addition of a pre-school unit and a computer room. The chair of governors ably carries out his duties and sees questioning policy and practice as an important part of his role. The governor with responsibility for special educational needs provides very good support to this aspect of school. However, the governors have yet to develop effective systems to improve their understanding of classroom practice and increase their role in shaping the direction of the school.
63. The headteacher has produced a draft school development plan following initial discussions with staff and governors. This draft document has begun to identify appropriate targets for school improvement. At this early stage, the plan does not clearly identify whole-school priorities and how they are to be addressed to give a strong lead to school improvement.

The full involvement of the governors in identifying priorities and in monitoring progress towards the agreed targets has not yet developed.

64. The school has sufficient well-qualified and experienced staff to teach most subjects of the national curriculum. It effectively deploys teachers to make the most of their expertise and experience. It currently has no music specialist on the staff but is aiming to correct this situation next term. Teachers ensure that classroom assistants are well prepared and their high quality contributions impact positively on all pupils, particularly those with special educational needs. The contribution made by other support staff is very good. The school effectively supports newly appointed staff to settle quickly into the school's systems and routines. In-service training provision reflects the priorities for individuals and the school keeps full records of courses attended. The performance management policy is fully in place. The headteacher and staff have identified individual targets and the headteacher and governors monitor them as required by the policy.
65. As at the time of the previous inspection, the accommodation is good, well maintained and kept very clean. Classrooms are of a good size and there is sufficient space in the school to enable groups of children to be withdrawn for individual activities. Although the tables and chairs for lunch and the physical education equipment are stored behind a curtain in the hall, inspectors do not judge this a significant threat to the safety of the pupils. The outside accommodation is spacious and pleasant. There are satisfactory resources for effective teaching in all areas of the National Curriculum. There is however insufficient large outdoor equipment for the very youngest children in Class 1.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

66. In order to build on recent improvements to the quality of education provided by the school, the governors, headteacher and staff should now:

(1) further develop the leadership and management of the school, by:

- using the school development plan to provide a clearer focus in guiding whole-school priorities for school improvement;
- continuing to develop the governors' understanding of the work of the school and their role in shaping its future direction;

(paragraphs: 58, 62, 63)

(2) develop the planning in subjects other than literacy and numeracy, particularly at Key Stage 2, so that the skills pupils need to learn are more clearly identified, taught, and assessed, by:

- ensuring that pupils build systematically on skills they have learned as they move through the school;
- developing whole-school procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress and using this information to guide curriculum development;

(paragraphs: 30, 47, 96, 100, 105, 106, 111, 116, 121, 133)

(3) raising pupils' standards by the age of 11 in art and design, design and technology, and information and communication technology by (1) and (2) above and by:

- ensuring all aspects of the subjects are taught in sufficient depth;
- providing continued in-service training to improve teachers' subject knowledge and their confidence in the use of computers;
- developing strategies, so that pupils have more opportunities to use information and communication technology in all subjects.

(paragraphs 5, 97-100, 101-106, 117-121)

In addition to the key issues above, the school should consider the following minor issues for inclusion in its action plan. They are indicated by the following paragraphs:

Area for development	Paragraph/s
The provision for pupils' cultural development, including the diversity and richness of other cultures found in British society.	3
Physical development for children in reception. (Outdoor resources and opportunities for frequent and regular outdoor activities)	2, 65, 72
Links with parents, including improving the quality of information given on children's progress in the annual report and information on homework.	53, 54

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	14
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	20

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
Number	0	2	5	7	0	0	0
Percentage	0	14	36	50	0	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than seven percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	39
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	2

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	6

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	2
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	0

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	8.4
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.4
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	3	4	7

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	**	**	**
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	**	**	**
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

** School data has been omitted, as there were fewer than 10 pupils in the relevant age group.

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	4	0	4

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	**	**	**
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	**	**	**
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	87 (85)

** School data has been omitted, as there were fewer than 10 pupils in the relevant age group.

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	39
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	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 – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	2.3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	16.25
Average class size	20

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	34

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001-02
	£
Total income	157,769
Total expenditure	148,813
Expenditure per pupil	3,383
Balance brought forward from previous year	0
Balance carried forward to next year	8,956

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	1.5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	1
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0.3
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0.3
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate 40.5%

Number of questionnaires sent out	37
Number of questionnaires returned	15

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	40	40	13	7	0
My child is making good progress in school.	33	47	13	0	7
Behaviour in the school is good.	33	20	40	7	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	27	53	7	13	0
The teaching is good.	40	27	13	7	13
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	27	40	0	33	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	40	40	13	7	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	40	40	7	13	0
The school works closely with parents.	27	40	13	20	0
The school is well led and managed.	27	40	13	7	13
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	40	27	13	7	13
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	27	47	13	13	0

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. Staff base the curriculum for children in reception on the six nationally recognised areas of learning. The children are taught in a class together with pupils aged six and seven, whose lessons are planned using the subjects of the National Curriculum. This presents an organisational challenge but at the same time allows children to make a smooth transition from the areas of learning to National Curriculum subjects. At the time of the inspection, the four reception children joined the older pupils in the class for most of their activities.

Personal, social and emotional development

68. Children make very good progress in developing their personal and social skills and they exceed the early learning goals for this area by the start of Year 1 because of the very high focus staff give to this aspect. They provide consistent, positive and encouraging role models, and treat children courteously. Consequently, children trust staff and behave very well in lessons. Children are polite with staff, visitors and each other, and have a good understanding of what is right and what is wrong. For example, they know they must sit and listen at register times and in assembly. Members of staff provide an environment where children are confident that adults appreciate their efforts and value their work. This means that they are motivated to persevere with new tasks and they concentrate well in activities, such as when listening to a visiting policeman explain his job. The children play together well and co-operate when using small equipment. They share the washing basin and hairdryers in the 'hairdresser's shop'. Staff encourage them to make decisions for themselves and this results in sensible, independent children who socialise well and make good relationships.

Communication, language and literacy

69. Children make good progress in acquiring the skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing. They talk together constantly as they work at their tasks and understand that conversation involves listening to others. They listen well to their teacher during lessons and have many opportunities to practise their speaking skills. Staff have good questioning skills and conscientiously and purposefully engage the children in meaningful conversations. Children are beginning to recognise patterns in words that correspond to sounds, such as 'sh'. They know words that rhyme, for example, 'skip' and 'ship', and 'fly' and 'sky'. One child, when asked to give an example of rhyming words, said, 'I saw a log in the fog'. Children order words and pictures to retell well-known nursery rhymes. They trace over words when writing about Florence Nightingale and 'copy-write' simple sentences such as, 'Kip had new shoes'. Many labels enliven the classroom so children are gaining an understanding of the importance of the written word. The school provides a rich environment to support children's development in communication, language and literacy. Teaching in this area of learning is good, and by the end of their reception year, children achieve, and some exceed, the early learning goals in this area.

Mathematical development

70. Children make good progress through the nationally recognised 'stepping stones' in their mathematical development. Children begin to acquire some of their numerical skills and realise that mathematics is part of everyday life through listening to and observing the activities that pupils in Years 1 and 2 complete. They count from one to 20 and, using a number line to help, back to one again. They accurately count the number of finger puppet 'passengers' on the bus. Children recognise the numerals from nought to nine and most accurately record them. With the help of the classroom assistant, they record the number of different vehicles passing the school using a tally chart and show their results in a simple pictogram. They use appropriate language when discussing their results, as when one girl noted, 'there were more cars than tractors'. Children show a good understanding of

number by adding one or two more onto a small number. For example, children solve simple problems, including $5p + 2p$ and 7 fish add 2 more. Pupils have a good understanding of spatial patterns and can continue a repeating pattern such as star, heart, star, heart and red, yellow, blue, red, yellow, blue. The provision for the development of children's numeracy skills, including teaching, is good. The current very small group of reception children has exceeded the appropriate early learning goals for their age.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

71. Children are on course to exceed the expected early learning goals by the time they begin Year 1. Working alongside older pupils, they have many opportunities to develop their knowledge of the world around them. Teaching in this area is good and therefore children become increasingly curious about the world. They ask sensible questions and show interest. For instance, they listened and watched with great interest when a visiting policeman explained how he helped other people. They have drawn pictures of ducks, swings and picnics to record what they can see in a park. They have discussed their own families and homes, famous people, such as Florence Nightingale, and differences between 'now and then'. Children know they travel in a car but long ago people used horses and carts. Through practical activities, they learn about how plants grow. For example, they have grown hyacinths from bulbs and planted seeds that grew into 'green hair' for their 'Mr Greenhead' models. Children benefit from good teaching and well-planned activities in this area of learning.

Physical development

72. Children are developing their fine motor skills satisfactorily in painting and drawing, using the mouse on the computer and building with construction kits. They use small tools, such as scissors and glue sticks, with appropriate skill for their age. The constraints of the accommodation and resources, however, hinder children's progress in this area of learning. Currently, teaching and children's progress in this area of learning are unsatisfactory. The recently built secure outdoor area for reception children is not yet completed. Children's experience of climbing, jumping, balancing, crawling and using wheeled toys is severely curtailed since there is no suitable outdoor apparatus available. Children are not experiencing regular and frequent physical activity indoors and outdoors as an integrated part of their work. This has a negative impact on their physical development and to some extent upon their self-confidence and creative development. Children join their older classmates from Years 1 and 2 in their weekly physical education lesson. This gives them only a limited opportunity to be physically active. The activities in these lessons are adapted to suit their physical skills. For instance, reception children practise log rolls whereas older pupils attempt forward rolls. However, these activities do not allow the children to experiment, explore and refine their own movements unhurriedly. They do not support children's learning in other activities by providing opportunities for children to learn and practise new words and ideas in practical situations.

Creative development

73. Children make satisfactory progress in creative development and are on course to reach the expected early learning goals by the time they reach Year 1. Staff provide children with useful opportunities for role-play in the home corner. They organise this area to provide different but familiar situations beyond school to stimulate language development as well as personal and social skills. Currently, the home corner is a 'hairdresser's shop'. The children's imaginative play involves them in taking turns in being the receptionist, the hairdresser and the customer. Children make satisfactory progress in using a range of materials to produce their own artwork. They crumble and glue tissue paper to create a picture of a kite, use straws to make model people and draw self-portraits in chalk. Children make model homes and they use recycled materials to make the furniture and fittings and decorate them with care, using paint and crayons. They use a simple art program to draw pictures on the computer. Evidence of these activities would indicate that teaching in this

area is satisfactory but it suggests that the activities were led by an adult and that children may not be given sufficient opportunities to experiment with their own ideas.

Summary

74. The overall quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is good as the teacher and classroom assistant have a clear knowledge and understanding of how young children learn. They provide good role models for the children. They listen carefully, show interest in the children's responses and speak courteously to them. They provide a happy and interesting environment for the children who benefit from the very good relationships within the mixed-aged class. At this late stage in their reception year, the children are well prepared for the start of the National Curriculum at the beginning of Year 1. They happily join in many activities with the older pupils in their class. Occasionally, these children require a less formal approach to their activities and more opportunities to explore and experiment with their own ideas. The school is aware of the need to improve the teaching and resources for children's outdoor physical development.

ENGLISH

75. National test results over recent years show that pupils achieve average standards by 7 and 11 years. Inspection evidence indicates that, by the end of Year 2, standards are now above the national average and pupils make good progress. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. This is because the quality of teaching in literacy lessons is now good, compared with satisfactory at the time of the last inspection. Over recent years, the school has not improved the quality of teaching and learning in the juniors due to constant staff changes. Consequently, by the end of Year 6, standards remain satisfactory. Older pupils make sound progress in relation to their prior attainment. This is similar to the judgement of the previous inspection. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress within the targets set for them because of good levels of support. Throughout the school, there is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls.
76. By the end of Year 2, pupils' attainment in developing their speaking and listening skills is above the level expected for their age because the teacher provides considerable encouragement and praise. Pupils listen carefully so that they understand what they are to do and so make good progress. For example, in an infant lesson about the use of question marks and question words at the start of a sentence, the teacher provided very good opportunities for pupils to express themselves. She encouraged them to think carefully before they responded. After a short period where they shared and prepared their questions in pairs, one pupil responded, 'I know that question marks are used to ask something and mine is: Why is it raining outside?' Pupils clearly demonstrated their understanding of how to punctuate correctly by raising their arms to indicate the use of a capital letter and curving them to illustrate the shape of a question mark. All were eager and confident to offer their examples and were keen to share their work with others. Consequently, they made good gains in their learning and in the development of their personal and social skills.
77. By the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment in speaking and listening matches the level expected for their age and they make satisfactory progress. In the Years 3 and 4 class, pupils listen attentively to each other. For example, when the teacher talks about writing to favourite authors, one pupil confidently asks, 'How do you know that?' They take turns to answer, are eager to participate and this has a positive impact on their learning. In the Years 5 and 6 class, the headteacher works hard to develop pupils' thinking. She poses challenging questions at the beginning of the lesson so that all pupils are immediately involved in a whole-class discussion. For example, all were actively involved in sharing their knowledge and understanding of superstitions. Their responses are lively and well spoken, with clear diction and well-formed sentences. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because they are involved in each activity and make a special

effort to do their best. For example, they worked hard to read the shared story with the rest of the class. Since her appointment, one of the headteacher's priorities is to improve pupils' attitudes to work and raise their self-esteem so that they have a more positive attitude to their work. Already, she has been successful because she has allocated regular times in the timetable for pupils to share thoughts and ideas in a caring way. This is having a positive impact on their learning. At the end of lessons, some pupils reflect confidently on their work and share their tasks with the rest of the class. In a discussion with a group of Year 6 pupils, they listened carefully and respectfully to each other's points of view. They co-operated very well and offered well considered responses.

78. By the end of Year 2, pupils' attainment in reading is above the level expected for their age and they make good progress. This judgement matches the findings of the previous inspection. All pupils are interested in reading but the inspection findings agree with parents that there is not an established routine for pupils to take books home to develop further their reading skills. In Year 1, pupils are confident readers because they tackle unfamiliar words such as, 'looked' and 'around'. They use picture clues, recognise errors and build up words, letter by letter, to make sense of the text. By the end of Year 2, pupils talk about the plot and characters in their books in short, accurate sentences. Higher-attaining pupils read words such as 'magnificently' and 'audience' with assurance and explain the meanings. For example, one explained clearly that, 'lifting one's spirits' meant 'she didn't feel nervous'. They understand the role of an author and illustrator. For example, one pupil has concluded his own story with the words, 'Written and illustrated by...'. They clearly predict what may happen next when they discuss the favourite part of their story and higher attaining pupils refer to the text for examples. They know how to find a book in the library. Pupils who are less confident readers receive valuable support from the classroom assistants so that they too make the progress that they should.
79. By the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment in reading matches the level for their age and they make satisfactory progress. This reflects the judgement of the previous inspection. In Year 3, pupils enjoy reading and read their books with reasonable confidence. For example, one average reader recognises many words such as 'oceans' and 'addition' but has difficulty with words like 'southern' and 'colourless'. However, he is able to make corrections by using phonic clues and meaning to predict what the words could be. In Year 4, pupils' reading skills develop further and they read more accurately. Year 5, readers continue to make satisfactory progress and refer carefully to the text when answering questions about the plot. They enjoy books by authors such as Dick King-Smith and Jacqueline Wilson whom they met when she signed their own copies of one of her books. By the end of Year 6, most pupils are confident readers and can use inference and deduction to explain the text. Higher-attaining pupils fulfil their potential because their personal reading is well matched to their needs. For example, one boy was able to deduce articulately that the ship, Estonia, could have sunk in rough weather 'because the Baltic Sea is rough'. However, from Years 3 to 6, although pupils are interested in books, they are not expected to read every evening as part of their homework and so they have not developed the habit of reading regularly. Pupils with special educational needs in these year groups make good progress in their reading because staff give them individual support to develop their skills systematically.
80. By the end of Year 2, pupils' attainment in writing matches the level expected for their age because pupils receive a well-balanced range of work. The teacher provides many different styles of writing for pupils to develop their skills, such as stories, poems and recipes. In Year 1, pupils learn to write simple sentences. They usually spell commonly used words correctly and they know how to use full stops and capital letters. Their handwriting is neat, tidy and consistent in size. The teacher provides all pupils with satisfactory opportunities to use their basic skills of writing. For example, one Year 2 pupil wrote in her recipe for a sandcastle, 'Take some dazzling sand, a lovely, shiny pebble and decorate it with seaweed'. By the end of Year 2, pupils write in longer sentences and occasionally use speech

marks. They draft their longer pieces of writing in a story plan to improve them before rewriting them in their final form. The teacher provides good opportunities to extend pupils' understanding of the use of question marks by encouraging them to write their own questions to ask the visiting policeman. There is clear evidence of their learning about the use of question words and question marks in their written work. This includes the accurate use of capital letters and question words such as 'who?', 'where?' and 'how?'. Satisfactory use is made of computers because the teacher plans word processing into every literacy lesson. Pupils' spelling of common words is usually accurate and they use this skill confidently in their independent work. There are good links with other subjects such as religious education and information and communication technology. The classroom assistant effectively provides valuable help for those pupils who require it. As a result, all pupils make satisfactory gains in their learning.

81. By the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment in writing matches the level expected for their age and they make satisfactory progress. However, from Year 3 onwards, the standard of handwriting is inconsistent and does not reflect the carefully, well-formed handwriting they practise as exercises. From Years 3 to 6, pupils have opportunities to develop their skills in different forms of writing in literacy lessons but teachers do not develop the range widely enough in other subjects. For example, pupils have written clear reports in history and science, but in geography, their written work is restricted. In Years 5 and 6, pupils write in a variety of styles and present their work more neatly. Most pupils use paragraphs and punctuation accurately. Average pupils write expressively, for example, 'Ivy was crawling up the ragged carpet on the stairs'. Writing is often thoughtful and lively with clear evidence of pupils using suitable vocabulary and grammar from regular practice in structured sentence work. For example, a pupil's poem about snakes successfully illustrated previous work on similes by using lines such as, 'As fast as a chameleon's tongue, teeth as sharp as a needle, tongue working like eyes'. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because they have positive support from class assistants. The headteacher is now providing a more systematic programme of work to develop pupils' writing skills in order to have a more positive impact on their progress.
82. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. It is good in the Years 1 and 2 class, including one very good lesson observed during the inspection. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. In Years 3 to 6, the quality of teaching is satisfactory, which is similar to the judgement in the previous inspection. The particular strengths in the teaching are:
- carefully detailed planning for all abilities of pupils, including those with special educational needs, which is clearly shared so all know what they are to do;
 - interesting and lively lessons which motivate pupils to do well;
 - good relationships, high expectations and very good management of behaviour so that pupils have very good attitudes to work;
 - effective contribution made by the classroom assistants for those pupils who need extra support so that they may make better progress;
 - very good informal assessment in Year 1 and Year 2 to check that pupils know how they are progressing;
 - very good use of time in Year 1 and Year 2 so that all pupils stay on task and make the progress that they should;
 - valuable opportunities to give responsibility to pupils so that they gain in confidence and self-esteem;
 - a good standard of marking in Years 5 and 6 which tells pupils what they have achieved and what they can do next to improve;
 - good use of questioning skills to assess pupils' knowledge and understanding;
 - very good use of resources in Year 1 and Year 2 to illustrate particular learning points;

- regular opportunities to give responsibility to pupils so that they gain in self-confidence and assurance, particularly in Year 3 to Year 6;
 - developing a caring ethos within the classroom so that pupils learn to respect each other and become more mature, particularly in Year 3 to Year 6.
83. There is some evidence of the effective use of pupils' literacy skills in other subjects, such as history and science, but this has yet to be further developed. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Teachers have made a satisfactory start in formally monitoring the quality of teaching in each class so that they may further improve the quality of their teaching and so make a positive impact on pupils' learning. Teachers set realistic targets for each pupil so all know what they need to achieve. These are clearly displayed in each class and shared with parents. Procedures for assessment of pupils' attainment and progress are satisfactory. Teachers use these regularly to measure pupils' progress or to inform their planning for future lessons so that they may raise standards further. The library is attractively arranged and pupils enjoy using this facility on a regular basis. Reading books are well organised to provide a carefully structured resource to support pupils' development of skills. This ensures that there is a smooth progression between the infant and junior classes. This is having a positive impact on pupils' confidence in using non-fiction texts for research and further enhances their personal and cultural development.

MATHEMATICS

84. Standards at the time of the last inspection were in line with national expectations. The school has maintained these standards. Inspection evidence and test results over the last three years show that pupils gain satisfactory levels of achievement. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make at least sound progress in their learning. This is because of satisfactory and at times good teaching and the pupils' positive attitudes. Teachers have satisfactorily introduced the National Numeracy Strategy. This helps them to make sure the work pupils do builds on what they already know. There are no significant differences in the performance of girls and boys.
85. By the age of 7, most pupils gain satisfactory levels of achievement in their understanding of number. They accurately count, order and write numbers to 100 and understand the place value of each digit. Pupils recognise sequences in numbers such as when counting in twos and fives and identifying odd and even numbers. For example, one pupil knew that 99 was an odd number because it ended in nine. Pupils satisfactorily apply their knowledge of number when solving simple money problems. In other areas of mathematics, such as shape, space and measures, teaching is satisfactory and pupils have a sound knowledge. They use simple Venn diagrams to sort objects, for example, those with flat faces and those that roll. Pupils record information using block graphs. They satisfactorily measure volume using non-standard units, as when finding out how many corks and cotton reels are needed to fill a jug. Pupils recognise a line of symmetry within a simple two-dimensional shape. They tell the time using hours, half-hour and quarter-hour units and use suitable vocabulary related to time.
86. The very small numbers of pupils in each year group make sound progress through the juniors and individually they achieve satisfactory levels of achievement. By the age of 11, the majority of pupils achieve the expected standard, Level 4. Most pupils use an appropriate range of methods to calculate short- and long-multiplication. For example, they use their mental recall of multiplication facts to accurately calculate 32×20 and then add 32 to find the product of 32 and 21. Pupils have a sound understanding of fractions, decimals and percentages. They satisfactorily use their knowledge of numbers to solve simple word problems involving quantities, such as money and time. Teachers provide higher-attaining pupils with sufficient challenge so that they achieve the appropriately high standard, Level 5, and have good understanding of number. For example, they find fractions of numbers, such as three-tenths of 700, and round a number with decimal places to the nearest whole

number. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards their individual targets because teachers and support staff provide a high level of good quality support in lessons.

87. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory, and often it is good. Teachers have a sound understanding of the subject and use the national guidelines when planning their activities. All lessons begin with a brief session of oral mathematics, which in the main satisfactorily develop pupils' mental number skills. In some sessions, the tempo is slow and so the pace of learning is slow. Teachers do not always explain useful strategies to help develop pupils' mental skills, such as how to calculate how many more are needed to reach 100. However, in the better sessions, the effective use of questions that progressively become more difficult ensures the needs of all ages and abilities within the class are met while maintaining a brisk pace.
88. General strengths in the teaching include:
- the sharing of the learning objective with the class before the main lesson activity, which helps pupils develop an understanding of their own learning and provides a focus to the lesson;
 - clear explanations and effective individual support from the teacher and support staff;
 - the correct use of mathematical vocabulary during lessons. For example, the careful revision of the terms 'times' and 'product' helped pupils' understanding of multiplication.
 - teachers have high expectations of behaviour and they manage the pupils very well.
89. While the overall standard of teaching is sound, there are two common areas for development within the subject:
- teachers, particularly in the junior classes, make insufficient use of information and communication technology to support learning in mathematics. Teachers do not make sufficient use of computers to consolidate pupils' understanding of number and shape or to collect and classify data, produce graphs and tables;
 - where teaching is satisfactory, rather than good, the pace of activities is often slow, explanations too long and the focus on what pupils are to learn within the lesson is not always clear enough to ensure better progress.
90. Relationships between staff and pupils are very positive. Consequently, pupils are very well behaved and attentive in lessons. They show good levels of concentration. This only dips when individual activities are too long or do not fully involve all members of the class. Pupils are confident to ask for help if they do not understand. Their positive attitudes are an important factor in the sound progress they make.

SCIENCE

91. Inspection evidence indicates that standards of attainment in science by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are in line with national expectations and pupils make satisfactory progress. Standards are the same by the end of Year 2 as they were at the time of the last inspection but they are lower by the end of Year 6. This is because there have been considerable changes in staffing in the juniors. The way pupils' work is organised as they move through the school is not sufficiently effective to allow them to make better progress. The curriculum is taught in a four-year cycle at present. This means that pupils cover an aspect of the science curriculum in one year and then do not always develop their learning in the aspect again while at the school. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress within their targets because classroom assistants provide good levels of support.
92. Pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 develop a secure understanding in the three knowledge aspects of the National Curriculum of living things, materials and processes. The teacher encourages pupils to think for themselves and this has a positive impact on their learning and on the development of their speaking and listening skills. For example, in one lesson,

they showed a good awareness of what constituted 'a fair test'. They demonstrated this clearly in their experiment on finding out whether they could collect more cubes of the same size by larger hands, larger fingers or a stronger grip. Pupils showed their clear understanding of the activity by recording their results in a logical way. Practical problems such as this help pupils to develop their scientific knowledge and have a positive impact on the development of their literacy and numeracy skills. Scrutiny of earlier work indicates clearly that pupils have a sound knowledge and understanding of, for example, how the eye responds to light, how living things grow and the rate at which different materials absorb water. The teacher demonstrates her high expectations of pupils and makes very good use of appropriate vocabulary. Consequently, pupils develop a satisfactory range of scientific vocabulary such as 'absorbent' and 'pollination'. They are confident speakers because the teacher questions her pupils skilfully and allows time for them to think before they answer.

93. Pupils continue to make satisfactory progress from Year 3 to Year 6. They have a sound understanding of the habitat of animals and plants, have grown seeds and considered the conditions that affect growth and development. They have learned about the pull of gravity. For example, one pupil has written, 'There is not much gravity on the moon so an astronaut would bounce'. There are sound links with other subjects such as music. For example, in an experiment on making telephones, they understand that the tone of vibrating strings is affected by altering the length of string. By the end of Year 6, pupils record their findings systematically. They employ a variety of methods such as graphs, charts and clearly written explanations, thus making satisfactory use of their literacy and numeracy skills. Teachers regularly emphasise and explain the meaning of scientific words in their discussions with pupils. As a result, in their writing, they clearly demonstrate their developing knowledge of scientific vocabulary by using words such as, 'predators', 'herbivore', 'carbon dioxide' and 'filtration'. They work co-operatively in small groups, take turns amicably and listen to each other and to their teacher in a respectful manner. Consequently, they make sound progress in their learning. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because classroom assistants provide good support for them to meet their targets. However, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to work in an investigative and experimental way and this has a negative impact on their learning. The four-year cycle of planned activities does not yet allow pupils to revisit elements of the curriculum. As a result, they do not have sufficient opportunities to develop systematically their skills as they move through the school. Teachers' plans are not appropriately adapted to match the needs of individual pupils in each year group so by the end of Year 6 there are gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding of certain aspects.
94. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. During the inspection, one very good lesson was observed in the infants and a satisfactory lesson in the juniors. Teaching is better in Years 1 and 2 because the teacher is well established in the school. She plans a broad range of experiences for her pupils and matches the work carefully to their individual needs. In Years 3 to 6, because of the instability in staffing in previous years, planning to develop scientific skills in all the aspects of the curriculum has been inconsistent. However, the newly appointed headteacher has already made a good start in adopting national guidelines, which she intends to adapt to match the needs of individual pupils in each year group. The planning of which elements are to be revisited so that there are no gaps in pupils' learning has yet to be completed.
95. Particular strengths of teaching are:
- many opportunities are given to pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills so that they clearly demonstrate their understanding of tasks;
 - teachers use praise well so that pupils are motivated and want to do their best;
 - there are high expectations for all to succeed by providing pupils with interesting, challenging tasks so that they use their time profitably;
 - teachers have good subject knowledge so that pupils enjoy their lessons, are enthusiastic and concentrate well;

- informal assessment of pupils' knowledge and understanding of tasks is good so that pupils know exactly what to do;
 - pupils co-operate well in small groups and share resources amicably, so that they make good progress;
 - there is good management of behaviour, particularly in Year 1 and Year 2 so that pupils are attentive and make the best use of time.
96. Teachers provide their pupils with regular opportunities to make good use of their literacy and numeracy skills. For example, scrutiny of earlier work provides clear evidence that they are confident in presenting their work in a variety of ways, through writing, creating charts or graphs. There are satisfactory links with other subjects such as information and communication technology, history and geography. There are, however, no whole-school procedures for teachers to assess pupils' knowledge and understanding at the end of each topic. Teachers carry out informal assessments that help highlight the areas of weakness and allow them to plan the content of future teaching but the assessment and recording of pupils' skills in science is inconsistent and is an area for development.

ART AND DESIGN

97. Standards in art and design are at expected levels for pupils in Year 2 and this is similar to the standards observed at the time of the last inspection. However, standards by Year 6 are below national expectations and this is a decline from the above average standards previously seen. The lack of clear guidelines to help teachers in their planning has resulted in pupils not progressively developing their skills as they move through the juniors. The school has begun to address this weakness but it is too early for recent developments to have had an impact on pupils' learning.
98. By the time pupils are 7, they know how to manage paint and mix colours. Pupils know that by mixing primary colours they can create other new colours. They mix different shades of a colour, as when using different blues and greens to create a simple landscape picture. Pupils show satisfactory brush control when painting pictures of scarecrows. The teacher gives the pupils appropriate opportunities to use a suitable range of materials. For example, pupils used pastels to make colourful backgrounds for their pictures of a mother and child, which had been coloured using felt-tip pens. They decorate card shapes and fasten these to a wooden stick to make stick-puppets. Pupils develop a satisfactory understanding of pattern when making leaf prints. In three-dimensional work, they draw flowers onto clay blocks and use dough to make models of clowns, which when baked they decorate with paint. Satisfactory use is made of information and communication technology skills to support work in art. For example, pupils used a simple art program to produce colourful flowers, which complement those drawn in pencil and pastel.
99. There was very little evidence of artwork by pupils aged 7 to 11 years. A display of pencil drawings of the local church showed a wide range of attainment, including a small number of sketches of a good standard. However, pupils have not had regular opportunities to develop their artistic skills. In an introductory lesson to a new art topic, observed during the inspection, the teacher used her satisfactory subject knowledge to introduce pupils to the work of Swiss artist, Paul Klee. The pupils showed good levels of interest in developing the idea of 'taking a dot for a walk' to produce a continuous line that created various shapes and areas that they could then decorate. However, their resulting pictures highlighted their lack of appropriate levels of skill for their age. Despite a brief trial at the beginning of the lesson, pupils have not developed, for example, their understanding of how different pencils can be used to create lines and shading. Pupils have not built up over time a wide range of suitable skills. They have not had opportunities using sketchbooks to experiment and explore different techniques using a range of media and styles. Pupils' knowledge of famous artists is very limited.

100. The headteacher has recently adopted national guidelines to help with the planning of a new scheme of work for the subject. This is at a very early stage of development and has not yet been adapted to meet fully the needs of the different ages within the junior class. There are no procedures for assessing pupils' progress as they move through the school.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

101. At the time of the last inspection, standards were in line with national expectations. No lessons took place during this inspection and there was only very limited evidence of pupils' previous work. Therefore, it was not possible to make judgements on the standards of teaching and learning.
102. The school has recently adopted national guidelines to help teachers plan termly activities for this subject. These units form the school's scheme of work for the subject. For example, pupils in Class 1 have tasted different fruits and then designed their own fruit salad, and have made models of playground equipment. Pupils in the juniors have designed and made slippers. Evidence from these units indicates that standards by the age of 7 are similar to those for most pupils of this age. This is similar to the findings of the previous inspection. However, standards by the age of 11 are below those expected by the end of Year 6.
103. By the age of 7, pupils draw adequate designs when planning their models. These are satisfactorily based on simple pictures with labels to show the materials the pupils are to use, such as 'wood' and 'paperclip'. Their models involve appropriate methods of fixing materials, including glue and tape, and the careful use of paint to decorate them. The finished models of swings and seesaws indicate that the pupils have suitable making skills for their age. They satisfactorily evaluate their models by adding suitable comments to their original plans. For example, one pupil wrote, 'With my swing I didn't put wooden parts at the top of it because I didn't like them'.
104. The older pupils' designs for their slippers show little progression. They are simple pictures showing the basic style and the colours of the materials to be used. Some include a small number of labels, such as 'sole' and 'orange fabric'. However, they do not show any measurements or give details of how the slippers are to be made or of alterations made to the initial design. While pupils are taking care in the making of their slippers, the quality of stitching used indicates that pupils have not sufficiently developed this skill over time or through focused activities prior to starting their slipper. Overall, standards in design and making are below those expected of pupils of this age.
105. The school's newly introduced scheme of work for pupils in Years 3 to 6 is not clear enough to help teachers know which specific designing, making and evaluating skills they are to develop. The units, which the school intends to follow over a four-year period, are aimed at specific age groups. For example, the unit on making slippers is suitable for pupils in Year 6. However, the school has not adapted these units to take into account the different ages within the class and pupils' lack of previous experience in developing their design and technology skills. The impact of the newly introduced scheme is therefore very limited.
106. The school recognises the need to further develop its planning and to ensure the skills required to complete the tasks set for each year group are to be learned progressively as pupils move through the school. Some teachers are not clear about how pupils develop practical and designing skills through focused tasks and then how they apply these skills in problem-solving activities. There are no records of how well pupils are attaining, other than a comment in the written reports to parents at the end of each year. This means that teachers do not have enough information to guide planning and teaching and ensure that pupils progressively develop their skills.

GEOGRAPHY

107. No lessons were observed during the inspection but sufficient evidence was gained from looking at previous work, teachers' planning and talking to pupils. Standards in geography match national expectations by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and are at the same level as those noted in the last inspection. Pupils make satisfactory progress in their development of their geography skills as they move through the school. Taking into account the coverage of work and the quality of marking, teaching appears to be satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because teachers plan their tasks to match their ability and they receive good support from classroom assistants. This is an improvement since the last inspection.
108. In Years 1 and 2, pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of contrasting localities because the teacher has provided interesting tasks based on their own experiences. These pupils have explored their immediate surroundings and made clear drawings of different types of houses. They have visited a local supermarket and linked their visit successfully to their design and technology project on types of food. For example, they tasted different types of food such as pizzas. They further build on their enquiry skills through their study of the way of life on the Isle of Struay in northern Scotland, the travels of Barnaby the Bear to places such as Dublin and a ferry trip to France. They have learned about different forms of transport and that it is important for islanders to have a pier. They make good use of books and maps so that they learn to make comparisons between different places. Scrutiny of earlier work illustrates that they use this knowledge and understanding well in their own maps, confidently including symbols to represent different types of weather. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because they have appropriate opportunities to record their work in pictures or charts to represent their understanding of tasks.
109. Pupils make steady progress in Year 3 to Year 6. They make satisfactory use of their research skills by using a variety of maps and books to find out, for example, about under-developed parts of the world, such as India. They understand that these areas have limited supplies of clean water. Their earlier work reveals their clear understanding of the causes of pollution. The colourful and informative display in the hall contains photographs of the materials used to build African homes and the conditions in which poor families live. They understand about how different countries irrigate their land, for example, by using artesian pumps in Australia or shadufs in the Sudan. They learn how places grow from small hamlets to large holiday centres and how this change affects the lives and activities of the inhabitants. However, although pupils have opportunities to record their tasks, these are not sufficiently regularly planned to develop their literacy skills through extended writing of their topics. The subject makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' spiritual and cultural development overall by providing opportunities for pupils to reflect on contrasting events and their impact on the conditions and lives in other countries.
110. No overall judgement can be made about the quality of teaching in geography. However, positive features are:
- satisfactory subject knowledge which encourages pupils' interest so that they work productively;
 - realistic expectations of use of time to complete individual pieces of work;
 - satisfactory use of resources to enable pupils to develop their skills and enjoy their lessons;
 - valuable use of classroom assistants who work with pupils with special educational needs so that they make good progress within their targets.
111. Pupils have not had the opportunity to develop their skills systematically due to changes in staffing and the lack of a clear scheme of work. The co-ordinator has only recently been appointed. The school has now adopted the national guidance for the subject so that

teachers can provide clear plans for each age group in their classes. Teachers mark work regularly, but the quality of marking is inconsistent. The best marking informs pupils of what they have achieved and what they need to do next to improve. Presentation of work is better in the infant class than the junior class. This is because changes in staff in the junior class have not provided a consistent emphasis on the importance of regular practice of handwriting skills. Good use is made of the local area and the school has a satisfactory level of resources to support the teaching of its present range of topics. Visits to places of interest in the immediate locality and beyond, such as Fountains Abbey, enhance the curriculum and further develop pupils' personal, social and cultural experiences.

HISTORY

112. No history lessons were observed during the inspection, but sufficient evidence was gathered by looking at pupils' previous work, teachers' planning and discussions with teachers and pupils to allow judgements to be made. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, pupils' standards match the levels expected. They make satisfactory progress because their teachers provide an appropriate variety of interesting experiences. This mirrors the judgement of the previous inspection. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because teachers and classroom assistants provide them with appropriate tasks which build successfully on what they have learned. This is an improvement since the previous inspection.
113. In Years 1 and 2, pupils develop a satisfactory sense of the passing of time. For example, they have compared objects from the past and present, such as cars and horses, sinks and wells. They have looked at their family trees over a period of time. By the end of Year 2, they have learned about the lives of several famous people such as Florence Nightingale and Samuel Pepys and their impact of changing conditions over time. For example, one pupil has written, 'Martin Luther King changed laws in America and wanted all people to be treated the same'. Another example of writing clearly illustrates a pupil's developing skill to form opinions; 'The Great Fire of London began in Pudding Lane in a baker shop. The maid left the cakes in the oven because she was tired!' Pupils develop their literacy skills in their extended writing because the teacher provides opportunities for them to express their ideas in a variety of styles such as reports and diaries. Teachers make good links with other subjects such as science, design and technology, and art and design. For example, pupils realise that they need to eat fresh fruit and that hospitals must be clean to keep healthy. Consequently, they are developing a sound sense of the impact of the past on the present time.
114. Pupils sustain this satisfactory progress from Year 3 to Year 6. In Years 3 to Year 6, pupils build on their understanding of the passage of time and further develop their sense of chronology through studying, for example, the ways of life of the Vikings and Victorians. Pupils have had opportunities to develop their research skills by considering the characteristics of the past and present in modes of travel, conditions in factories and evidence of Vikings in Britain. There is clear evidence of pupils making good use of the local census to collect evidence about Victorian life in the local community and they are able to draw sensible comparisons. They have had valuable opportunities to link the subject with their geographical research of shops in the local area. They develop their literacy skills satisfactorily as they produce their evidence in the form of reports, diaries and autobiographies. This is an improvement since the last inspection.
115. No overall judgement can be made about the quality of teaching in history. However, positive features are:
- teachers' subject knowledge is satisfactory throughout the school so that pupils make satisfactory progress;
 - teachers make good use of time so that pupils stay on task and cover a satisfactory range of topics;

- literacy skills are effectively promoted and there are satisfactory links with other subjects such as information and communication technology, art and science;
 - classroom assistants provide valuable support as they work with pupils with special educational needs so that they make good progress.
116. History contributes well to pupils' social and cultural development. The subject provides challenging opportunities for pupils to reflect on past events and on the impact on their own lives. The curriculum is planned over a four year cycle and the school has recently introduced the national guidance scheme of work on which to base their planning. However, because of recent staff changes, the headteacher is aware that this has not yet been appropriately adapted to suit the needs of individual year groups so that they build systematically on their skills as they move through the school. Teachers regularly mark their pupils' work but do not always provide constructive comments to support pupils' understanding of what they have achieved or what they need to do to improve further. The presentation of pupils' work in Years 1 and 2 is better than in Years 3 to 6. This is because there have been considerable changes recently in staffing and this has had a detrimental effect on pupils' perceptions of acceptable standards. Teachers have not introduced formal assessment of pupils' work but the co-ordinator is aware of the need to develop this.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

117. At the time of the last inspection, no overall judgements on standards were possible. However, it was noted that there were too few opportunities to use computers and that pupils' progress in the subject was slow. The situation has improved in the infant class, where standards are now similar to those expected nationally by the age of 7 years. By the age of 11, standards are below expectations as junior pupils continue to have too few opportunities to develop their skills on the computer. No formal information and communication technology teaching was seen during the inspection and so it is not possible to make a judgement on teaching.
118. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 happily used computers in a range of lessons during the inspection. Samples of pupils' previous work, displays of their work and observations of them using computers show that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make sound progress. Infant pupils use information and communication technology for a sufficiently wide range of purposes and this enhances teaching and learning in other subjects, such as literacy, science and art. For example, pupils satisfactorily use a word-processing program to write lists of items they like to touch as part of their science topic on senses. They create and display simple charts to show the height of their runner bean plants and use a suitable art program to draw pictures of monsters. Pupils successfully enter a series of commands, such as forward, backward, left and right, to make a programmable toy robot move around a simple course on the library floor and to make a 'ladybird' move on the computer screen.
119. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 are interested and keen to use computers. They satisfactorily use a word-processing program to type, edit and print examples of their work from subjects, such as English and religious education. For example, pupils used computers to write about the Jewish New Year and to display their Haiku style poems. They use a desktop publishing package to make greetings cards that combine text and pictures. Pupils enter and store information into a data-handling program. They print charts and graphs to display their data, as when comparing shoe sizes. Pupils have begun to use spreadsheets to store information, for example, about television 'soap' programmes they watch. Pupils make use of the Internet to research information for topics in subjects, such as water in geography and the Vikings in history. However, pupils have not had sufficient opportunities to develop fully their computer skills and gain confidence in many aspects of information and communication technology, for example, in the area of control. Pupils have not used equipment to monitor external events, such as temperature or light. Over recent years, the sound start pupils

have in the infants has not been built on in the juniors. Consequently, overall progress has been unsatisfactory.

120. Teachers in the juniors have not developed their knowledge and confidence in using the programs and resources available. They have also not developed successful strategies for using computers regularly to support pupils' learning in all subjects. The school is aware of the weaknesses in this subject and has recently introduced national guidelines to help teachers plan a suitable scheme of work for the subject. This is intended to raise standards by ensuring pupils progressively build on what they have previously learned. It is too early for these guidelines to have had an impact on pupils' learning. The school is intending to build a classroom especially for the teaching of computer skills to raise standards further.

MUSIC

121. There were no music lessons observed during the inspection. Therefore, it is not possible to make a judgement about standards or the quality of teaching. Singing in assemblies is satisfactory. Pupils sing tunefully and with enjoyment. Displays around school and discussions with pupils provide evidence that pupils in the infant class have experience of making music. For example, they learn to develop their improvisational skills by experimenting with sounds of percussion instruments, such as drums, to make rain music. Year 6 pupils develop their singing skills from a selection of recorded programmes. The co-ordinator has not monitored teaching and learning. Assessment procedures are still at an informal stage but the headteacher is aware of the need to address this in order to improve teachers' planning for the systematic development of pupils' skills as they move through the school.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

122. Standards in physical education have been maintained since the last inspection. By the ages of 7 and 11, pupils achieve the expected standards for their age. Two lessons were observed during the inspection; a gymnastics lesson in the infant class and an outdoor adventurous activity for all the juniors. Teaching ranges from satisfactory to good; overall, it is satisfactory.
123. In gymnastics, younger pupils satisfactorily learn to control their movements. They use a suitable range of movements, as when running around the hall and when jumping and landing. By Year 2, pupils show appropriate co-ordination for their age, for example, when holding a simple balance position or performing a basic log roll. They satisfactorily create and perform a short sequence linking basic actions, with a clear beginning, middle and end. For example, pupils combined suitable movements, such as a balance, a jump and a roll, into a neat performance. Many include smart starting and finishing positions, which enhance their sequences.
124. Good teaching in the infant class results in pupils making steady progress in developing their physical skills and very good progress in their social development. The teacher carefully plans activities to provide a brisk pace and good progression through the lesson, with each activity extending the previous one. For example, individual floor-activities lead into a sequence of movements on large mats. The teacher's expectations are high and relationships are very good. Consequently, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, behave very well, are keen and work hard. They watch with interest as others demonstrate their sequences, offer positive comments and applaud good performances.
125. Junior-aged pupils satisfactorily develop their knowledge of outdoor activities through being introduced to sports, such as orienteering. They use small-scale maps of the school's pleasant grounds to good effect. Satisfactory teaching results in all pupils gaining an

appropriate understanding of the sport. For example, through simple exercises, pupils practise relating the maps to the actual features within the grounds.

126. The quality of teaching and learning observed was good in the infant lesson and satisfactory in the junior lesson. Positive features of the teaching include:
- teachers pay good attention to health and safety;
 - they begin lessons with an appropriate warm-up that raises pupils' heartbeat and gently stretches their muscles, so pupils are aware of the changes that happen to their bodies during exercise;
 - activities during lessons ensure that pupils are kept physically active and the pace is good;
 - the management of pupils is good, particularly in Class 1;
 - there are very good relationships between pupils and staff; consequently, most pupils have positive attitudes and show good levels of concentration.
127. Overall, the attitudes and behaviour of pupils in Years 3 to 6 are good. Occasionally, a very small number of pupils are easily distracted. The effective intervention of the teacher and support assistant ensures that the impact of these interruptions is kept to a minimum. In the main, relationships are good. For example, a girl in the lower juniors offered to help a classmate find his disk during the orienteering game. Pupils often applaud the efforts of their classmates
128. Teachers plan a suitable range of activities, including gymnastics, dance and games. The school has a satisfactory programme of swimming for junior pupils. They visit a local swimming pool for a weekly lesson in the autumn and spring terms. Specialist instructors teach them confidence in water and an appropriate range of strokes. By the end of Year 6, most pupils can swim 25 metres or more, the expected standard for an 11-year-old.
129. Teachers' planning identifies the aspect of physical education to be developed, such as linking combinations of gymnastic actions. However, they do not identify the specific skills they want the pupils to practise or perform. Teachers make use of pupil demonstrations to praise and encourage pupils' efforts. However, they do not use these effectively to highlight what the pupils did well or provide opportunities for others to practise these skills to improve their performance. In some activities, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to experiment with their movements and develop their own ideas. As a result, pupils make satisfactory progress in the development of their skills rather than better progress.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

130. There were no lessons observed during the inspection. However, sufficient evidence was obtained by looking at pupils' books, teachers' plans and talking to pupils and teachers to allow judgements to be made. Pupils' attainment is consistent with the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. They are provided with a satisfactory range of opportunities to develop their understanding that all people are of value and that there are several other faiths other than Christianity. This matches the judgement in the previous inspection. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support, so they make good progress within their targets. This is an improvement since the previous inspection.
131. In Years 1 and 2, pupils make satisfactory progress in developing self-awareness through topics such as 'My Family'. They know that their local church is the church with which the school is associated. They are aware of the importance of the church in their lives because they have learned that everyone is a friend. They understand the importance of rituals such as christenings because they have visited the local church to observe one. They understand the role of the rector, parents and godparents. They have learned about the Jewish faith and the importance of belief in God. They know that He is a special person.

The teacher makes effective links with pupils' literacy skills. For example, one pupil has written, 'Just make all the river shining blue again, and I will set the people free, so God made the river blue'. By the end of Year 2, pupils know about the significance of Christmas and Easter because their teacher provides appropriate opportunities for them to learn about religious festivals.

132. In Years 3 to 6, pupils make satisfactory progress because they learn about the lives and work of special people. They consider festivals and learn about food that is associated with them. These include Christian and Jewish festivals and those of other world faiths. They recognise that different religions share, for example, features such as beliefs and places of worship. They learn about Shabbat, the Feast of the Passover and the Pillars of Islam. They understand the meaning of Ash Wednesday, Palm Sunday and Advent and appreciate the contribution that special people have made in their lives, such as Mother Theresa and Anne Frank. The subject makes a valuable contribution to the development of pupils' literacy skills as they write in a variety of forms to illustrate their understanding of their tasks. They have learned about the Ten Commandments and how these affect their lives. They are aware of how good relationships within a family are important and know that forgiveness is a very special feature of living together in harmony. They understand the meaning of worship. For example, beneath one pupil's illustration and writing of *The Lord's Prayer* are the words, 'You could pray in this peaceful place on the hills. We are all special to God'. One pupil has interpreted the meaning of faith as, 'I think faith means you believe in something. My dog will stay with me no matter what I do'. In assemblies, pupils show appropriate respect in their behaviour and in their periods of reflection because they learn how to respond in such situations.
133. Pupils make good use of their literacy skills because teachers have provided good opportunities for pupils to record their thoughts and feelings about issues that they have discussed in classes. Visits to places of interest, such as the local churches and a mosque, provide an added dimension to pupils' cultural and spiritual development. There are no formal systems for the assessment of pupils' work. The headteacher is aware of the need to implement some so that teachers' planning is matched more closely to pupils' individual needs in order to raise standards further.