

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **DARLEY COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Darley. Harrogate

LEA area: North Yorkshire

Unique reference number: 121410

Headteacher: Mr P Raymond

Reporting inspector: Mr S O'Toole  
20891

Dates of inspection: 12<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup> March 2001

Inspection number: 230146

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 4 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Darley  
Harrogate

Postcode: HG3 2PZ

Telephone number: 01423 780234

Fax number: 01423 780224

Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Dr M Beer

Date of previous inspection: 3/02/99

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
20891	S O'Toole	Registered inspector	Foundation stage Art Mathematics Information and communication technology Design and technology Physical education	The school's results and pupils' achievements Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well are pupils taught How well is the school led and managed What should the school do to improve further
9624	G Norval	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils How well does the school work in partnership with parents
23039	D Penney	Team inspector	Special educational needs Equal opportunities English Science Geography History Music Religious education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils

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## REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>6</b>
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	
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	
<b>HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?</b>	<b>11</b>
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
<b>HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES</b>	<b>27</b>

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Darley Community Primary School is located in the North Yorkshire Dales about eight miles from Harrogate and serves the local village and nearby American and British military bases. Most of the pupils are of British origin, but almost a third are American citizens. Overall, the pupils' socio-economic backgrounds are average although only two percent are eligible for free school meals (well below the national average). Of the 106 pupils attending the school, 46 are boys and 60 are girls. Most pupils are from white ethnic backgrounds and there are six black Americans. No pupil has English as an additional language. There are 18 pupils with special educational needs (about average), although none has a statement of special educational need (below average). The number of pupils on roll varies from year to year due to the high mobility of the forces' families. Children start in the reception class in the September of the academic year in which they are five. Attainment on admission varies significantly between year groups and is generally below the local authority average. There has been a complete turnover of teachers in the previous three years.

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

This is now a good school and standards are rising steadily. The teaching is good with about a third being very good or excellent. Standards in English, science, art and design, music and design and technology are above average by the end of the juniors, although standards in geography are below expectation. The very good headteacher and governors have guided the school very effectively through a time of significant change and improvement. Leadership and management are good. The school provides good value for money.

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

- By the end of the juniors, standards in English, science, art and design, music and design and technology are above average.
- The teaching is good and the pupils make good progress.
- Children make a good start in the reception class.
- The pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development are good.
- The headteacher provides very good leadership, manages the school effectively and promotes a strong sense of teamwork.
- This is a caring school which involves parents well.

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

- The use of assessment to plan work which ensures consistency in developing pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding.
- The role of the subject leaders.
- The development of pupils' spelling, handwriting and punctuation.
- Standards in geography in the juniors.

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

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

The school has made good improvement since the previous inspection in February 1999 and tackled the issues raised successfully. Standards in most subjects are better than they were and progress is now good as a result of more effective teaching. The lessons now include more precise objectives and the teachers insist on good behaviour. The pupils work hard and are keen to do their best, most are able to use their initiative and work independently. Satisfactory progress has been made in developing procedures to check on the pupils'

progress although the information is not used sufficiently to plan work. There has been good improvement in providing opportunities for pupils to learn about different cultures and this provision is now good. The school is well placed for further improvement and has good capacity to improve.

## STANDARDS

Overall standards have improved since the previous inspection. Attainment on admission varies significantly from year to year and performance in national tests is affected significantly by high levels of mobility in the school, the low number of pupils taking the tests and the proportion with special educational needs. Trends indicate that improvement has been in line with national trend with most improvement in English and science due to the school's successful target setting and improvements in teaching. There is little overall difference in boys' and girls' attainment. National test results at the end of the infants in 2000 showed that standards in reading, writing and mathematics were average but below those of similar schools. At the end of the juniors, the pupils attained average standards in English and mathematics and well above average standards in science. When compared with similar schools attainment was well below average in English, below in mathematics and above in science. Results need to be treated with caution due to the low numbers taking the tests.

Inspection evidence shows that standards in English and science, by end of the juniors, are above average, although there are gaps in pupils' skills in spelling, handwriting and punctuation throughout the school. Pupils attain average standards in mathematics and achieve well in number and shape, space and measures. By the end of the infants, standards in reading and speaking and listening are above average, writing is average. Science is average by the end of the infants. Variations between test results and inspection evidence are due to improved teaching, the natural differences found in year groups and the proportion of pupils with special educational needs. Progress is mostly good due to effective teaching. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. Progress is most rapid in Years 2 and 6 due to the often very good or excellent teaching. Throughout the school, standards in art and design, music and design and technology are above those expected for pupils aged seven and eleven. Standards are average in information and communication technology, history, physical education and religious education. Computers are used well in other subjects. In geography, the infants attain appropriate standards for their age but standards are not high enough and below those expected for eleven-year-olds. Pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are improving at a good rate due to the school's recent emphasis on and adaptation of national strategies. Children in the foundation stage make good progress in the areas of learning. They exceed the early learning goals in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world. They attain the early learning goals in personal, social and emotional, physical and creative development. Overall standards are high enough and the pupils achieve well, with the exception of geography in the juniors. The school has set sufficiently challenging targets for English and mathematics and is on course to meet them.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. The pupils are keen to learn and try hard in all their work. They respond very well to creative opportunities in art, music and English. Children in the reception class have positive attitudes and apply themselves well.
Behaviour, in and out of	Good. The pupils help to create an orderly and caring

classrooms	community. They move around the school sensibly and play together well. They have a clear understanding of the impact of their actions on others. There have been no exclusions.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils use their initiative and look for ways of helping others in the school and by raising funds for charities. They work well independently and also co-operate effectively.
Attendance	Good. Attendance is above average; the pupils enjoy school. Punctuality is good.

### TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Very good	Good

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

The teaching is good overall with a high proportion of very good and excellent teaching. In the lessons seen, 17 percent were excellent, 17 percent very good, 44 percent good and 22 percent satisfactory. There was no unsatisfactory teaching. Strengths include the very effective development of basic skills in English and mathematics. The school has good strategies for the teaching of literacy and numeracy. Teaching meets the needs of all pupils. Pupils with special educational needs are taught well and they have individual education plans which match their needs. The best teaching is in the infants and Years 5 and 6. Other subjects which benefit from good or better teaching are art and design, music, design and technology and information and communication technology. There is good teaching of children in the reception class and Years 3 and 4. Learning is good; pupils work hard and show, interest, concentration and independence. Areas for development in teaching include more effective use of marking, the pace of some lessons and further development of pupils' handwriting and spelling.

### OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. The school has good strategies for literacy and numeracy. The curriculum includes all subjects but the development of skills lacks consistency. Geography is not taught to sufficient depth. Children in the reception class follow an appropriate curriculum. The school provides satisfactory extra-curricular activities and makes good use of visits and visitors.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils are supported effectively and individual education plans are well focused. There is restricted access for pupils with physical disabilities.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. The school works hard to promote the pupils' understanding of right and wrong and to extend their social skills. Assemblies contribute well to spiritual development. The school successfully promotes pupils' knowledge of the wider world and has good links with the American community.

How well the school cares for its pupils	Effectively. The staff show much care for the pupils and have supportive systems to promote their attendance, good behaviour and well-being. The procedures for assessment are satisfactory but insufficient use is made of the information to plan work.
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The school has very good links with parents. The parents support the school through helping in classrooms, assisting on visits and by raising substantial funds. Reports on children in the foundation stage do not include information about the areas of learning.

### HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher sets high standards and inspires the staff. Staff work well together and have a strong commitment to school improvement. Their roles as subject leaders are underdeveloped.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very effectively. The chair provides very good leadership of the governors. The governors have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and are involved fully in strategic planning and managing finance. They keep a check on how well the school is doing.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The school now completes a rigorous annual review of its performance and has begun to use data to set targets for improvement in national tests. The governors set targets and monitor the performance of the staff. Priorities are linked well to staff development.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Financial control and planning are good. The school robustly seeks tenders for supplies and services and applies the principles of best value. There are secure long-term plans linked to finance.

There are an adequate number of teachers with good expertise. The school has sufficient support staff and a very capable secretary. Resources are satisfactory overall and good for information and communication technology and English. There are shortages of equipment and limited space for outdoor play for reception children. The accommodation is satisfactory but some classrooms are too small.

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

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The way the school is led and the approachability of staff.</li> <li>• The quality of teaching and the progress their children make.</li> <li>• The way in which the school helps their children to become mature and take responsibility.</li> <li>• That their children enjoy coming to</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The provision for extra-curricular activities.</li> <li>• Homework.</li> <li>• The way the school works with them.</li> </ul>

school.	
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The inspection team endorses the positive views of parents. There is a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities. The school provides regular and an appropriate amount of homework. The school works well with the parents and keeps them informed about their children's progress.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Children start in the reception class in the September of the academic year in which they are five. Attainment on admission varies significantly from year to year. Children start school with a variety of pre-school educational experience and about a third have no pre-school experience. Levels of personal, social and emotional development are generally below those expected of four-year-olds. There is much variation in the children's knowledge and understanding of spoken English. Language levels are below those expected. However, the school compensates for these variations well by providing effective teaching of the children in the foundation stage. The children, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. By the end of the reception year, the children attain the early learning goals in all areas of learning. They exceed the early learning goals in communication, language and literacy, mathematics and knowledge and understanding of the world. In their personal, social and emotional, creative and physical development the children have appropriate skills and knowledge for their age. Their performance represents good success for the school and is an improvement since the previous inspection.

2. In the national tests at the end of the infants in 2000, the pupils attained average standards in reading, writing and mathematics, but teacher assessments showed that standards were below average in science. When compared with schools with similar intakes, standards were below average in reading, mathematics and science and well below in writing. These results were not as good as in the previous year due to the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs and their low attainment on admission to the school. Analysis of the trends in performance show that, overall, the school has kept pace with the national trend. The results show that boys do better than girls, but these results need to be treated with caution due to the very small numbers involved. Only eight pupils took the national tests at the end of the juniors in 2000, but analysis of trends over the last three years show that standards are improving and are average in English and mathematics and well above average in science. When compared with similar schools, standards were well below in English, below in mathematics and above in science.

3. The following factors influence performance in national tests and cause some variation from year to year:

- Attainment on admission varies significantly each year;
- There are high levels of mobility between the infants and juniors due to the high proportion of forces' children;
- The low number of pupils taking the tests makes year on year comparisons unreliable;
- The proportion with special educational needs varies annually;
- The natural variations in ability found in each year group.

4. Bearing in mind these influences, the trend over three years indicates that improvement in national test results in English, mathematics and science at the end of the juniors has been in line with national trend with most improvement in science. The rate of improvement in English and science is better than mathematics but the school has recognised this and targeted improvement in mathematics. Its rigorous approach is beginning to have a positive impact on standards.

5. Overall standards have improved since the previous inspection. Inspection evidence shows that standards in English and science, by end of the juniors, are above average. Pupils attain average standards in mathematics and achieve well in number and shape,

space and measures. By the end of the infants, standards in reading and speaking and listening are above average, writing is average. Science is average by the end of the infants. Pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are improving at a good rate due to the school's recent emphasis on and adaptation of national strategies. Variations between test results and inspection evidence are a result of variations in the cohorts, improved teaching and target setting and a stronger focus on improving the pupils' written work. The school sets sufficiently challenging targets for performance in national tests and is on course to meet them. These targets are reviewed regularly and monitored by the governors.

6. Progress is mostly good due to effective teaching. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. They are set work which is matched to their needs and linked to well focused individual education plans. Progress is most rapid in Years 2 and 6 due to the often very good or better teaching. The school has made good headway in raising standards in writing, having identified this as a weakness. There is much rigour in improving pupils' written work and of using literacy skills in other subjects. Teachers make good use of the National Literacy Strategy as a basis for developing pupils' skills. Similarly, in mathematics, the strong focus on mental arithmetic and number has helped to raise standards and improve pupils' progress in the subject. Mathematics is used very well to support work in art and design, information and communication technology and design and technology.

7. Throughout the school, standards in art and design, music and design and technology are above those expected for pupils aged seven and eleven. Standards are average in information and communication technology, history, physical education and religious education. Computers are used well in other subjects. In geography, the infants attain appropriate standards for their age, but standards are not high enough and below those expected for eleven-year-olds. Overall standards are high enough with the exception of geography in the juniors.

8. The pupils rapidly improve their artistic skills through the successful intervention of specialist teaching. They achieve particularly well in their work in clay. In design and technology, the pupils have good skills of making and evaluating and refining their products. The pupils' musical competence is good. They sing tunefully, in a variety of styles and have good skills in composing and performing their own compositions. The pupils are making good progress in information and communication technology, although overall standards are average. The improved rate of progress is due to the school's new equipment and effective teaching and use of computers in other subjects. The parents' view that standards have improved and their satisfaction with their children's progress are justified by inspection evidence.

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

9. The pupils' good behaviour, attitudes to work and attendance contribute well to their attainment and progress. The pupils take advantage of the opportunities to show initiative and take responsibility. They respond enthusiastically in most lessons and sustain concentration well, although, in a few lessons in Years 3 and 4, they become distracted when the lessons are too long. Pupils are very interested in English and music and respond very well to opportunities to work creatively in art and design. They have a good awareness of environmental issues and show respect and care for the school buildings and resources.

10. The reception children make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development and learn how to co-operate, work independently and listen to and respond to their friends and adults. They quickly settle into the school's routines and become keen and interested in all the activities provided for them. They behave well and co-operate effectively, sharing toys and equipment. In role-play they show good communication skills and attentive

listening, taking it in turns to act out parts. They respond well to adults and are keen to please.

11. The pupils have positive attitudes to work and one another. Relationships are good and impact well on the pupils' developing skills of collaboration. In lessons, pupils with special educational needs have good attitudes to their work and generally behave well. They are totally integrated with other pupils in lessons and are included by their peers in all playground games and activities. In literacy lessons, the pupils respond very well to the imaginative and stimulating teaching. In Years 5 and 6, the pupils engaged in lively discussion and debate. They worked hard to improve their writing and to make it interesting to the reader. Pupils are keen in mathematics lessons. They enjoy the challenge of answering questions quickly and accurately and respond well to rewards and praise. In a music lesson in Years 1 and 2, the pupils responded excellently, paying careful attention and listening to instructions. They co-operated well and produced work of a good standard.

12. Throughout the school, pupils are keen to come to school, and attendance and punctuality are both good. Attendance has improved since the last inspection and now exceeds the national average. There is very little unauthorised absence and parents are prompt in letting the school know the reasons for any other absence. There is some holiday absence during term time, largely due to the number of American nationals whose holiday patterns are different to those in Britain. Parents at the parents' meeting and in the questionnaire state that their children are keen to come to school and enjoy the available activities. Evidence from the inspection supports these views.

13. The school council and the duties allocated to pupils in each class group support personal development. Pupils elect the council members and their requests receive careful consideration by the headteacher and governors. Pupils act as chair during sub-committee meetings. Suggestions from the full council include timetabling the use of the playing field and the provision of smaller goalposts to let younger pupils have a chance. The council also suggested improvements to the toilet facilities. There is a range of duties in each class group suitable to the pupils' age. Children in reception take turns to be register monitors, Years 3 and 4 organise the music and door duties in assemblies, and Years 5 and 6 have playground duties, helping younger pupils. This is an improvement since the last inspection.

14. Parents are impressed by the way in which the school helps their children to become mature and take responsibility. The inspection team endorses these positive views. In a lesson delivered by community police about self-esteem and strategies to avoid drugs, pupils were asked to write down how they could help their parents. One pupil wrote, 'Make them proud of me', others listed 'Don't waste money' and 'Tidy up'.

15. Behaviour in and out of classrooms is good. The majority of pupils respond to the high expectations of the teaching staff. There is an orderly atmosphere, evidenced by the way pupils relate to each other and members of staff. There is a clear understanding of the impact of their actions on each other. There is no evidence of racism, sexism or bullying. Pupils from different nationalities work and play together very well. There have been no exclusions.

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

16. Teaching has improved since the previous inspection and is good overall. Parents' confidence in the teachers is justified by inspection evidence. Of the lessons seen, 17 percent were excellent, 17 percent very good, 44 percent good and 22 percent satisfactory. There was no unsatisfactory teaching. The teachers focus well on the needs of the different abilities and ages in the classes and this helps the pupils to learn effectively. Learning is

good and pupils work hard, persevere with tasks and concentrate well. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. The most effective teaching is in the infants and Years 5 and 6. The quality of teaching has a beneficial impact on the pupils' progress and is contributing to raising standards, particularly in English, mathematics, science, art and design, music and design and technology.

17. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is effective. Learning support assistants, with responsibility for special educational needs pupils, make a good contribution to their learning because the quality of relationships is good; pupils respond well to the targeted and specific support they receive. In lessons where there is no targeted adult support, teachers tend to provide extra support themselves. They are fully involved with the co-ordinator for special educational needs (SENCO) in formulating each individual education plan and so are well aware of the specific needs of each pupil. However, other than in English and mathematics, teachers' planning does not routinely and explicitly identify specific work to meet the needs of special educational needs pupils.

18. Teaching of children in the foundation stage is good. The teacher and support staff have good expertise and experience of working with young children and provide stimulating and interesting lessons. Much emphasis is given to developing the children's confidence and in promoting their personal, social and emotional development. The children respond well to the opportunities to play together and explore the "shop" and "Opticians" in their role-play. The adults intervene well in these situations and encourage the use of a wide range of vocabulary and imaginative play which promotes good speaking and listening skills. Communication, language and literacy are taught well. The staff plan good opportunities for the children to improve their reading and writing skills both informally and through well-structured lessons. In the optician's shop there are opportunities to make lists and to write prescriptions and the children are good at making lists. The staff regularly listen to the children read, play lots of word games and teach a wide variety of rhymes and songs well. There is a good emphasis on teaching the names and sounds of letters. The teaching of the mathematical area of learning is good. There are good opportunities for the children to learn through using apparatus. The staff intervene very well in the "shop" with good questions which promote the children's thinking. The staff also keep a check on how well each individual makes progress, record the information and use it to plan work. This was illustrated very effectively in mathematics when the teacher noticed how well a more able child used money. She intervened effectively and provided much additional challenge through the use of apparatus and intensive questioning. The children are keen learners and apply themselves very well. They respond to the good teaching in the creative and physical areas of learning and knowledge and understanding of the world. The staff have good subject knowledge and make good use of the national guidance for the foundation stage. They understand how young children learn and, by following the stepping-stones for learning, create opportunities for the children to learn through play, direct teaching and small group work. This combination of methods aids learning. The staff manage behaviour well; the children are left in doubt about what is expected of them. There is regular homework, including opportunities for parents to read with their children.

19. Teaching and learning in the infants are very good and they are good in the juniors. About a fifth of the lessons seen were satisfactory and areas for development in these lessons include, more effective behaviour management, sharper marking and a brisker pace. Occasionally, when lessons are too slow, the pupils lose interest and the pace of learning drops as in design and technology in Years 3 and 4. Pupils in the infants and juniors respond well to the teachers and become well-motivated and interested learners. They work hard and produce good quantities of work. They are proud of their achievements and because the teachers clearly explain what is expected, they have a good knowledge of their learning.

Learning is at its best in the infants and Years 5 and 6 as the teaching is often very good and sometimes excellent.

20. The school has good strategies for teaching English and mathematics and the teachers plan well for these subjects. Lessons in English and mathematics begin with a well-paced introduction, often with quick and challenging questions which get the pupils thinking. Good reference is made to previous learning and the teachers skilfully assess what has already been learned and match work to the needs of the different abilities and ages in the classes. In order to promote understanding, much care is taken in using apparatus in mathematics to support learning. In an excellent lesson in Years 5 and 6, the teacher prepared well using overhead transparencies to illustrate rotation and then showed the pupils how this manual task could be transferred to the computer to very good effect. The pupils were engrossed and inspired by this approach and, as a result, learning proceeded briskly. Teachers have a thorough knowledge of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and focus very well on developing skills through carefully building on what has already been taught. They expect much of the pupils and keep the pace of lessons moving through the effective use of questions and by providing good levels of support. The teaching of reading and writing is very good. There are opportunities for the pupils to practise reading in a variety of ways and there is good teaching of the names and sounds of letters. In the infants, the teacher encourages the pupils to write for a wide variety of purposes and makes effective use of stories and poems to motivate them. In the juniors, the teachers build on the pupils' interest in literature and promote effective learning through studying different styles of writing. There is some good marking of pupils' English work in Years 5 and 6, which includes the setting of targets and references which guide the pupils on how they might improve. However, areas for improvement in the teaching of English include developing pupils' spelling and handwriting.

21. The teachers have good knowledge of the subjects and use this to plan interesting work. Very good expertise in the teaching of music promotes good standards throughout the school in composing, performing and listening and appraising music. The school has a good scheme of work for art and design and it is used effectively by the teachers to plan lessons. The teachers' good subject knowledge helps to make up for gaps in the overall planning of the curriculum. Teachers expect much from the pupils and are particularly effective in promoting good behaviour. The pupils are left in no doubt about what is expected from them and the teachers' good use of rewards and sanctions keeps the pupils on task.

22. Teachers give the pupils responsibility for their own learning. There is satisfactory provision for homework and the pupils' learning improves because of it. Reading, mathematics and some topic work, for example, design and technology are regularly given for homework. The pupils are encouraged to use their initiative and to work independently and this is an improvement since the previous inspection. Pupils concentrate hard on activities and apply physical and creative effort well. In lessons in physical education, they refine and improve their performance, working together and, by analysing their performance, are able to perform good sequences of movement. In art, they carefully build up pictures using a wide range of techniques and their knowledge of the work of famous artists. They also are keen to improve their academic work, for example, by using their knowledge of number facts to solve problems.

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

23. The curriculum has improved and now complies fully with statutory requirements. It is suitably broad and balanced and contains all National Curriculum subjects and religious education. National strategies for literacy and numeracy have been implemented well and

are beginning to raise standards in these subjects. For literacy, this is an improvement since the last inspection. Good links with other schools and early years providers ensure that pupils are well prepared for the various stages of their education.

24. In the parents' questionnaire returns, there is a measure of criticism about the range and amount of provision made by the school for extra-curricular activities. Because of the absence of a member of staff, certain high-profile after-school clubs that normally run regularly have not taken place recently. However, the inspection team judges that the level of extra-curricular activities is satisfactory.

25. Teachers and support staff work to good effect to ensure that each pupil gets the same opportunity to participate in activities and lessons and to make suitable progress. They direct their questions well to include all pupils and to ensure that they contribute to discussions. High quality relationships enable all pupils to feel confident to express their thoughts and beliefs freely. Differences between the British and the American cultures are dealt with sensitively so that pupils from each feel equally valued and valuable. For example, a good display that shows where each pupil was born and where they have travelled is sited in the main entrance hall and sets a good tone for the work of the school.

26. The school has recently adopted national guidance for the Foundation Stage and for subjects other than English and mathematics following a long period of time when they were required to concentrate their efforts on implementing a more narrow range of curriculum targets, as identified on the action plan following the previous inspection. This has secured a balance of provision within each subject and has ensured that all the individual subject requirements are being met in full over a two-year period of time. Care has been taken to ensure that there are sensible links between subjects so that the curriculum remains coherent. Rightly, the school has identified the need to develop this national guidance into relevant schemes of work for all subjects that clearly set out in a logical sequence what skills pupils should learn and what understanding they should acquire. This work has now begun in art, information and communication technology and religious education. Further development in other areas and subjects is clearly identified as a priority in the current school improvement plan so that teachers can meet the developing needs of all pupils more closely.

27. Pupils with special educational needs are taught in class with their peers, which ensures that they enjoy equal access to the curriculum and are fully integrated into the life of the school. Their individual education plans are good and provide suitably precise targets for improvement. All the requirements of the Code of Practice are met in full. Provision for special educational needs has improved significantly since the previous inspection.

28. Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is good. Provision for the teaching of sex education to pupils in the juniors has improved since the last inspection and is now satisfactory. Parents are now being notified of both the content of proposed lessons and their right to withdraw their children from them. The provision to teach pupils about the use and misuse of drugs is very good. In line with national guidance, teachers are beginning to plan appropriate activities to develop pupils' skills of citizenship, for example, in religious education lessons and through the work of the school and class councils.

29. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is good and regular opportunities for prayer are now being provided, which is an improvement since the last inspection. Religious education lessons provide satisfactory opportunities to consider the beliefs of other people, for example Judaism and Islam, and to develop their spiritual awareness. Some teachers plan for exciting and inspiring moments in other subjects. An example of this was an excellent literacy lesson in Years 5 and 6 where the way in which the teacher produced ice sculptures from a cool box was exceptionally effective in promoting a sense of wonder and

excitement in all the pupils. Reception children experienced a sense of wonder when they looked closely at the developing buds on a willow tree in the school grounds. The daily acts of collective worship fulfil statutory requirements and make an appropriate contribution to pupils' spiritual development; in a whole school assembly pupils sang "The Millennium Prayer" with sensitivity and feeling.

30. The school makes good provision for pupils' moral and social development. Pupils have a clear sense of what is acceptable behaviour and what is not, which is generally consistently reinforced by all members of staff. A clear system of rewards and sanctions contributes well to promoting good behaviour and developing good work habits. Good opportunities to work in pairs or larger groups are frequently provided for pupils in all classes and this enables them to develop their social and interpersonal skills. The school contributes regularly to various charities and pupils develop a good sense of the need to help those less fortunate than themselves. They contribute well to village life, for example working with the 'Darley in Bloom' committee to improve the school grounds. They have good links with individuals and organisations in the community; this makes a good contribution to the breadth of experience enjoyed by pupils and develops their sense of belonging to a community.

31. Provision for pupils' cultural development is good, overall, and has improved significantly since the last inspection. Very good consideration is given to the differences and similarities between the British and the American cultures. Pupils have been given a Thanksgiving Day meal and have attended the tree lighting ceremony that signals the start of the American Christmas celebrations. Pupils from the school have visited the local USAF base to participate in a variety of cultural events. Pupils often comment in lessons about practical differences in lifestyles; for example, in a Year 1 and 2 geography lesson, American pupils highlighted the dangers for themselves and their parents of having a left-hand drive car when being picked up from school. French is taught to older pupils and all pupils regularly listen to a range of Western European music. There have been occasional displays of artefacts from cultures from further afield but this aspect of the school's work has already been recognised as one for further development.

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

32. The staff and governing body help to make Darley Primary a caring school which meets the personal needs of the pupils effectively. The school has addressed the concerns of the previous inspection regarding the provision of child protection, the monitoring of attendance and the provision of a healthy and safe environment, these aspects of the school's work are now good. Staff are approachable and pupils and parents are confident that any concerns will be addressed promptly and effectively.

33. The school has good procedures to monitor attendance and punctuality. Parents are reminded of the importance of good attendance and support the school in its efforts to minimise absence. Punctuality is also good and registers are well kept, conforming to statutory requirements. The educational social worker rarely visits the school.

34. Behaviour standards are good and there is a structured and co-ordinated use of the sanctions and awards specified in the behaviour code. During the inspection, the usual minor incidents, such as calling out in class, were dealt with firmly but gently. Parents are informed of any problems that occur with the behaviour of their children. Ninety-seven per cent of parents responding to the questionnaire state that behaviour is good. At the parents meetings, they recognise that the school procedures are responsible for supporting good behaviour. Inspection evidence supports these views.

35. The headteacher is the designated person responsible for child protection. The policy is clearly structured and teaching staff are aware of the procedures to be followed. However, the school recognises the need for wider, more formal training for lunchtime assistants and classroom support staff. Welfare procedures are up to date and good. The headteacher has recently re-qualified in first aid, any accidents are recorded and great care is taken to inform parents of any concerns. The restricted accommodation prevents the school from providing a quiet area where injured pupils can wait to be collected. The school has recently taken advice from the local authority on the extension of the existing good risk assessment procedures. The governing body is involved with health and safety matters and significant outcomes of risk assessment are incorporated into the school improvement plan.

36. The school's policy for assessment is very thorough, gives clear and unambiguous guidelines for staff and sets a very good agenda for further improvement. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment are satisfactory. Regular annual testing in English and mathematics for pupils in Years 2 to 6 is used satisfactorily to identify trends in attainment over time and to indicate how a group of pupils compares with their peers locally and nationally. As part of the school's recent adoption of national guidance, testing in many subjects is now more frequent, typically at the end of a unit of work. This is giving a growing body of information about individual's levels of attainment that has yet to be used fully to judge the rate of individual's progress, to inform teachers' future planning or to ensure that pupils develop skills and understanding in a logical sequence. The school is well aware of the developments needed and has incorporated them into the current school improvement plan. The school's marking policy is satisfactory. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly but seldom indicate what pupils should do to improve their work. The best practice is in Years 5 and 6, where the teacher gives good guidance that often leads to swift improvement.

37. The individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs contain suitable targets for improvement. These targets are reviewed and amended regularly and pupils' progress is tracked carefully. Designated learning support assistants help pupils with special educational needs to focus on their tasks and make a good contribution to their progress. To support the school's work for pupils with special educational needs, there is good liaison with many outside agencies, such as the Behaviour Support Service, although some Health Authority agencies visit only infrequently. Because of the steps between the junior classrooms, the hall and the library, access for pupils with physical disabilities is difficult. Currently, these difficulties are being overcome satisfactorily for part of the week because of the appointment of a learning support assistant. This support is missing, however, for the majority of the week, which places added responsibility on the class teacher or other adults. This is an unsatisfactory arrangement.

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

38. The school has very good links with parents. Parents make a good impact on the work of the school. These aspects support pupils' personal development and academic progress. The quality of information to parents and their impact on learning by supporting their children's work at home are satisfactory.

39. A significant minority of parents responding to the questionnaire is concerned that their children do not get sufficient homework and that curriculum information is sparse. Inspection evidence only partly supports these views. The concept of homework differs between British and American education systems and the school provides appropriate homework. The school accepts the concern about curriculum information. New documents are prepared and ready for distribution very shortly to overcome this omission. In all other aspects, the parents recognise, and are very supportive of, the schools efforts to involve them in their children's education.

40. Information to parents has improved since the last inspection. The prospectus and governors' report to parents are both detailed documents which comply with statutory requirements and give much useful additional information. The pupils' annual reports cover every subject and contain suggestions for areas of improvement. There is a constructive Home-School Agreement and a homework policy available to parents. However, reports in the Foundation Stage do not specify the early learning goals as they should. The school has recognised this omission and the reports issued at the end of this academic year are designed to include early learning goals.

41. There is a very active and supportive Parent Teacher Association. Members raise significant sums of money that has been used to buy additional computers and playground toys. The current target is to replace the curtains in the school hall. A number of parents help in classrooms. The school values this support and parents recognise that their help is important.

42. Parents expressed concern about the small range of activities outside school hours. Evidence from the inspection does not support this concern. In a relatively small school, all of the staff take part in extra curricular activities. Following the temporary departure of one staff member on maternity leave, there was a short-term gap in the activities she ran. This has been overcome and new activities, such as the school's newspaper, have been introduced.

43. The parents of pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in formulating and reviewing the targets on their individual education plans. Where parents are unable to attend review meetings in school, draft individual education plans are sent home for their comment; this is good practice.

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

44. Leadership and management of the school have improved since the previous inspection, are good overall and this has a beneficial impact on the standards and quality of education. The headteacher leads by example and inspires confidence in the staff, parents and governors and has created an effective team who have good capacity to move the school forward. There is now greater involvement of the governing body in decision-making. The school has remedied the weaknesses identified in the previous inspection report and is better than it was. Standards in most subjects are higher than previously reported. The quality of teaching has been improved, through effective monitoring and good training. The curriculum now meets statutory requirements. Issues regarding poor behaviour and health and safety have been tackled successfully. The school has made good improvement since the previous inspection.

45. The school has a very positive ethos in which all are valued. Its aims are clearly displayed and are shared by staff, governors and parents. The school successfully meets its aims. Statutory requirements regarding collective worship, the curriculum are considered carefully and the school has a good commitment to providing equal opportunities. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is managed well and the school makes effective use of support from outside agencies as needed. There is a very good policy for pupils with special educational needs that provides clear guidelines for all staff; all systems and routines are clearly articulated and understood. The co-ordinator for special educational needs (SENCO) is knowledgeable and well organised and all the required paperwork is in good order. Currently, she has regular non-contact time to enable her to deal with routine matters but she is unable to work regularly with pupils throughout the school. The headteacher and governors have suitable plans to provide more non-contact time in the next

financial year to address this matter. The governor designated with responsibility for special educational needs meets the SENCO regularly and is fully aware of provision and issues within the school. The school has made good progress in developing and managing the provision for the foundation stage, although the accommodation and resources for outdoor play for the reception class are inadequate and unsatisfactory.

46. Much work has been done by the headteacher in monitoring lessons and this has improved teaching. The headteacher effectively balances a heavy class teaching commitment with his leadership and management role. There are good job descriptions and they are reviewed regularly and linked to performance management. Having raised standards and improved the quality of education, the school's main focus is to improve the effectiveness of the role of subject leaders which is underdeveloped. Insufficient focus has been given to monitoring the pupils' learning and establishing supportive systems to guide the teachers in building upon what has already been taught. This is the main target in the school's development plan.

47. The governors effectively fulfil their statutory responsibilities and take an active part in supporting the school and have begun to monitor the school's progress. The chair of governors is well-informed and provides very good leadership and firm direction. Several governors with responsibility for pupils with special educational needs, literacy and numeracy, visit the school regularly and have a secure understanding of how well the school has introduced the national strategies for literacy and numeracy. There is an appropriate structure of committees and governors have a clear view of the school's strengths and areas for development and are fully committed to raising standards and improving the quality of education. The governors are well informed by the headteacher and keep up-to-date on government and local initiatives through regular attendance on training courses.

48. The school has made a good start in using data to set sufficiently challenging targets for performance in national tests. The governors set targets for the headteacher and the teachers and track their performance in relation to the pupils' achievements. The school has used its analysis of national test results to identify underachievement in writing and devised successful ways of improving standards. As a result, writing standards have improved.

49. The school has good plans for the future; they are detailed and well focused. Although there are many objectives in the plan, the headteacher, staff and governors have the will and ability to reach their ambitious targets. Priorities are identified along with staff responsibility, projected costs and timescales for completion. The governors are involved in reviewing the plan and hold the school to account for its progress. They also thoughtfully consider ways in which to support the staff in meeting targets and have provided additional funds to support the staff in completing management tasks. The plan includes sharply focused measures of success.

50. In the recent auditors' report, the school was commended for its financial systems and planning and the inspection team endorses this opinion. Financial control is robust. The school has built up a healthy surplus to cushion itself against the impact of a dip in numbers caused by the high mobility levels at the school. The headteacher and governors have also taken steps to reduce the 17 percent surplus by providing additional teaching and support staff, improving resources for the foundation stage and improving the accommodation. Budget projections show that the surplus will fall to about seven percent next year and be reduced further in 2003. The governors link finance to the school's plans and take good steps to ensure that best value is obtained for supplies and services. The headteacher and governors have also considered other ways of improving the school by reviewing the organisation of the school day, the provision for pupils with special educational needs and they have plans to improve the curriculum.

51. The school benefits much from the very good support provided by the efficient secretary who frees time for the headteacher and staff to concentrate on their teaching. She completes a wide range of day-to-day routines to do with registration, admissions, supply staff and overseeing the school fund and petty cash. School routines are very secure. There is an adequate number of support staff who contribute to the pupils' progress. The teaching staff are an effective team; they work hard and show much commitment to raising standards. Staff working with children in the reception class have appropriate qualifications and experience. There is a good programme of training which has helped to improve their competence in the teaching of English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology. However, they have had limited experience in leading subjects, although the school has identified this as a training priority. The process of supporting new staff and newly qualified teachers works very well. Because of the good quality of teaching the school would be a good provider for initial teacher training.

52. The accommodation is satisfactory but there is limited access for pupils with disabilities. The staff use the pupils' work to create a welcoming and purposeful learning environment. There are no health and safety issues and the school is a safe and secure building. There is a small, but attractive library, but it is not used fully to develop pupils' skills in using reference books. The funds raised by parents and the school's own funds have been used well to provide sufficient computers of good quality and they are used well. As a result, standards in information and communication technology are rising and the pupils have good opportunities to use computers in other subjects. The hall is used well for physical education and assemblies. Although the school field slopes steeply, it is used for games. Opportunities for children in the reception class to benefit from outdoor play are limited as there is only a small separate area for them. The school has adequate and satisfactory resources for most subjects. There is a suitable range of library books and small collections of books in each class. The school makes good use of funds for designated purposes such as literacy and has built up a good range of resources to support the teaching of pupils with special educational needs. The school makes good use of visits, visitors and loans from the local authority to enhance the curriculum.

53. In view of:

- The pupils' below average attainment on admission;
- The above average costs of educating the pupils;
- Above average standards in English, science, art and design, music and design and technology by the end of the juniors;
- The good teaching and learning;
- Effective leadership and management.

The school provides good value for money.

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

54. In order to accelerate the rate of pupils' progress the headteacher, staff and governors should:

**\*Improve planning to take account of what the pupils have already studied by:**

Making more effective use of assessment;

Ensuring consistency in marking in order to guide pupils on how they might improve.

(Paragraphs 12, 19, 20, 36, 70, 88, 98, 108 and 118)

**\*Improve the role of the subject leaders by;**

Providing effective training;  
 Providing opportunities for them to monitor learning rigorously;  
 Providing schemes of work which guide teachers effectively in developing the pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding.  
 (Paragraphs 26, 46, 84, 88, 93 and 118)

**\*Improve pupils' spelling, handwriting and punctuation and use of the library for research.**  
 (Paragraphs 20, 52, 65, 67 and 71)

**\*Raise standards in geography in the juniors.**  
 (Paragraphs 7, 91 – 94)

### **OTHER ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL**

\*Improve the provision for outdoor play for children in the reception class. (Paragraphs 45, 52, 55 and 60)

\*Improve the written reports for parents of children in the foundation stage. (Paragraph 40)

\*The school has already identified these issues in its improvement plan.

## **PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS**

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

Number of lessons observed

36
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Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

15
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### ***Summary of teaching observed during the inspection***

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
17	17	44	22	0	0	0

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

### ***Information about the school's pupils***

<b>Pupils on the school's roll</b>	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	N/A	106
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/A	2

FTE means full-time equivalent.

<b>Special educational needs</b>	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	N/A	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	N/A	18

<b>English as an additional language</b>	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

<b>Pupil mobility in the last school year</b>	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	19
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	26

## Attendance

### Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.6
National comparative data	5.2

### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
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	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2000	9	6	15

<b>National Curriculum Test/Task Results</b>		<b>Reading</b>	<b>Writing</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Total	13	14	14
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	87 (81)	93 (86)	93 (95)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

<b>Teachers' Assessments</b>		<b>English</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>Science</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Total	13	13	13
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	87 (86)	87 (95)	87 (95)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

The table showing performance at the end of Key Stage 2 has been omitted due to the small number of pupils taking the tests.

### **Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	6
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	82
Any other minority ethnic group	3

*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)	4.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24
Average class size	26.5

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	55

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Financial information**

Financial year	1999/2000
	£
Total income	211,953
Total expenditure	209,196
Expenditure per pupil	2,094
Balance brought forward from previous year	39,541
Balance carried forward to next year	42,298

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

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out

106
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Number of questionnaires returned

56
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### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	59	39	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	54	43	2	2	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	45	52	0	2	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	32	46	14	7	0
The teaching is good.	61	36	2	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	27	57	14	2	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	64	36	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	61	36	2	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	32	48	18	2	0
The school is well led and managed.	52	29	9	0	11
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	45	50	0	0	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	18	25	36	11	11

### **Other issues raised by parents**

Parents are very pleased with the progress made by their children and how they learn basic skills. Issues such as bullying and bad behaviour are dealt with very well. Parents at the meeting said that the school provides sufficient homework and that there are enough extra-curricular activities.

## **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**

55. Children start in the reception class in the September of the academic year in which they are five. Their attainment on admission varies from year to year and is generally below the local authority average. The children, including those with special educational needs, make good progress and, by the time they start in Year 1, have attained the early learning goals in all areas of learning. They exceed the early learning goals in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world. Their personal, social, emotional, creative and physical development is appropriate for their age. The teaching is good and achieves an effective balance between adult directed and led activities and independent work. The school has adequate resources for most of the areas of learning but there are limited resources for outdoor play and the play area is too small. The school has identified this as an area for development and has set aside funds to improve the situation in the coming year. The school has made satisfactory improvement in this aspect of its work since the previous inspection. The staff make good use of recent guidance on the foundation stage curriculum and plan work effectively taking into account the stepping-stones for learning. Parents are pleased with the start made by their children in the reception class.

#### **Personal, social and emotional development**

56. The children make a good start to school and soon adjust to the routines and organisation of the reception class. There are good opportunities for individual learning provided through a well-balanced programme of work where children have opportunities to play and work together and to use their imaginations as in role-play and creative work. The good teaching results in the development of positive attitudes to work and helps the children to establish friendly and purposeful relationships with other children and adults. The children enjoy taking responsibility and readily organise themselves in the "optician's" into clients, secretaries and the optician. They show appreciation of one another's ideas and willingly take turns and share equipment. The staff are very involved in some of the activities and act as good role models and, by entering into the activities, stimulate positive attitudes and effective learning. The children develop a good awareness of the needs and feelings of others through their studies of religious education. They behave very well and are familiar with the school's rules and why they have them. The children are confident in approaching visitors and love to share their work with them. They talk effectively about what they have learned. The good emphasis given by the staff in promoting positive attitudes results in the children becoming effective learners who are well prepared for work in Year 1.

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

57. The children make good progress in communication, language and literacy and exceed the early learning goals by the time they leave the reception class. The teaching is good and the staff take every opportunity to enhance the children's early reading and writing skills. There are very good opportunities to practise speaking and listening skills in role-play and in story times. The teacher also intervenes well with challenging questions to get the children thinking about their work and she insists on detailed explanations in order to promote clear speech. The children benefit from a systematic approach to teaching reading which includes learning about the sounds of letters and opportunities to listen to a wide variety of stories and poems. The children respond enthusiastically in learning rhymes and this helps to promote effective use of language as the teacher explains carefully the meaning of new words and phrases. The children learn at a good rate. They concentrate very well and stick

at tasks. The children work hard and respond to the challenges set by the staff. The children enjoy reading and almost all recognise and read simple texts. They know the names of the characters in the reading scheme and describe them accurately. They attempt new words using proficient skills of building new words. The more able read with confidence. They show their enjoyment of what the stories tell them about the characters in their books. There are good opportunities for the children to learn how to write. They begin by making marks using a variety of pencils and crayons and soon start forming letters correctly. They recognise and write their own names and the more able write short sentences independently. The average children write copy sentences that have been written for them by the teacher.

### **Mathematical development**

58. The teaching of this area of learning is good as the staff provide a wide variety of practical activities for the children to learn about number, space and measurement. The children, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in their mathematical development and exceed the early learning goals by the time they leave the reception class. The children recognise numbers to 10 and beyond and many correctly count beyond 30 in the correct order. The more able already add and subtract small numbers and identify some number patterns such as odd and even. The children know several two-dimensional shapes and through playing in the sand and water they gain in confidence in using mathematical vocabulary accurately to compare size, shape and weight. They sustain concentration well and stick to tasks. The children are enthusiastic learners and love practical work. When learning about the value of coins, they carefully matched them, estimated their value and grouped them according to size and value. The more able completed several sums involving addition and subtraction of money in a short time. The staff encourage the children to use mathematical vocabulary and the children make good gains in understanding signs and symbols. The children work in a calm and purposeful way because their learning is well organised. Activities are planned according to the requirements of the stepping-stones of the early learning goals. The activities are also often linked to practical work. The classroom assistant engaged the children in a shopping activity which involved choosing items and working out change. In this way, learning is made meaningful and, because of this approach, progress is good.

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

59. The teaching of this area of learning is good as the staff provide a wide variety of activities for the children to develop their knowledge and understanding of the world. The children, including those with special educational needs, make good progress and exceed the early learning goals in this area of learning by the time they leave the reception class. The children have a good knowledge of the area in which they live and gain much from the wide experience of their peers who come from different parts of the United States. The staff focus much on celebrating the different cultures and traditions of the children and this encourages a respect for and appreciation of culture. This is picked up well in religious education lessons where the children are taught about a variety of religious beliefs. They understand several festivals and celebrations and know about key events in the life of Jesus. The children accurately describe their routes to school and know that there are different ways of travelling. They have a good vocabulary to describe direction and describe different features of parts of the world. They make good gains in developing an understanding of how things change over time through studying their own lives and families. Much of the children's good scientific knowledge is the result of practical work. They know about electricity and how it is used to power many things and to make our lives easier. They accurately draw a simple circuit that would light a bulb. They have a keen interest in the natural world and enjoy watching how their seeds and bulbs grow. They correctly name the main parts of plants and the staff draw their attention well to labels and diagrams that explain growth. The children

have appropriate skills in using computers. They know how to load a program and recognise that their commands influence what happens on screen. They write their own names and include capital letters appropriately. The pupils have appropriate making skills. They make models using a variety of recyclable materials and make effective use of tools and paint to enhance their models. The children work well independently and select their own resources. They also produce recognisable models using construction toys.

### **Physical development**

60. The teaching is good and the children attain the early learning goals by the time they leave the reception class. All children, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in their physical development although progress is hampered by insufficient opportunities to take part in outdoor play, as the space and equipment are limited. The children enjoy physical education lessons in the hall and gain much from effective intervention by the teacher. They have an appropriate awareness of space and, when moving around the hall, they avoid collisions. They respond well to music and recognise the different mood and tempo played and move appropriately. In games, they improve their throwing, rolling and catching skills as the teacher carefully explains a variety of techniques to improve performance. The children listen carefully and practise their skills until they become proficient in stopping moving objects such as beanbags. They enjoy exercise and know that, when they move quickly for a long time, they become breathless. They know that it is important to eat healthily and to take exercise. They develop a good understanding of friendly competition and are always ready to applaud their friends who have completed a task successfully. Other physical skills such as holding pencils correctly and using a variety of tools and equipment are developed well. The teacher provides good opportunities for the children to write using a variety of implements and the work using clay and tools improves the children's dexterity.

### **Creative development**

61. The children make good progress in their creative development and, by the time they leave the reception, have attained the early learning goals in this area of learning. The teaching is good. The teachers provide a good range of opportunities to develop the children's creative skills and the children participate with a great deal of enthusiasm. They experiment with paint and produce recognisable pictures of themselves, paying good attention to detail and including eyebrows and lashes. They observe closely and take much pleasure in studying hyacinths they have grown and making pictures of them. They mix paint effectively and know that different colours can be blended to create a new colour. They competently use rollers and sponges for printing and make good repeating patterns of geometric shapes. The staff provide good opportunities for the children to learn about music. The children know a wide range of songs and rhymes and sing with gusto and enthusiasm. They use instruments to add to their work and recognise the names of several instruments and know how to use them effectively. The children join in with the rest of the school to perform for their parents. The children benefit much from the good opportunities for role-play and enjoy creating their own activities. They work together well in the "shop" and "optician's" using correct and sometimes humorous vocabulary.

## **ENGLISH**

62. Great care needs to be taken when considering the National Curriculum test results for any one year group as comparisons between schools and year groups are not reliable because the numbers of pupils in each year group are too small. Nevertheless, by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, the results show improvements over the last four years at a rate that

matches the national trend and, in the year 2000, they were in line with the national average. By comparison with similar schools, they were below average at the end of Year 2 and well below average at the end of Year 6, because few pupils achieved the higher levels. There was no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls.

63. Inspection findings are that standards are continuing to improve. By the end of both Year 2 and Year 6, pupils' standards, overall, are above average. This improvement has been achieved through well-focused target setting, linked to analysis of test results, improved teaching and the successful development of the school's literacy strategy.

64. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are above average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress throughout the school because there are many planned opportunities for them to talk in groups of different sizes. Year 2 pupils are articulate and use language freely. They speak clearly and audibly, often including good details in their explanations. Higher attaining pupils speak at length and justify their opinions sensibly, using a good range of vocabulary. They listen well, for example, in a music lesson to distinguish high or low pitched sounds, and this helps them to benefit from the high quality teaching they receive. Year 6 pupils have developed their confidence and talk in an interesting way about the work they are doing. They listen carefully to adults and each other and make pertinent comments and suggestions that often develop well the topic under discussion. Many pupils speak clearly and confidently in a range of more formal situations, for example, when reading the prayer in assembly.

65. Pupils' reading skills develop well as they move through the school and, by the end of Years 2 and 6, standards are above average. A good system of recording the level of book they have completed and then assigning a suitable further book helps to ensure that they progress at a good rate when they are heard to read regularly. Year 2 pupils read repeated and familiar words and phrases fluently. They make effective use of their knowledge of letter sounds to work out unfamiliar words but often fail to take into account the effects of a final 'e' on the sound of a word, mispronouncing words such as 'nine'. Higher attaining pupils retell stories in detail. They read confidently and fluently with good attention to punctuation, achieving standards above those expected nationally for their age. Year 4 pupils read with appropriate expression. They make sensible predictions about what may happen next in a story. By the end of Year 6, average-attaining pupils read with fluency and accuracy, paying good attention to punctuation and meaning. They go beyond the literal to make inferences about meaning from text. Higher-attaining pupils are very fluent and accurate readers who make valid deductions about characterisation from the text they read. They express reasoned preferences about authors and genres and justify them well. Although each class has regular, timetabled access to the central library, there is no systematic development of their research and library skills, which inhibits the use they can make of the satisfactory stock of books in the library. In each class, there is a satisfactory range of fiction and relevant non-fiction books.

66. The provision that the school makes to develop pupils' writing skills has improved significantly since the last inspection and is now good. This has resulted in an improved and good rate of progress throughout the school. Standards are average at the end of Year 2. They are above average by the end of Year 6 as a result of particularly inspirational teaching of the older pupils, which is a considerable improvement since the last inspection.

67. Year 2 pupils write stories in correct sequence and at reasonable length, using a variety of sentence structures to create interest. They punctuate sentences correctly but sometimes fail to use capital letters correctly, for example, for the names of people or places. Their spellings are recognisable but they do not use their phonic skills well enough to build words correctly. For example, they spell 'morning' as 'moning' and 'charging' as 'chageing'.

Higher attaining pupils are beginning to choose words and phrases to good effect when they write phrases, such as ‘...the most beautiful place you could ever imagine.’ They give good consideration to story telling techniques, for example, repeating phrases, and they make good attempts at early characterisation in their stories. By the end of Year 6, pupils’ standards of word choice and imagery have developed well and are above average. However, standards of spelling and punctuation are only satisfactory. They choose words with great care, redrafting their work to good effect. Openings, such as “Suppose fire wasn’t pleasant” and “It pounces on its prey”, grab the reader’s attention and create a very good context for the developing poem, which flows well. However, standards of spelling are below average and word-building skills are not used correctly, for example, ‘wounded’, which is spelled as ‘wondered’. Higher attaining pupils write with a refreshing maturity of phrase and use adjectives, adverbs and conjunctions to good effect. Their spelling standards are average. Pupils make good use of information and communication technology in their writing and also access the Internet to improve their research and reading skills.

68. The National Literacy Strategy has been implemented well and has helped to raise standards throughout the school. Pupils’ literacy skills are used soundly across the curriculum, for example, to record the results of scientific experiments, evaluate design and technology projects and to give reasons for improving aspects of their environment.

69. The quality of teaching and learning are very good throughout the school. This is a considerable improvement since the last inspection and a major factor in the improvement in pupils’ standards. Teachers plan their work thoroughly and have a clear idea about what pupils are to learn in each lesson, which they often share with pupils at the beginning of the lesson. Their teaching of basic skills is very good, aided by a very good subject knowledge that ensures that pupils are continually challenged to improve their work and achieve higher standards. Activities are chosen well to further the aims of the lesson and to interest pupils. Some stimuli are outstandingly effective, as in a Year 5 and 6 lesson, where ice sculptures were used to captivate pupils’ attention and to inspire them to write good quality creative poetry and to ‘go beyond the obvious’. Teachers have high expectations of pupils’ behaviour, attention and standards. Because relationships and the management of pupils are so good, these expectations are fully repaid and pupils work willingly and very productively. The structure of the literacy lesson is effectively used to ensure that pupils know how far they have succeeded in attaining the objectives of the lesson.

70. The assessment procedures are satisfactory. Annual testing for Years 2 to 6 is being supplemented by a system of termly testing in writing, which is marked with close reference to National Curriculum level descriptors. This growing body of information is used satisfactorily to determine the levels of attainment for complete year groups and to identify common strengths and weaknesses. However, it is not yet used fully enough to enable teachers to judge individual’s rates of progress and to plan work that matches pupils’ developing need increasingly closely. The co-ordinator is currently absent from school on maternity leave. The school is aware that her role is an area for further development.

71. The library has been refurbished and now provides an appropriate base to house a satisfactory amount of non-fiction texts. It is used regularly by each class but not frequently enough, particularly in the juniors. Each class has easy access to a suitable number of quality fiction books to augment the small stock held centrally. The number and condition of the main reading scheme books are good.

## **MATHEMATICS**

72. Standards in mathematics are improving and the pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in their mathematical understanding. Overall, by the

end of Years 2 and 6, standards are in line with the national average. Pupils have above average knowledge of number and space, shape and measures. Their competence in data handling and using and applying mathematics are average. Pupils apply their mathematical skills well in other subjects. The teachers are always looking for ways in which to link numeracy with subjects such as design and technology, information and communication technology and art and design. Pupils make good gains in identifying and using geometric patterns in their artwork. They measure accurately when making models in design and technology and the oldest pupils have a good understanding of scale when designing models. Although standards overall are at a similar level as at the time of the previous inspection, there have been recent good improvements in the teaching, the quality and quantity of resources and the use of a published scheme to support learning. The school has successfully introduced the National Numeracy Strategy and this is having a beneficial impact on pupils' attainment throughout the school.

73. Results of national tests at the end of the infants and juniors vary from year to year due to the small cohorts and the percentage of pupils with special educational needs. In 2000, the results of tests at the end of the infants and juniors showed that standards were average, but below average when compared with similar schools. The school has analysed the results carefully and made good use of the information to set challenging targets. It is on course to achieve the targets in this year's tests and to increase the proportion of pupils attaining the higher levels. Trends over time show that the school has kept pace with the national improving rate. There are some indications that boys do slightly better than girls, but these comparisons are not reliable due to very small numbers taking the tests. Inspection evidence shows that girls and boys do equally well. Given the pupils' attainment on admission, standards are sufficiently high.

74. By the end of Year 2, pupils' competence in mental calculation and knowledge of number facts is good. The pupils have a secure understanding of addition and subtraction and the more able multiply and divide small numbers correctly. The pupils respond well to opportunities for homework and learn multiplication facts at home, being confident in working in the 2, 5 and 10 times tables. The teacher makes good use of guidance in the National Numeracy Strategy to focus on improving the pupils' knowledge of mathematical vocabulary. They make good progress in this aspect of their work. The pupils have a good knowledge of two-dimensional shapes and recognise patterns in shapes and number. They make reasonable estimates of size and are familiar with a good range of terms for shapes. They measure using standard units such as centimetres and weigh objects correctly using balances and scales. Their skills in solving problems are average as is their ability to make graphs and charts. The pupils make suitable use of computers to record data and print out their own graphs.

75. By the end of Year 6, the pupils have good number skills and confidently and correctly calculate using addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. The more able apply these skills well in using decimal fractions. Pupils have very good mental arithmetic skills and quickly and accurately recall multiplication facts. They have above average knowledge of shape, space and measures and use computers particularly well to produce geometric patterns. They have an average knowledge of data handling and are able to collate, sift and organise information effectively using computers and manual methods. They are able to solve problems at an appropriate level for their age but some struggle when several operations are needed to calculate the answer.

76. The quality of teaching and learning ranges from good to excellent and is very good overall. The teachers have focused very well on raising standards in mathematics and are on course through their effective work to raise pupils' performance to that in English and science. This is being achieved through the successful implementation and understanding of

the National Numeracy Strategy and the school's use of a published scheme of work. Targets are sharply focused and sufficiently challenging and each pupil has been set a target. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and they apply the principles of the National Numeracy Strategy very effectively. Lessons have brisk pace and there is a good balance between regular practice of number facts, opportunities to work as individuals or in small groups and class teaching. During introductions to lessons, the teachers explain very clearly what is to be learned and they remind the pupils of the objectives throughout the lessons. In an excellent lesson in Year 1, the teacher skilfully questioned the pupils, using a wide range of mathematical vocabulary, and then moved learning on at a good rate by introducing new strategies for solving problems. Similarly in an excellent lesson in Years 5 and 6, the teacher prepared demanding activities on shape and then linked the work to information and communication technology. The pupils responded enthusiastically and produced work of good quality. They showed a thorough understanding of angles and shape and this was illustrated well by their well-presented and accurate work. In most lessons, the teachers make good use of apparatus to support learning. The pupils take care of equipment and willingly share it with their peers.

77. Lesson planning is good in mathematics and the teachers organise classes well so that pupils of different ages and abilities receive sufficient support from adults. Tasks are matched well to ability and the involvement of classroom assistants ensures that pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good gains in their learning and grow in confidence in using a variety of mathematical strategies. There are very good relationships between staff, and pupils are confident in asking for support and help. The teachers mark pupils' work regularly and accurately, but there are few examples of written guidance for pupils on how they might improve their work. The lessons end with a suitable recap of what has been achieved and the teachers use this time to assess understanding and to plan tasks for the next lesson. Throughout lessons, the pupils work hard and apply themselves effectively. They use their initiative in selecting resources. They have a good understanding of their achievements and are keen to improve. They respond well to homework and say that it helps them to improve.

78. The teachers have worked together successfully on developing the teaching of mathematics in the school. The headteacher has monitored the teaching and linked his findings to further training. This has worked well and staff are confident in their knowledge and approach to teaching mathematics. The headteacher analyses the results in national tests and uses the information to set targets. Assessment is satisfactory overall. The school has adequate resources and books to support the teaching of mathematics and uses computers well to support learning.

## **SCIENCE**

79. There are no National Curriculum tests for pupils at the end of Year 2, but teacher assessments in 2000 indicate that pupils' standards were below the national average. By the end of Year 6, pupils' standards in the National Curriculum tests were well above the national average and were above those of pupils from similar schools because half the year group achieved higher levels of attainment than those expected nationally. Boys performed better than girls in this test. Improvements have been made over the last four years at a rate that exceeds the national trend. However, these results must be viewed with care because the numbers of pupils in the year group were very small, which adversely affects the reliability of direct comparisons. Standards have improved since the previous inspection.

80. Inspection findings are that, by the end of Year 2, standards are average and Year 6 pupils' standards are above average. By the end of Year 2, pupils know that some materials are changed to make items that are useful to us, for example, sand being used to make

glass. They give valid reasons for their predictions and are beginning to use some simple technical vocabulary correctly. Higher attaining pupils have a secure understanding of a small number of direct relationships, for example, that the speed that an ice cube will melt is in proportion to the amount of heat applied. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in the infants.

81. Because the curriculum is planned for classes in which there are two year groups, many pupils in the juniors have made good progress during this year. This is particularly the case in Year 3, where they are expected to work with Year 4 pupils at levels above those expected nationally, and in Years 5 and 6, where the teacher's subject knowledge and expectations of pupils' standards are high. In Years 3 and 4, pupils investigate effectively, for example, which materials cause shadows. They structure their work logically and record their results clearly, often drawing on their numeracy skills to present and interpret their findings in tables and graphs. Older and higher attaining pupils write clearly and with a greater degree of understanding of the principles involved, although work is rarely planned to extend their understanding. They use a growing range of scientific vocabulary correctly, for example, opaque, carnivore and diet. They understand the reasons for a healthy and balanced diet and have a thorough knowledge of the purposes of a skeleton. Although higher attaining pupils in Year 4 have a sound grasp of the movement of the Earth around the Sun and of the Moon around the Earth, many younger and average attaining pupils remain confused by the relative orbits and the time they take. Older and higher attaining pupils use information and communication technology appropriately, for example, to research into the planetary bodies. By the end of Year 6, pupils have made good progress. They have a clear idea of the main food groups from which a balanced diet should be chosen and relate their current diet knowledgeably to the ideal. They investigate a range of scientific phenomena logically, making reasoned predictions and drawing valid conclusions from a good range of data that they have collected and presented clearly. They label their diagrams clearly. They have a secure knowledge of a range of forces, with higher attaining pupils having a good grasp of the resultant effects of balanced and unbalanced forces acting on an object and make a good attempt to devise an absolute co-efficient to explain which elastic band would stretch the most in relation to its original length.

82. Because of the timing of the inspection, no teaching was seen in the infants. Nevertheless, based on a scrutiny of pupils' work and teacher's plans, it is evident that the quality of teaching of six and seven-year old pupils is at least satisfactory. The quality of teaching in the juniors is good. Teachers' plans for each lesson are thorough and provide a sound structure for extending pupils' knowledge and developing their skills. Teachers have high expectations of pupils and their behaviour is managed well, although there are some pupils, particularly in the younger class, whose attention span is rather short. As a result, the teacher has to work harder than she should to keep them focused on the task, which sometimes adversely affects the pace and effectiveness of parts of the lesson. In addition, the initial sessions of lessons are occasionally too long, which shortens the length of time available for pupils to be actively engaged in learning. Teachers have good subject knowledge and so the correct basic skills are effectively taught. Activities are well chosen to meet the objectives of the lesson and to interest the pupils. Consequently, pupils work hard at relevant tasks, often discussing and collaborating well, which makes a good contribution to developing their speaking and listening skills and their social development. As a result of this good teaching, pupils are now gaining knowledge and skills at a good pace.

83. The school has recently adopted national guidance and is beginning to adapt it appropriately to reflect their needs and context. This ensures that the full requirements of the National Curriculum are being met. This includes the regular provision of opportunities for pupils to experiment and investigate scientific issues, which is a good response to the key issue identified in the previous inspection report. However, the school has no scheme of

work to identify the sequence in which pupils should acquire skills and there are many gaps in pupils' understanding, for example, of how to construct a fair test. There is a suitable system of recording pupils' attainment to allow teachers to track pupils' developing skills, but this system is not used rigorously enough. The school has already recognised that these are areas for further development and they are priorities in the current school improvement plan. The co-ordinator has a good grasp of the strengths and weaknesses of the subject and, together with the rest of the teachers, an informed determination to improve provision and raise pupils' standards.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

84. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, in the infants and juniors make good progress in art and design. By the end of Years 2 and 6, they achieve standards which are above those expected for seven and eleven-year-olds. Standards are similar to those reported at the time of the previous inspection, but there have been improvements in some aspects of the subject, particularly, in modelling using clay and other mouldable materials. There is a good scheme of work which identifies the key skills to be taught. The guidance includes good advice for the teachers on planning lessons and identifies the order in which to develop techniques. The subject leader has a clear understanding of the subject and has worked hard to produce effective guidance on assessing the pupils' work. However, monitoring of the pupils' achievements is still underdeveloped. The subject benefits from very effective specialist teaching and this inspires the pupils to produce effective and attractive work. Although no lessons were seen during the inspection, the standards achieved by the pupils, samples of their work, teachers' planning and attractive displays show that teaching is good. The school has a wide variety and good range of resources for art and design, although there are few books in library about art. The school makes good use of computers to promote pupils' learning. Infant pupils have made effective use of a variety of programs to improve and refine their drawing skills. Older pupils have accessed the Internet to find out about the work of famous artists.

85. By the end of the infants, the pupils have developed good drawing skills. The teacher emphasises a variety of drawing techniques and there is much practice of shading, using tone and texture and insistence on accurate representation of objects. The pupils use their environment to explore shape and texture in man-made and natural things. They use a variety of media effectively, including crayon, pastel and pencil, to shade and make impressions of objects. The pupils know how to mix and blend colours and produce stunning pictures of countryside scenes. They have a good understanding of proportion as they study and represent faces in portraits. The teachers emphasise colour awareness and pupils link their artwork successfully to work in science on materials by making colour wheels using a good range of fabrics.

86. In the juniors, the pupils build successfully on these skills and techniques and show a level of sophistication in their work rarely found in primary schools. This is most noticeable in their clay work. The pupils make attractive tiles and add precise detail and finishing touches which bring their pictures to life. The teachers encourage pupils to work together on large paintings, for example, a record of their residential visit to Marrick Priory. Pupils successfully combine a range of painting techniques including printing and brushwork to create a three-dimensional effect with imaginative use of colour blends.

87. The teachers encourage pupils to apply their artistic skills to work in other subjects. In history, the pupils study Elizabethan and Tudor artists' work on portraits and then apply what they have learned to detailed portrait painting. Pupils apply creative skills well and are painstaking in their approach to adding detail. They are not easily satisfied with the results and immensely proud of their achievements. The teachers offer good advice and encourage

effective learning by allowing sufficient time for the pupils to experiment with a variety of techniques and to adapt and improve their work. Pupils thoroughly enjoy art and design and link their work effectively to design and technology. They also show an understanding and appreciation of the work of famous artists.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

88. By the end of Years 2 and 6, the pupils achieve standards which are above those expected for seven and eleven-year-olds. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, in the infants and juniors make good progress in design and technology. Standards and the quality of teaching have improved since the previous inspection. The school has adopted national guidelines for the subject and this has brought an improvement to teaching and the development of skills. However, the school does not have a consistent way of measuring what has been achieved and of building on what has already been taught. This relative weakness is tackled effectively through good teaching and the school has plans to bring together all of its approaches to developing skills in the subject under a new scheme of work linked to the assessment of pupils' skills.

89. Teaching and learning vary between very good and satisfactory and are good overall. The most effective teaching is in the infants and Years 5 and 6. In Years 3 and 4, lessons sometimes drift because explanations go on too long and the pupils lose concentration. The teachers have good subject knowledge and an effective understanding of the design and technology elements of the National Curriculum. They plan lessons well and structure them to include opportunities for the pupils to study designs, produce their own designs and then make models. Much emphasis is given to improving the pupils' work through critical appraisal and helpful suggestions. The pupils respond well to this positive approach and are keen to produce refined and working models. From the infants, the pupils understand the importance of making models which work and are robust enough to withstand frequent use. The infant teacher links the subject well to literacy. The pupils make moving pictures to illustrate stories they have heard. They add good detail and the end products are pleasing and effective. The pupils are encouraged to think carefully about their designs and to plan their work thoroughly. The teacher insists on carefully drawn designs which include labels and directions. The infants are self critical and also very pleased with their achievements.

90. Junior pupils are set demanding tasks and they rise to the challenge. They are very good at planning their work and of taking account of the purpose for which they will use their models. They work collaboratively and the teacher skilfully intervenes to ensure that everyone's contribution is valued. Through this method, the pupils become skilful in negotiating and in compromising so that the end products are of good quality. From work following their residential visit, the pupils have designed challenging rope courses involving several different challenges. The pupils have a good understanding of the technical terms used in design and technology. They are very good at designing work, apply themselves rigorously to tasks and evaluate what they have achieved. The pupils are encouraged to make effective use of their mathematical skills. They measure accurately and the more able draw to scale. They alter their designs to improve them. The pupils have made good models involving several moving parts. They know about axles, cams and gears and also use their knowledge of electrical circuits to make their models light up. The school has a suitable range and quantity of resources for design and technology. The teachers have a good awareness of health and safety and when the pupils are using tools, they insist on care and safety. The work in design and technology contributes much to the pupils' social skills as many of the activities are in small groups.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

91. In the last inspection report, pupils' standards were average at the end of Year 2 and, by the end of Year 6, were below average; resources were inadequate. While resources are now satisfactory, pupils' standards have not improved and insufficient progress has been made in this subject since the last inspection.

92. Year 2 pupils have a satisfactory understanding of local issues, such as safety on the road outside the school. They recognise that the beginning and the end of the school day are more dangerous because of the high volume of traffic as a result of having conducted surveys of the traffic flow, which also makes a good contribution to their mathematical development. They give their opinions sensibly and make valid comparisons between how the problems are different for British and American families, for example because some cars are left-hand drive. By the end of Year 6, pupils have some knowledge of the main mountain ranges of the world and place them generally correctly in the correct country. They have little idea about how mountains are formed, although they realise that mountain regions have a special climate and a specific range of habitats. Through a river study associated with a residential visit, pupils investigate natural and man-made aspects of the environment through direct observation. They have a satisfactory knowledge but are unable to draw conclusions or to perceive patterns or processes at the level they should. Progress is satisfactory in the infants, but unsatisfactory in the juniors for all pupils, including those with special educational needs.

93. The school has recently adopted national guidance to ensure that all the requirements of the National Curriculum are covered over a two-year cycle of study. However, because it has been necessary to address other, more urgent priorities in other subjects, a scheme of work that identifies a logical development of pupils' skills has not been developed. There is also no rigorous system of gauging pupils' levels of attainment regularly and frequently. As a consequence, there are many gaps in pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding, and teachers are unable to plan work that meets the needs of individual pupils closely enough. The school has already recognised that this is an unsatisfactory state of affairs and has put these as priorities in the current school improvement plan. There is no identified subject leader, which hinders development and is unsatisfactory.

94. Nevertheless, in lessons, pupils are now making very good progress in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory progress in Years 3 to 6 because of the quality of teaching. Teaching is now very good in the infants, which is a significant improvement since the last inspection. The teacher has a very good understanding of the subject and a clear idea of what knowledge and skills pupils should gain in the lesson. The subject matter is very relevant to the pupils and lessons are conducted at a good pace. Consequently, pupils are interested and maintain very good levels of concentration. The teacher's questioning skills are very good and probe pupils' understanding effectively. Relationships are very good and pupils are confident to answer questions and to express their views. The teacher has a very encouraging manner with the pupils and values their answers, giving them appropriate praise and motivating them very well. The teaching of the older pupils is satisfactory overall. The pace of lessons is sometimes too slow because the initial sessions are too long and pupils are passive for too great a proportion of the lesson. Teacher's planning for the lesson is satisfactory, overall, and resources are adequate. However, precisely what skills pupils are to learn is not always clear enough and despite effective teaching, the lack of development of pupils' geographical skills and knowledge in the past has restricted their overall level of attainment. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are well managed and the teacher is knowledgeable but, in Years 3 and 4, there is a small number of pupils who find it difficult to maintain concentration for long enough to benefit fully from the teacher's knowledge. Overall, however, pupils have good attitudes to learning and are interested in the subject.

## **HISTORY**

95. Because of the timing of the inspection, no history lessons were seen in the infants and so, no judgements are possible about many of the aspects of teaching and learning. Nevertheless, from the evidence of pupils' work and teachers' planning, and through talking with pupils, it is clear that their standards match those expected nationally at the ages of seven and eleven and that all pupils make satisfactory progress throughout the school, including those with special educational needs. These judgements match those made at the time of the last inspection.

96. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a secure knowledge of a small range of events in the past, such as the Great Fire of London. They realise that events have consequences and are beginning to develop a reasonable sense of chronology although they are unable to place events beyond their own experience in the correct order. By the end of Year 6, pupils are beginning to understand that events in the past can be represented in a number of different ways. They know some of the main events from Greek history and appreciate the differences between the city-states of Sparta and Athens. Their sense of chronology is appropriate. Throughout the school, pupils have satisfactory attitudes to history and enjoy learning facts about the past. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 were intrigued by the marriages of Henry VIII and even more intrigued by the way they ended!

97. Only one lesson in the juniors was seen. In this lesson, the teaching was good. No judgement was made during the last inspection about the quality of teaching. The teacher's subject knowledge was good and basic skills were taught clearly and succinctly. Her questioning skills were good and ensured that all pupils were drawn into the lesson fully. Incorrect answers were skilfully used to extend pupils' understanding with the result that pupils retained attention well and worked at a good pace. Her expectations of pupils' attention, behaviour and standards were good; pupils responded well and so learned at a good rate.

98. The school has correctly recognised that the development of a scheme of work that makes good provision for developing pupils' skills in a logical sequence is a matter of priority. However, national guidance has been adopted to ensure that all requirements are being met and is being adapted successfully to meet the needs of the school. Also in the school improvement plan is the development of a manageable assessment and record keeping system; this is appropriate.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)**

99. By the end of Years 2 and 6, the pupils achieve standards which are in line with those expected for seven and eleven-year-olds in information and communication technology (ICT). Pupils, including those with special educational needs, in the infants and juniors make good progress in using computers and this represents an improvement since the previous inspection. Standards are rising due to the school's new resources, more effective teaching, the successful implementation of national guidelines and extensive training for the teachers. The school is successful in developing pupils' skills in using computers in other subjects.

100. By the end of Year 2, the pupils' attainment is in line with that expected for their age. This is the result of recent good teaching and a successful emphasis on developing the pupils' skills and knowledge in the subject by using computers effectively in other subjects. The pupils have a secure knowledge of basic word processing and enhance their written work by using several of the computers' tools. They change fonts, size and colour and are able to present their work in an attractive way. They know that computers are widely used in

society and they recognise that computer technology is useful and is different from manual ways of working. They use several programs confidently. They draw and paint using the computer and know that they can access information from the Internet. They use the digital camera well to enhance their work on the environment of the village. The teacher matches work well to the needs and abilities of the children and provides good opportunities for them to learn. She intervenes well and keeps accurate records of what has been achieved.

101. Standards by the end of the juniors are average and are improving rapidly as the school purchases and uses new equipment. The pupils are keen computer users and recognise how they can be used to good effect to save time in writing, analysing data and controlling events. The pupils set up a database and use the information well in mathematics. They produce a variety of graphs and charts and have a good understanding of spreadsheets. The pupils know how to load, save and print their work. They make good use of some of the computers' tools such as the spell checker. They present their work well. Pupils now have good opportunities to use computers for such things as analysing temperature and they measure accurately using sensors.

102. Teaching and learning are good. The pupils enjoy using information and communication technology and apply themselves well. They share equipment and discuss ideas of how to improve their work. The teachers encourage this collaborative approach and move learning on effectively by posing problems and asking sharply focused questions. Pupils respond enthusiastically. In mathematics lesson in Years 5 and 6, they experimented with rotating shapes, drawing them manually and then transferred these skills to the computer where they produced complicated and detailed geometric patterns. Pupils also use information and communication technology in music well; they understand how a keyboard can be programmed and the sound changed to fit the mood of the lyrics of a song. The teachers plan lessons well and are beginning to build up a bank of activities based on national guidelines; this is having a beneficial effect on consistency in learning. However, the school does not have a sufficiently detailed system of assessing pupils' work and using the information to plan the next stage in developing and using skills.

103. Staff have benefited from good training and they are competent users of information and communication technology with sufficient subject knowledge to improve the pupils' performance. There are regular class lessons to introduce new skills and good opportunities for all to practise them. The school has built up good resources for the subject and has used money raised by parents and school funds and grants effectively. The subject leader has a good understanding of the subject and clear aims to raise standards further.

## **MUSIC**

104. Pupils' standards are above average by the ages of seven and eleven and progress throughout the school is good for all pupils, including those with special educational needs. This is better than at the time of the last inspection and is caused by a significant improvement in the quality of teaching.

105. By the end of Year 2, pupils sing in unison with good attention to pitch and rhythm. They distinguish between high and low pitched notes securely and correctly use appropriate technical terms, such as pitch, pulse and rhythm. They listen very attentively to recorded music and accurately identify patterns and flows, for example, within a Chopin piano prelude. By the end of Year 6, pupils have secure knowledge of a good range of composers and their music and a good understanding of a range of styles, including jazz, classical, film, religious, traditional and popular music. They write songs of their own, using their literacy skills effectively to choose words correctly and to create the desired mood. They know how songs

can be used to express feelings and to convey information, which makes a very good contribution to their spiritual development.

106. The quality of teaching at the end of both key stages is excellent; this is a significant improvement since the last inspection and a key reason for the improvements in pupils' standards and progress. Both teachers have outstanding personal expertise and enthusiasm, which they use to very good effect to inspire the pupils. The pace of lessons is brisk and relentlessly moves learning on. Because of the teachers' very good understanding of the subject and their very high expectations, levels of challenge are consistently high. Learning is brisk and purposeful and pupils' skills are extended at a very good rate. The tasks set are highly relevant to pupils' experience and interest them greatly so they are motivated to try very hard and produce high quality work.

107. Instrumental teaching in keyboards, woodwind, guitar, brass and recorders enhances pupils' enjoyment of the subject. There are regular musical and dramatic productions that set high standards and are greatly enjoyed by pupils, staff, parents and community alike. The playing of a range of music, such as Irish film music, as pupils enter and leave assemblies adds to the range of understanding pupils have of different genres of music from other countries and cultures.

108. It is because of the personal expertise and enthusiasm of the teachers that pupils' progress in lessons is so good. There is no scheme of work to secure the logical development of pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding over time nor an assessment and recording system to ensure that teachers plan work that matches individuals' developing needs closely. The school has already incorporated these priorities into its improvement plan, which is an appropriate measure. There is a very good commitment and expertise to improve provision in the subject.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

109. Overall standards in physical education are at the levels expected of seven and eleven-year-olds and are similar to those at the time of the previous inspection. Pupils are taught well and cover all aspects of the National Curriculum for physical education. They make at least satisfactory progress and progress is often good for all pupils, including those with special educational needs. The school has adequate facilities for the subject, including a hall and playing field. However, the field has a steep slope and this inhibits pupils' progress in developing tactics and skills in team games. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 have weekly swimming lessons and all achieve the expected standards, being able to swim in a variety of strokes at least 25 metres and have a secure knowledge of water safety. The quality of teaching varies from good to excellent and is very good overall. The school sets aside an above average proportion of time for physical education and this has a beneficial impact on progress.

110. The infants make good progress and attain appropriate levels for their age by the end of Year 2. The teaching is of high standard and takes account of the different ages and abilities in the class. The teacher plans lessons very effectively and achieves an effective balance between developing pupils' physical skills and their awareness of the importance of healthy eating and exercise on their bodies. The pupils respond enthusiastically to lessons and apply themselves very well. Lessons are briskly paced and much is expected of the pupils in developing physical skills and of being aware of space. The lessons are very purposeful and pupils listen intently to instructions and guidance from the teacher. Pupils have good techniques for travelling on different parts of the body and moving gracefully. They have an appropriate awareness of space both on the floor and in using apparatus. They enjoy games and learn about different tactics to improve their skills of attack and defence.

The pupils behave excellently and are guided exceptionally well by the teacher who insists on high standards.

111. By the end of Year 6, the pupils attain appropriate standards for their age. They make consistent and steady progress overall and good progress in gymnastics. Pupils confidently work together to create sequences of movements. The teachers intervene well to challenge the pupils and guide them successfully on how to improve. In one lesson, the teacher demonstrated good techniques and used his knowledge of the subject well to guide the pupils on how to improve their balancing skills. In Years 3 and 4, the teacher controlled the pupils well and the lesson was quiet as the pupils concentrated intently. Learning proceeds at a good rate and the pupils apply much physical effort. The pupils perform a wide range of jumps safely and imaginatively and then transfer their skills to using apparatus well. They plan sequences which show sensitivity and imagination. In games, the pupils have appropriate skills. They pass, dribble and control in football and have a good range of techniques for catching and throwing. The teacher gives good advice about tactics and techniques. In all lessons observed, teachers made good use of pupils to demonstrate good practice and used praise effectively to say why it was a good performance, effectively encouraging pupils to strive for improvement in their performance.

112. The teachers are supported by a good scheme of work, and this contributes well to helping the staff to make effective coaching points. In all lessons, the pupils and staff change appropriately. Pupils enter the hall in an orderly way and find space. They are immediately ready for work and concentrate throughout, listening to advice and showing appreciation of others' achievements. Pupils show real enthusiasm for their work.

113. Planning for the subject is linked to a published scheme and the staff work well together to ensure that skills are developed consistently. There are good links with science and in Years 3 and 4 the pupils have completed a thorough topic about healthy lifestyles. This work was linked well with geography and involved the pupils in researching information about sports facilities in the locality. The pupils have some opportunities to play sports against other schools but these are limited. The school's field is of appropriate size but slopes significantly and hampers some activities. The school makes very good provision for adventurous activities on a residential visit for older pupils. The follow-up from this visit, including work in design and technology to produce a miniature rope course, is of good standard.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

114. By the end of both Year 2 and Year 6, pupils' standards match those required by the syllabus for religious education followed by most schools in North Yorkshire. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress throughout the school. These judgements match those made in the last inspection report.

115. Year 2 pupils understand the purposes of celebration and give many examples from their own experience, including many from the American tradition, which contributes well to pupils' cultural development. They know that Christians worship God and that Jesus is His Son. They know that the Bible is a special book that contains the Old and New Testaments. They develop a good understanding that Easter occurs during the spring season because both celebrate new life. By the end of Year 6, pupils have a secure knowledge of the structure and chronology of the Bible. They know that there are different editions of the Bible for different audiences but that all contain a consistent message. They make appropriate comparisons between the different versions of the Christmas Story in different Gospels. They draw valid comparisons between Christianity and Islam, including the common belief in

one true God. They have a secure grasp of the main tenets of Islam, including the Five Pillars and the Five Prophets.

116. No teaching was seen in the juniors but, from the evidence of pupils' work and teachers' planning, together with discussions with pupils, it is clear that the quality of teaching is at least satisfactory. In the infants, teaching is very good. The teacher has very high expectations of pupils' attention, application and standards. Relationships are very good, which motivates pupils to try very hard to produce work of a pleasing standard. They are confident to articulate their thoughts and feelings, secure in the knowledge that their opinions will be valued. Lessons are conducted at a very good pace with a very effective use of a range of strategies to retain pupils' attention and interest. Questioning is used skilfully to probe pupils' understanding and to extend their learning, with the result that pupils learn at a very fast rate.

117. Overall, the daily acts of collective worship make a suitable contribution to pupils' religious education and to their spiritual development. There are moments of spirituality in many lessons. Examples include a creative poetry lesson for Years 5 and 6, when pupils were amazed by some ice sculptures, and a lesson about new growth in the reception class, when children looked at the shoots and buds in the school garden. Regular visits to churches and chapels in the village make a good contribution to pupils' religious education, as do visits from local church workers.

118. The subject leader has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject. She is developing the school's scheme of work to take account of the changing syllabus for religious education. At the same time, she is taking the opportunity to devise planning and assessment procedures that ensure that teachers can judge pupils' attainment levels accurately and plan further work to match individuals' developing skills and understanding more closely.