

INSPECTION REPORT

MANDALE MILL PRIMARY SCHOOL

Thornaby, Stockton-on-Tees

LEA area: Stockton-on-Tees

Unique reference number: 130378

Headteacher: Gillian Dorman-Smith

Reporting inspector: Jean Morley
25470

Dates of inspection: 1 – 5 October 2001

Inspection number: 230883

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

© Crown copyright 2001

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

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 to 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Thorntree Road
Thornaby
Stockton-on-Tees

Postcode: TS17 8AP

Telephone number: 01642 647010

Fax number: 01642 647011

Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr. E. Kirkham

Date of previous inspection: June 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
25470	Jean Morley	<i>Registered inspector</i>	English.	What sort of school is it? How high are standards: results and achievements; How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9388	Anthony Mundy	<i>Lay inspector</i>		How high are standards: pupils' attitudes, values and personal development; How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
27477	Josephine Mitchell	<i>Team inspector</i>	Mathematics; Information and communication; Art; Design and technology.	
25623	John Edward Cox	<i>Team inspector</i>	Science; History; Geography.	How good are the curricular and other opportunities open to pupils?
26292	Helen Mundy	<i>Team Inspector</i>	The Foundation Stage; Special educational needs; Music; Physical education; Religious education.	

The inspection contractor was:

*Westminster Education Consultants
Old Garden House
The Lanterns
Bridge Lane
London
SW11 3AD*

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

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

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	1
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	6
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	9
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	11
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	13
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	15
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	16
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	18
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	19
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM.	24

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Mandale Mill is a large primary school with a nursery, situated in Thornaby, Stockton-on-Tees. The site is a rambling one comprising three separate buildings. The school has been recognised by the LEA as one of the least advantaged in the borough. There are 285 pupils on roll: 86 per cent are white European. The remainder are Indian or Pakistani: of these, 24 are in the nursery. At 45 per cent, eligibility for free school meals is high. At 23 per cent, the proportion of pupils with special educational needs is close to the national average. However, of these, 70 per cent have a more significant level of need, and receive support from agencies outside the school. Many have behavioural as well as learning difficulties. English is an additional language for 48 pupils (15 per cent), and, of these, 13 are in the early stages of learning the language. The attainment of children on entry to the school is well below expectations overall and is very poor in speaking and listening. Pupil turnover is high. Despite the best possible effort, the school has significant staffing and recruitment problems: five teaching staff are new to the school this term, and two of these are in their first year of teaching. Four staff are on temporary or supply contracts. It is of note that some of the loss of staff is through promotion elsewhere as a result of the high quality support and professional development that Mandale Mill has afforded them.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a school that is doing a good job in particularly difficult circumstances. It serves its community well. Leadership and management are strong, decisive and effective. As a result, the standards achieved by the school have risen substantially over the last four years. Although, at the end of both key stages, these still fall short of national averages, the progress pupils make from a very low starting point is good. This is particularly commendable because a significant proportion of pupils present their teachers with behaviour that needs handling with great skill if it to be channelled into constructive learning. The quality of teaching seen during the inspection was sound overall, although ranging from excellent to poor. Other evidence suggested strongly that, usually, the overall quality of teaching is good. Furthermore, such is the quality of the leadership, that there is the capacity for continuing improvement: this is already starting with structured support to new staff. Taking all these factors into account, the school offers good value for money.

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

- Some teaching is inspirational.
- Leadership and management by the headteacher and her deputy are very good; particularly in relation to the rigour with which they monitor the work of the school - and act on what they find.
- All pupils make good progress.
- Pupils' personal development and relationships are very good.
- Provision for the most able pupils, for those who find learning difficult, and for those who have difficulty in controlling their own behaviour is very good: there is equal opportunity for all.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good overall.
- Throughout the school, the work of the staff, who provide support to teachers is very good.
- The nursery is a colourful, welcoming and stimulating environment.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

- Standards in English, mathematics and science.
- The quality of some teaching in Years 1 to 4.
- *Throughout the school*, the opportunities for pupils to improve their literacy and numeracy skills.
- Pupils' attendance.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in June 1998. Since that time, the proportion of pupils who reach the expected standards in English, mathematics and science has improved markedly. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) have also improved to the current, satisfactory standards. In all other subjects - apart from art and physical education where they have fallen - standards have been maintained. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and personal development has improved significantly. Pupils' behaviour around the school and in most classrooms is good, but the unsatisfactory behaviour of a significant minority of pupils in some lessons reduces its overall quality to satisfactory. It was good at the time of the last inspection. All key issues from the last inspection have been fully met. In particular, the school has been rigorous and meticulous in monitoring the progress of boys and girls, and of closing the gap between the standards they achieve. In fact, the school looks closely at the progress made by all groups of pupils, and is successful in ensuring equality of opportunity for all. The prospects for further improvement are good.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	E*	E*	E*	D
mathematics	E*	E*	E	D
science	E*	E	E	C

Key
 Very high A*
 Well above average above average
 A
 B
 Average
 Below average
 C
 D
 Well below average
 Very low
 E
 E*

These results show that the school's performance in English in 2000 was in the lowest five per cent nationally, and that performance in mathematics and in science was well below national expectations. When compared with similar schools, standards were below the average in English and mathematics and in line with the average in science. However, the table above disguises the improvements that have been made: standards have improved significantly since 1997. They did so again in 2001, coming much closer to national standards. It is by looking at *actual percentages* that the real improvement can best be judged. From 1997 to 2001 inclusive, the proportion of pupils who, at the end of Year 6, reached the expected level (Level 4) was as follows:

- English: 28, 35, 42, 55, and 70 per cent (a rise of 42 per cent)
- Mathematics: 19, 19, 39, 55 and 64 per cent (a rise of 45 per cent)
- Science: 14, 38, 63, 73 and 80 per cent (a rise of 66 per cent)

To put this improvement into perspective, the *national* rise for all three subjects averages at about 10 per cent. This school's average rise is 51 per cent.

Similar improvements, culminating in Year 2 results, have taken place over the same period: they rose from 32 to 80 per cent in reading; from 36 to 77 per cent in writing and from 57 to 77 per cent in mathematics. This gives an average rise of 36 per cent compared with a national rise of significantly less than 10 per cent.

Not surprisingly then, the school has set - and met - very challenging targets.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have predominantly positive attitudes to school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is variable but satisfactory overall. Around the school and in most lessons it is at least good. When teaching is weak, behaviour follows.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are warm and pupils develop responsible attitudes.
Attendance	Attendance is poor and this has a negative impact on pupils' progress.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is variable, ranging from excellent to poor. It is satisfactory overall. Of the 55 lessons seen, five were of the highest possible quality; 11 were very good, 13 were good and 20 were sound. Of the remaining six, five were unsatisfactory and one was poor. Where teaching is less than satisfactory, it is because the teacher is unable to successfully manage the disruptive behaviour of some pupils. This disturbs all the pupils and slows down their learning. Where the teaching is excellent it is because the teacher makes the learning so much fun - and works at such a fast pace - that pupils have neither the inclination nor the time to consider misbehaving. Literacy and numeracy are taught well in literacy and numeracy lessons but satisfactorily overall: they now need to be nurtured and developed in the other subjects that pupils study. ICT is already well integrated into literacy and numeracy lessons and plans are afoot to broaden its scope. The school is skilled at meeting the needs of all pupils because it has paid particular attention to doing so.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum provides pupils with good learning opportunities. The strongest curriculum focus over recent years has, quite rightly, been on English, mathematics, science and ICT. It is now time to adjust the emphasis slightly and to broaden pupils' experiences.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision is equally good for the most able pupils, for those who find learning difficult and those who find it difficult to behave well.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Support for these pupils ensures that they understand enough of what their teacher says to them to take a full part in the lesson, to learn, and to make good progress along with the other pupils in the school.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	This is very good overall: very good for spiritual and moral development and good for social and cultural development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Teachers show good levels of care. They are skilled at adapting their responses to the particular needs of individuals.

The school works hard to forge links with parents and deserves a better response for its efforts.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher and her deputy provide strong leadership. They have a very clear vision for the school and planned change is well judged. Together they have successfully overseen significant improvement in academic standards.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors make a sound contribution, using well their particular strengths. They are fully supportive of the headteacher.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The headteacher is fully aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. She monitors its performance with considerable rigour and has the capacity to oversee further improvement.
The strategic use of resources	The school is active in seeking funding from a variety of sources and the money is wisely used.

Significant changes to the teaching staff are having an unsettling effect on the school. The team of classroom support staff is a valuable asset and has a clearly positive impact on the standards that pupils achieve - in all three key stages. Accommodation is spacious and well maintained and apart from a few small items, the school has all the resources it needs to function well. Money is spent prudently following sensible prioritisation.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<p>More than 4 of every 5 parents who commented feel:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their child likes school and makes good progress there; • Behaviour is good and children are expected to work hard; • Teaching is good and the school is well led and managed; • The information they receive is good ; • The school is approachable and responds to their concerns; • Their child is helped to become mature and responsible. 	<p>About 1 parent in 5 of those who commented feels:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of homework is not right; • There is not an interesting range of activities outside lessons.

Inspectors support most of the positive views of parents. However, during the week of the inspection they found the quality of teaching to be sound and the behaviour of pupils to be satisfactory rather than good. The activities available to pupils outside lessons, while not extensive, are satisfactory. The quantity of homework is well judged by the school. Too many parents, however, do not support their child with homework as well as they should.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. While standards in English, mathematics and science are below average at the end of Key Stage 2, the improvement over the four year period flanked by the 1997 and the 2001 test results has been remarkably good. In relation to the proportion of pupils who achieve the expected level, Level 4, there have been rises of 42 per cent in English, 45 per cent in mathematics and 66 per cent in science. Taken overall, this outstrips the national improvement by a ratio of five to one. No national comparative data is yet available for 2001 but these results were the best that the school has ever achieved. To put this in perspective, they were very close to the latest year for which national data *is* available – 2000. The comparison is made below: national averages from 2000 are in brackets.

- English: 70 per cent (70 per cent)
- Mathematics 64 per cent (72 per cent)
- Science 80 per cent (79 per cent)

2. The improving picture is equally encouraging in Key Stage 1 where, although standards remain below average, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected level, Level 2, has risen (over the same four years) by 48 per cent in reading, 41 per cent in writing and 20 per cent in mathematics. These give an average rise of 36 per cent while that nationally is around eight per cent. In order to achieve these standards at the end of both key stages, the school has set – and met - challenging targets.

3. Pupils enter the school with attainment that is well below expectations. This is borne out by the assessments undertaken by the school. Hence, while the standards remain below the national average at the end of Year 6, pupils have made good progress. This can best be demonstrated by looking at the Key Stage 1 and the Key Stage 2 results for the same group of pupils: the pupils who took their Key Stage 1 tests in 1997 and their Key Stage 2 tests this year. Given the high pupil turnover in the school, not all of those who took the 1997 tests were still in school in 2001 but, of those who were, all had made the progress expected of them. In addition, some pupils had made progress that was better than the two National Curriculum levels expected. The percentages of pupils who had made this better than average progress were:

- 65 per cent in reading;
- 46 per cent in writing;
- 27 per cent in mathematics.

4. One key to this school's success is its ability to respond to pupils individually and to provide the kind of support they need. The action the school has taken relates to the pupils who find learning difficult, to those who find it difficult to conform to acceptable behaviour, to those for whom English is an additional language and to the most able pupils in the school. This action has ensured equality of opportunity for all of these groups, and has been achieved in a number of ways:

Setting arrangements are used for English and mathematics in Years 1 to 6. Pupils of like ability are grouped together so that teaching can be more finely tuned to their needs.

- Within a 2-year group, teachers rotate around the three 'sets', so that all pupils receive teaching of the same quality. While this may seem a very cumbersome arrangement, it works well as far as raising standards is concerned, and the pupils say they like it.

- Pupils who find learning difficult, and those for whom English is an additional language, are supported well in the classroom.
- The most able pupils are identified and catered for through additional support. This is intensified in Year 3 and 4, when a group of the most able pupils is taught literacy and numeracy by a teacher employed, on a part time contract, for that specific purpose.
- Arrangements are put in place to help those who find it difficult to behave in an appropriate way. These always include helping the pupils to understand both themselves, and the situations that frustrate them.
- There are always adult – or pupil – mentors for those pupils who find it helpful, and the support staff are heavily involved here. There is a room at lunchtime where pupils can go when they feel they cannot cope with the playground.

5. Pupils with special educational needs – whether they are more able than the average, find learning difficult or find it difficult to behave in a way that will help them to learn – are all identified and supported by the school, and make the same progress as do all other pupils. Taken overall, this progress is good, although the greatest progress is in Years 5 and 6, where giant strides are made. Furthermore, now that the school has done so much to bring pupils to the expected level, the action currently being taken to support the most able pupils is likely to improve the proportion that achieve the higher levels at the end of each key stage.

6. At the very beginning of the school year, the best judgement about the attainment of children in the Foundation Stage can be made against the performance of those pupils who have just completed it, i.e. the pupils in Year 1. Doing so suggests that children at this school make good progress in their personal and social development, and sound progress in communication, language, literacy and mathematical development. This means that pupils enter Key Stage 1 with personal and social skills close to those expected, but with language, literacy and mathematical skills that remain well below the Early Learning Goals targets.

7. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are satisfactory at the end of both key stages, and this is an improvement since the school was last inspected. The subject is already used well to support work in English and mathematics lessons. Year 5 / 6 pupils, for example, took their mathematics lesson in the ICT suite. The interactive whiteboard (in essence, a large computer screen) was used in an excellent lesson to excite and challenge: the least able pupils in the year group gave 100 per cent effort for the full session. The school is aware of the need to now work towards making ICT both an integral part and a tool in other areas of the curriculum.

8. Standards in other subjects have not improved since the last inspection. In art and in physical education they have, in fact, fallen a little, and are now less than satisfactory. However, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standards in English, mathematics, science and ICT in each key stage at the time of the last inspection was so low that the school has been justified in placing the main thrust of its efforts into improving these. It now recognises that the time is right to seek to review opportunities in other areas of the curriculum, where, currently, they match expectations by the time pupils transfer to secondary school: these areas are geography, history, music and religious education. No judgement was possible for design and technology, as the subject alternates on a half-termly basis with art, and was not being taught at the time of the inspection.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. Most pupils at all levels of attainment have good attitudes to learning, although a small number of pupils in each year group are consistently unable or unwilling to concentrate on their work. The response of pupils during the inspection was occasionally unsatisfactory, but it was often good or very good. In 16 per cent of lessons, response was excellent. Of the parents who returned the pre-inspection questionnaire, 93 per cent confirmed that their children like school. The inspection evidence, including many conversations with pupils, endorses the parents' view. The good attitudes noted during the previous inspection have been maintained.

10. Children in the nursery learn positive attitudes by observing the good relationships between their parents, carers and teachers. They enjoy meeting other children, and are confident and secure in classroom and school routines. The children relate well to adults, listen to them attentively, and are very well behaved. Overall, pupils come to school enthusiastically. They enjoy lessons, and are learning to work independently without needing close supervision. They usually listen attentively to their teachers and to each other, but are sometimes hesitant or brief when answering questions. In discussion with visitors, they are good humoured, polite and proud of their achievements.

11. Behaviour in classes and in the open areas of the school is satisfactory. The previous inspection report judged behaviour to be good, but numerous recent staffing changes have unsettled some pupils and contributed to pockets of unsatisfactory behaviour. Most pupils are thoughtful and mutually respectful. They confirm that incidents of bullying or serious aggression are uncommon, and are dealt with effectively when they do occur. Several pages of behaviour rules are displayed in classrooms, but teachers' management skills are usually the critical factor in behaviour during lessons. Where teachers are responsive to individual needs, and lessons are fast-paced and interesting, pupils' behaviour and progress are good. Where teachers' behaviour management is unsatisfactory, most pupils disregard some of the displayed rules, and some pupils disregard them all. Relative to the size of the school, and the level of social deprivation among families, few pupils are excluded. In the last academic year, nine pupils were excluded for fixed periods.

12. Pupils' personal development is very good. They willingly carry out everyday classroom duties, and assume increasingly wide responsibilities in Years 3 – 6. All year groups are represented on the school council, and participate in the environment-friendly Green Team. At lunchtimes, pupils in Year 2 control access to the school buildings by operating magnetic locks on the main doors. In Years 5 and 6, pupils have significant responsibilities as librarians, peer mentors, and as playground or reading 'friends' with younger pupils. They manage and audit a profitable business, selling fresh fruit each playtime throughout the school. Within the curriculum, opportunities for personal development are good as collaborative work is a common feature.

13. Relationships in the school are very good. Most pupils respond politely and confidently to each other and to adults. They are not afraid to be seen to make mistakes, and they are mutually supportive. Some teachers have specific methods for developing pupils' self-confidence. For example, during the inspection, a Year 1 / 2 teacher invited pupils to identify deliberate mistakes in a piece of her own written work. Each member of the school community has equal status, and receives sensitive and effective support at work and play.

14. Attendance is poor, and has improved by less than 1 per cent since the previous inspection. Very few primary schools have worse attendance than Mandale Mill. The number of unauthorised absences is above the national average for primary schools. Few pupils achieve full attendance in any term, and a significant number of families do not fulfil

the legal requirement of ensuring their children's regular attendance at school. Statistically, each pupil in Years 1 – 6 misses almost one day's schooling in each two-week period. In the Foundation Stage, the average absence rate is doubled, and children miss two sessions in each two-week period. Throughout the school, erratic attendance seriously affects pupils' knowledge of all curriculum subjects. Punctuality is satisfactory overall, but a number of pupils are persistently late. Class registers are completed neatly, and conform to legal requirements. Registration periods are efficient, and most lessons during the day begin promptly.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

15. The quality of teaching observed during the inspection was satisfactory overall but ranged from excellent to poor. Of the 55 lessons seen, 16 were excellent or very good, 13 were good, 20 were satisfactory, five were unsatisfactory and one was poor. Staffing arrangements have been – and remain – unsettled and, at the time of the inspection, five of the staff had been in the school for less than a month. Two of these were teachers in their first year of teaching. Four staff were employed on a temporary contract or on a supply basis. A period of settled staffing is now needed as this will allow new staff to accommodate both to the school and to the challenging behaviour presented by a significant proportion of pupils. Responsibility for staffing difficulties should not, however, be laid at the door of the governors or the headteacher, because they have made every effort to employ high calibre teachers. Furthermore, some staff movement has been for promotion, made possible to some extent by the high quality of professional development offered in this school.

16. While the quality of teaching observed was judged to be sound overall, this is not reflected in other evidence available to inspectors. For example, pupils' work from the previous year showed, in most instances, good progress, neat presentation and good quality marking. Furthermore, as has already been demonstrated in the *Summary* and *How Good Are Standards?* sections of this report, the end of key stage test results have improved markedly over the last four years. Improvements of this magnitude are very unlikely indeed be a reflection of only sound quality teaching: it must have been better than that. So, to explain this apparent discrepancy, a closer look at the quality of teaching is needed. Of the observed teaching that was less than good, the following proportions were attributable to staff who had been in the school for between two and four weeks:

- 67 per cent of the teaching that was less than satisfactory;
- 50 per cent of the teaching that was sound.

This is significant because Mandale Mill Primary is not an easy school in which to teach. There are pupils in every class whose behaviour is disruptive. However, the school support systems are strong and effective. Monitoring is rigorous and clearly points the way forward for teachers, helping them to learn new skills and to develop as professionals. There is adequate reason to suppose that, had this inspection taken place less close to the start of the school year, the overall quality of teaching would have been better.

17. It is clear then, that the key weakness in those lessons where teaching was less than satisfactory, was the disruption to all pupils' learning caused by the unacceptable behaviour of a few. This manifested itself in a slowing of pace in these lessons as the teachers interrupted what both they and the pupils were doing, in order to reprimand those whose behaviour was unacceptable. While it is clearly not possible to predict the quality of future teaching, it is likely that, given support, the new staff who had problems with pupil management during the week of inspection *will have every chance* to acquire the skills

necessary to reduce the problem to manageable proportions. In the meantime - and just for this settling in period of the new and less experienced staff - the occasional presence of the headteacher or her deputy in and around classrooms is needed. Evidence gathered during the week of the inspection suggests that this need not be a prolonged intervention.

18. As the data shows, however, some teaching in the school is of the highest possible quality. In fact, 30 per cent of all of the teaching seen was very good or excellent. The teachers who gave these lessons demonstrated particular skills from which their new colleagues could learn much:

- **Contagious enthusiasm demonstrated by the teacher.** In the Year 5 / 6 lowest ability mathematics set, for example, the lesson was taken in the ICT suite. The activities chosen for the pupils to do were fun but with no loss of challenge. The first and final sessions made use of the interactive white board while, in the interim, pupils worked in pairs on computers. The focus of the lesson was multiplication facts, but the teacher was so full of enthusiasm that it was contagious, and, as a result, the pupils tried much harder calculations that they might otherwise have done.
- **An incredibly fast pace to the lesson.** In a music lesson the teacher had excellent subject knowledge, and she moved the lesson along at a lightning speed without leaving anyone behind. This significantly reduces the likelihood of bad behaviour.
- **Deflecting the potential for bad behaviour, rather than confronting the unacceptable behaviour itself.** Several teachers employ highly successful tactics for dealing with the potential for disruption: there is no bad behaviour because it is pre-empted and deflected into the activity itself, rather than being dealt with overtly. This is an important skill because it protects the well-behaved pupils from having their lesson interrupted.
- **Making pupils a part of the learning and decision making process in the classroom.** This was demonstrated beautifully in a Year 1 / 2 art lesson where pupils had a wealth of materials to choose from and a lot of freedom to move around the classroom: a situation inviting disruption. The teacher joined in the activity so that, when she recognised that pupils were experiencing some difficulty, and she could pretend that it was she who was having the problem. She asked for the advice of her class and then used this skilfully as a teaching point to all pupils. The pupils revelled in their teacher needing *their* help and advice! This is a very good example of teacher and pupils working in harmony; they are not pulling in different directions.

19. As the examples above make clear, there is a wealth of expertise in school from which new staff can learn. Arrangements are already in place for some 'new' teachers to observe more experienced colleagues at work. These observations need a sharp focus, so that the observers can return to their own classrooms with a particular skill to try. There might also be much to be gained from then reversing the observation, so that the experienced teacher can observe the new skill in practice.

20. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall, and is sometimes good or very good. Teachers are clear about what they want children to learn. Their behaviour management is good overall, and often very good or excellent. Staff have adequate knowledge of the Early Learning Goals, and medium term planning is satisfactory. Day-to-day planning and assessment needs attention, and these issues are dealt with more fully in the *Foundation Stage* section of this report.

21. Most class teachers are skilled in providing for the full range of special educational needs. The specific wording of individual education plans is helpful to pupils and all staff, and pupil targets are carefully monitored and amended. The most able pupils in school are clearly identified, and special provision is made for them – from nursery to Year 6. In Years 3 and 4 these pupils have small group tuition in English and mathematics.

22. The school invests heavily in support staff: 254 hours per week throughout the school. The decision to do so was a wise one. In addition, however, the support staff have been encouraged - and have been keen - to acquire additional qualifications to improve the quality of their input. Hence they have undertaken a year long accredited university course for classroom assistants, and some, in addition, have undertaken training related to pupils with special educational needs. This has been time and money well spent, and the support staff who work in this school, including those who work in the nursery, make a very significant contribution to pupils' learning. Whilst their input is always valuable, it is particularly so during this period of staff change.

23. Literacy and numeracy skills are taught well in literacy and numeracy lessons. Outside of these lessons, however, there is scope for development. Since the last inspection, the school has concentrated on raising standards in English, mathematics, science and ICT. This was the right decision to make, but it has meant that work in other subjects has been 'squeezed'. That is not to say that some subjects have not been taught; they have. Furthermore, there have been some opportunities to develop literacy and numeracy skills in subjects other than English and mathematics. However, these have been sparse and it is now time for the school to review this element of its work. To its credit, the school has already recognised this need in relation to Key Stages 1 and 2. This should be embarked upon and should be extended to include the Foundation stage. It should begin with a plan which details exactly what the *ideal* would be, in terms of opportunities across the curriculum for pupils to practise, improve and refine the skills that they learn in their daily literacy and numeracy sessions.

24. One of the strengths of the school is the equality of opportunity it offers to all pupils. These are dealt with in full in the '*How high are standards?*' section of this report. Suffice to state here that the action taken by the school enables all pupils to make equally good progress. The rate at which pupils learn and make progress mirrors the quality of teaching they receive. Test results over the last four years are testament to the good learning that has taken place. Currently, all pupils make progress that is at least satisfactory, and many make progress that is good or better. When the new staff are settled into the school, the overall progress pupils make should be at least good.

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

25. This school offers all of its pupils a good curriculum, which covers all statutory requirements. It supports well pupils' intellectual, moral, physical and personal development. Very good provision is made to ensure that all pupils have equal access - both to everything the school provides and to opportunities to succeed. The school is vigilant in this respect.

26. There is good provision for personal, social and health education throughout the school. All classes take part in lessons every week in which personal and social matters are discussed. Health matters are taught through science lessons and the school nurse teaches about drugs and sex education.

27. The National Literacy and National Numeracy Strategies have been put in place, and are having a positive effect on pupils' learning. The school has satisfactory strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy skills. Numeracy skills are reinforced successfully in some other subjects: science, for example.

28. The provision of after school activities is satisfactory. Pupils take part in football, tag rugby competitions and cross country races. Year 6 pupils have recently visited the theatre to see a production in the *Shakespeare 4 Kidz* scheme. Contact was made this year with Thornaby Cricket Club, and plans are in hand to provide more cricket coaching next year.

29. Pupils are given equal and very good opportunities to take part in what the school offers them. The school makes great efforts to ensure that all pupils are given the best chance to learn in lessons. Pupils whose attainment is above expected levels and those who find work difficult to understand are provided with work that matches their needs. They are withdrawn into small groups or supported in the classroom – whichever is the most appropriate. In literacy and numeracy lessons, teachers change classes every two weeks so that pupils and teachers get to know each other well, and pupils benefit from being taught by teachers who have particular strengths in these two areas. Pupils are given responsibilities in school, and they respond well to these. A pupil organises the *Playtime Friends*, a group of Year 5 and Year 6 pupils who agree to take care of younger pupils at playtime to make sure they have someone to play with. Another pupil runs the *Fruit Company*, selling fruit to pupils at lunchtime; other pupils, known as *The Green Team*, care for the plants in the school.

30. The school has satisfactory links with its community. A local vicar visits the school when invited to talk to pupils. They, in turn, visit his church to learn about how services are conducted and about the significance of the robes he wears. Pupils sing at carol services in the church. They also sing to elderly residents at a residential home and to members of a local luncheon club.

31. There are good links with nearby schools. Pupils visit Thornaby Community School where most will attend after primary school. They meet pupils from other schools when they take part in quizzes, science challenges and maths master classes. A Year 6 pupil from the school won the Stockton Children's Book of the Year Competition – organised by the library service.

32. Visits to places of interest add to pupils' learning and good use is made of visitors to school. Pupils visit local museums. Groups of Year 6 pupils visit both the local theatre and golf tournaments at Slaley Hall. Pupils have learnt about army life at Catterick Garrison, made use of the Victorian shops in Preston Park, and visited Butterfly World. The school is not able to take pupils on as many visits as it would like. Teachers were particularly disappointed when a proposed trip to York had to be cancelled because of lack of support from parents. Visitors have included the school nurse, a dentist and local police officers. The Fire Brigade showed pupils how to escape from a smoke-filled room. Visiting puppeteers and storytellers develop pupils' drama and literary skills. A visiting artist showed pupils how to make wall hangings using batik techniques, and pupils in Year 5 and Year 6 are now working with an artist to produce mosaic pictures.

33. Provision for pupils' spiritual and moral development has improved since the previous inspection and is now very good. School assemblies are used as times when pupils can talk about feelings and emotions and think about how they behave around the school. A candle is often used as a focal point to concentrate their thoughts. Music such as Barber's plaintive *Adagio for Strings* is used effectively to create an atmosphere for reflection and contemplation in assemblies. Pupils in the mixed Year 5/6 classes have an area in their classrooms where they can sit quietly to think about their feelings. Following a whole school project, pupils stitched a *Peace Quilt* showing their thoughts about peace. Throughout the school, adults use encouraging remarks and praise in order to teach pupils to value themselves: this promotes pupils' self-esteem effectively.

34. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and act as very good role models. Pupils are reminded of school rules and individual classes devise rules to make life more pleasant in the classroom. The school and home agreement reinforces the joint responsibilities that everyone connected with the school bear to each other. Older pupils are given the chance to set good examples to younger pupils through the *Playtime Friends* scheme. Nursery Star Badges are given to children who have made great efforts in their work while pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 are awarded certificates for effort, positive attitudes, hard work and good behaviour. Good behaviour at lunchtime is recognised when lunchtime supervisors nominate pupils to be presented with Alex the Bunny and a replica silver trophy. Classes who arrive at school promptly share Bella the Bear.

35. Provision for pupils' social development is good. As well as contacts that pupils make when they care for other pupils, pupils in Year 6 hold a beach party. They socialise at visits to the theatre and sporting events and when they sing to elderly residents. Pupils meet contemporaries from other schools in school quizzes and maths and science challenges. They learn good social skills when they take part in fashion shows organised by the Parents' Association.

36. Improvements have been made to arrangements for pupils' cultural development since the previous inspection and provision is now good. Pupils learn about their own and other cultures. Pupils visit theatres and enjoy visits from artists and local clergy. A visit to a local Gurdwara is planned. It has not been possible to arrange visits to the local mosque. Pupils listen to classical music from America when they go into assembly, and to musicians from the Teeside Music Service. Music workshops are held with pupils from the Foundation Stage as part of a behaviour management course. A visit to Australia by two teachers has led to pupils looking at Aboriginal art and musical instruments. African art is studied, as is the work of artists such as Paul Gauguin, Edvard Munch and Missouri Jenkins. Pupils' knowledge of their own culture is developed through visits, to Preston Park for example.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

37. The safe and caring environment maintained since the previous inspection has a positive effect on the standards pupils achieve. Good procedures are established for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare. The teachers nominated as the responsible officers for child protection are conscientious and well informed, but have not received recent training. The school has adopted the local education authority's child protection policy. All staff understand child protection issues, and they discretely implement the school's procedures. An update training session for teaching and ancillary staff is scheduled for this term.

38. The school has implemented the local authority's health and safety policy, including procedures for ensuring the safety of pupils on site and during out of school visits. Good health and safety practice includes daily patrols by the caretaker and bi-annual site inspections by the governors' premises committee. Two members of staff have first aid certificates, and all staff are sensitive to the needs of pupils. Care is good at lunchtime, because the playgrounds are supervised by well-trained and conscientious midday assistants. The programme for pupils' personal, social and health education is good.

39. Teachers and other adults know the pupils well. They are skilled in assessing needs, and in providing individual care and support. The school's learning support staff are very well trained, and often show exceptional aptitude when dealing quietly with disruptive pupils. Procedures for monitoring pupils' personal development are satisfactory, although largely informal.

40. A special prospectus, and a home visit by the Foundation Stage coordinator are part of the warm welcome offered to parents when their children join the nursery. Although most pupils joining other year groups settle quickly and happily into the school's routines, some of those who transfer each year have had serious behaviour difficulties in previous schools. Sometimes the support provided in classrooms for these pupils limits the support available for others who have confirmed, but less acute, special educational needs. A lunchtime care club is very popular with all year groups: pupils with behaviour difficulties are referred by their teachers and others participate on a daily basis when places are available. The club's relaxed atmosphere of informal games, and semi-formal activities in writing and art, provides a very good bridge between morning and afternoon school for those who would find the playground environment more than they could cope with.

41. A complex but satisfactory policy promotes acceptable behaviour in the school buildings and in the grounds. Parents receive a good, brief summary of the main points of the policy. Each classroom displays several lists of school rules governing behaviour during specific activities, and an attendant list of sanctions for misbehaviour, including a cooling-off period with the teacher of an adjacent class. A few classrooms also display additional rules agreed between teacher and pupils.

42. Each class teacher nominates four 'stars of the week' to receive a certificate for effort, work, attitude or behaviour. Certificates are presented at weekly assemblies, and cumulative gold and silver awards are presented at end of term assemblies. Pupils' special efforts are rewarded with 'Red Letters' mailed to their parents. Although most pupils respond enthusiastically to merit awards, the modest weekly targets are rarely achieved by the small number of pupils with serious behaviour difficulties.

43. Anti-bullying procedures are good, and the school responds imaginatively to specific incidents. Pupils have few concerns about bullying. They know that staff are accessible at break times and lunchtime to help resolve incidents. Difficulties between girls in Year 6 were solved by a reconciliation and discussion process led by the special educational needs co-ordinator. All incidents of bullying are formally recorded, but the current anti-bullying statement is not an adequate basis for a full policy. Staff and governors have not yet agreed a policy on the use of force by staff, or procedures for noting incidents of restraint of pupils. The school is a happy and generally orderly community.

44. Systems for monitoring and promoting attendance are satisfactory overall. Attendance figures are displayed, but are not used forcefully to promote competition among classes or year groups. The educational welfare officer monitors class registers. She visits family homes to investigate patterns of absence, and is preparing an informal written quiz game to motivate families whose children achieve less than 87% attendance. However, some families are unresponsive or hostile to requests for their children to attend school. A significant group acquiesces in occasional or regular absence.

45. School procedures are unsatisfactory for contacting families when a pupil is absent unexpectedly. However, the governors have decided to appoint a part-time clerk to contact families on the first morning of a pupil's absence. This is a wise decision - but the appointment is not yet confirmed and attendance continues to be among the worst nationally for primary schools.

46. In Key Stages 1 and 2, the arrangements to assess and monitor pupils' academic progress in English mathematics and science are very good. The school fully analyses pupils' national test results. Staff are, therefore, able to identify areas of general weakness and use this knowledge for future curriculum planning. Full use is made of any comparative

data provided by the local education authority. Analysis is vigilant, particularly in relation to gender, pupils with English as an additional language, and pupils who are the most able. Assessment in ICT is at an early stage of development. As at the last inspection, no assessments yet take place in other subjects.

47. Assessment in the Foundation Stage is not satisfactory. Children are assessed on entry to the nursery and targets are set in collaboration with parents. Subsequently, however, children are not systematically assessed, and the strengths and weaknesses of their work are not regularly noted. Consequently, targets for improvement are not set for individuals or the whole class.

48. Portfolios of assessed work are updated regularly at moderation meetings attended by the whole staff. This has developed teachers' skills in assessing work on a day-to-day basis. The quality of marking has improved significantly since the last inspection. Teacher's comments are both constructive and diagnostic, giving pupils guidance on how to improve their work.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

49. Parents' views of the school are favourable: 97 per cent of those who responded to the parents' questionnaire indicated that their children make good progress, and 95 per cent indicated that the school works closely with them. These views were confirmed by parents who attended the pre-inspection meeting with the registered inspector. The inspectors endorse these views, and conclude that the work of the school is rightly valued and respected by parents.

50. The school has good links with parents: they are welcome to visit at all times. The inspection confirms good two-way communication, and very good relationships with class teachers and other members of staff. During the day, some parents and friends offer valuable help with reading and other activities to groups of pupils and individuals.

51. An after-school homework club, led by an external tutor, allows parents and their children to work together for an extended period each week. The school's family learning project offers parents similar daytime opportunities to develop their own skills and interests. The courses, including mathematics, computing and parenting have enabled some parents to obtain employment using their acquired skills. The quality of outreach to parents is a strength of the school, and is of increasing benefit to pupils' attainment.

52. The parents' association organises regular social and fund raising events. The association contributes to the cost of school trips, and pays fully for pupils' Christmas parties and gifts, for visiting theatre groups and for numerous small items for classrooms. Good co-operation is established between the association and the governing body, and some families are active on both committees.

53. The quality of information for parents is good. A termly bulletin for each year group lists the work planned in all subjects, and reminds parents of the homework timetable. There are frequent and informative newsletters about year-group and school events, and important dates. Details of costs and subsidies are provided when parents are invited to contribute to the cost of school trips. The school prospectus and the 2000 governors' annual report to parents conform with legal requirements. At three consultation evenings each year, parents are clearly informed of their children's progress. Teachers' annual written reports to parents are of good quality, showing in some detail what children know and can do, and how attainment may be improved in the core subjects of English, mathematics, science and information and communications technology.

54. Parents of pupils with special educational needs understand the school's procedures for support and discipline. Good records are maintained by the special needs co-ordinator. Each term, she invites parents to a daytime meeting to discuss their children's progress. Parents are encouraged to work closely with their children. One family provides full time classroom assistance to their child who requires constant attention but does not qualify for a local authority statement of special educational needs.

55. Parents are well informed of the school's routines and expectations when their children enter the Foundation Stage or join other year groups. Parents of pupils in Year 6 are well informed about transfer to secondary school. All pupils take home their reading books, and other homework is set regularly in all year groups. However, too few parents are sufficiently active in making a satisfactory contribution to their children's learning.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

56. The school is very well led and managed by the headteacher and her deputy. Both have a secure understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and a rigorous approach to implementing change in order to raise standards. This is clearly demonstrated in the impressive rise in the proportion of pupils, who, at the end of both key stages, achieve the levels expected of them. Since taking up the post, the headteacher has also successfully united the work of two schools: amalgamation co-incided with her appointment. In addition she has implemented and refined a rigorous system for monitoring the work of the school: her evaluations are candid and hard-hitting but they have earned her the respect of the staff. Written reports convey her judgements – and areas for development – to staff. The system used for monitoring the quality of teaching has evolved over several years and has been fine tuned to the needs of the school. It is the rigour of the evaluations of the headteacher - combined with constructive advice - that supports the judgement that she has the capacity to move the school further forward still. She is acutely aware that her first task is to support her new staff as they adapt to the demands of this school.

57. There is much time spent - and effort expended - on ensuring that the needs of *all pupils* are met. The result is a comprehensive package of measures, which epitomises the vision for equality of opportunity that the headteacher has for the school. This is a hallmark of her work. The particular measures are dealt with in detail in the *How high are standards?* section of this report.

58. Governors provide sound support to the school. They contribute according to their interests, skills and available time. Some are regular visitors to the school while others' involvement is limited to attendance at meetings. They are kept well informed by the headteacher and, in some instances, by staff with particular subject responsibilities. Armed with this information they are then able to discuss, with the headteacher, the best way forward. The governing body satisfactorily fulfils its statutory responsibilities. In accounting for the performance and improvement of the school, governors are reliant on the headteacher's advice.

59. The school makes good strategic use of its resources, including specific grant and other funding. Short-term financial planning is good, and plans for longer-term development are costed. The headteacher and administrator work hard to secure good value when purchasing goods and services. Budgeting is currently the responsibility of the headteacher, with support from the bursar service of the local education authority. The headteacher directs the budget carefully to support the school's identified priorities. The

governors' finance committee needs a better overview of the process, and procedures for the systematic review of areas of expenditure.

60. Administrative routines are very good, and the school office functions smoothly. The school's clerical officer ensures that updated financial information is available to the governors and headteacher. Good systems are established for checking and collating purchases, and paying creditors. A rigorous audit in 2000 by the local education authority required significant amendments to financial procedures. These have all been implemented. The audit indicates the proper expenditure of all funds allocated to the school, including those for pupils with special educational needs. The school's teachers are deployed effectively, and support staff are encouraged to use and develop their skills. The core curriculum is adequately funded, and details of expenditure are readily available to subject managers.

61. The school has an adequate number of teachers, although recruitment of skilled, permanent, full-time staff is a continuing problem. Most teachers are versatile and have good knowledge of primary school subjects. Teachers experienced in managing curriculum areas have good subject knowledge. The special educational needs co-ordinator is well qualified and experienced, a good team leader, and a good teacher of children with special educational needs. She is well informed, and, at regular meetings, shares her knowledge and expertise with all staff. As a full-time class teacher, she has limited opportunities to monitor teaching for special educational needs through the school. The teacher who supports the most able pupils in school is also most effective. The number of support staff is generous. They are well trained, versatile and enthusiastic. In lessons, working independently with individuals or small groups, they make significant contributions to pupils' progress. Administrative and cleaning staff and lunchtime assistants all contribute significantly to the smooth running of the school.

62. Accommodation is good overall, and is very good in the ICT suite and the nursery. All classrooms are at least of adequate size for the numbers of pupils. Classroom furniture is generally in good condition and is suitable for all pupils in the primary age range. Externally, the playground is of adequate size, and the playing field is in very good condition. Although the school buildings occasionally suffer damage from external vandalism, they are free of graffiti and litter, and are commendably well maintained by the caretaker and cleaners. The site and buildings present no serious risk to health and safety, but the footpath to the main entrance is in poor condition. The girls' toilet block in the lower school building has no sign.

63. The school's learning resources are satisfactory overall. Resources are very good in science, and are good in music and ICT. In the Foundation Stage, multicultural resources and the stock of fiction and non-fiction books is inadequate. Good resources are available for pupils with special educational needs.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

64. The headteacher, staff and governors should work together to raise standards, particularly in English, mathematics and science, through taking the following action:

- Improve the quality of teaching in those classes in Years 1 to 4 where it is sometimes less than satisfactory by:
(Paragraphs: 11, 16-19, 75, 82, 86, 90, 92)
 - * taking all possible steps to secure more stable, long-term staffing arrangements;
 - * making use of the significant teaching expertise in the school to support and to develop the skills of those who are less successful at managing pupils' behaviour;
 - * increasing the presence of the headteacher and / or deputy headteacher in and around classrooms until the necessary improvements have been made and are secure.

- Review the way that literacy skills and numeracy skills are developed throughout the school by:
(Paragraphs: 8, 23, 47, 67, 79, 82, 90, 92, 110)
 - * producing a plan that sets out clearly the best possible literacy and numeracy experiences for pupils in all year groups (from nursery to Year 6) and *across the full curriculum*. This should detail how and when these experiences will be incorporated into teachers' planning and teaching, in order to ensure they are used in the best possible way to support the development of work *in all subjects*. Implement the plan.
 - * in the Foundation Stage, establishing a rigorous assessment system that will facilitate faster progress towards the appropriate *Early Learning Goals*, and enable most pupils to achieve them by the time they leave the reception class.

- Improve pupils' attendance by increasing the rigour and promptness with which all absence is pursued. This should include encouragement to the parents of children in the Foundation Stage to ensure that their children attend regularly.
(Paragraphs: 14, 44-45)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	55
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	42

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	5	11	13	20	5	1	0
Percentage	9.1	20	23.6	36.4	9.1	1.8	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. [When the total number is substantially less than 100, add] Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than one [two, three, etc] percentage point[s]. [Where the total is close to or greater than 100, use only the first sentence.]

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	24	261
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/A	142

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	3	69

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	48

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	56
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	24

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	9.0
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.7
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	26	21	47

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	21	22	22
	Girls	20	20	17
	Total	41	42	39
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	87 (57)	89 (60)	83 (62)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	22	22	22
	Girls	20	17	21
	Total	42	39	43
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	89 (57)	83 (62)	91 (64)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	24	21	45

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	14	16	20
	Girls	11	9	13
	Total	25	25	33
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	56 (42)	56 (39)	73 (63)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	12	15	14
	Girls	10	10	9
	Total	22	25	23
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	49 (21)	56 (21)	52 (24)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	6
Pakistani	29
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	213
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	12.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20.9
Average class size	23.7

Education support staff: YR– Y6

Total number of education support staff	7.0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	98.8

Qualified teachers and support staff: Nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1.0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.5
Total number of education support staff	2.0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	28.2
Number of pupils per FTE adult	7.8

FTE means full-time equivalent.

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	9	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Financial information

Financial year	2000-2001
----------------	------------------

	£
Total income	769240.00
Total expenditure	762922.00
Expenditure per pupil	2257.00
Balance brought forward from previous year	59185.00
Balance carried forward to next year	65503.00

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	7.0
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	6.0

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1.0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

	20.1%
Number of questionnaires sent out	319
Number of questionnaires returned	64

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	52.0	42.0	3.0	0	3.0
My child is making good progress in school.	48.0	48.0	0	2.0	2.0
Behaviour in the school is good.	39.0	47.0	8.0	3.0	3.0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	28.0	45.0	19.0	3.0	5.0
The teaching is good.	48.0	42.0	5.0	0	5.0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	42.0	47.0	8.0	2.0	2.0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	56.0	37.0	5.0	2.0	2.0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	70.0	25.0	3.0	0	2.0
The school works closely with parents.	46.0	49.0	3.0	2.0	0
The school is well led and managed.	44.0	42.0	8.0	2.0	5.0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	48.0	41.0	6.0	2.0	3.0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	22.0	42.0	19.0	6.0	11.0

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

65. Provision in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall – with some strengths (particularly in relation to children’s personal, social, emotional development) and some weaknesses (particularly in the very limited way in which assessment is used to help children make progress).

66. The nursery is a colourful, stimulating and welcoming place, and children are happy there. It provides places for a maximum of 78 children, (although 20 of those are currently vacant) divided equally between morning and afternoon sessions. The morning and afternoon nursery curricula are identical for all children. Children may enter the nursery at age three. Unfortunately, not all do so: entry is at various times and may be with or without playgroup experience. Children whose fifth birthday falls between September 1st and the end of February enter the reception class in September. The remainder start in January. All attend full time. For all of these children attendance is poor: on average they miss one session every week. Evidence from baseline assessment indicates that children enter the nursery with attainment well below that expected in all areas of learning. Speaking and listening skills are particularly poor. Most do not achieve the Early Learning Goals in any area. Provision for children with special educational needs and for those for whom English is an additional language is good: they, as with all others, are fully involved in all activities.

67. The quality of teaching is good for personal, social, emotional and creative development. As a result, some inroads are made into children’s low attainment in these areas. As, in all other areas of learning it is satisfactory, by the time children embark on Key Stage 1 attainment remains well below average. More rapid progress is certainly possible in these areas, and a review of provision in the areas of language, literacy and mathematics is needed. The key feature of this review should be the introduction of a rigorous and effective assessment system that rotates the setting of short-term targets for children, monitors progress towards these and then replaces them with new ones. Such action has the potential for significant impact on the pace of learning, making achieving the Early Learning Goals possible for most children. Currently the school does not have a policy or schemes of work for the Foundation Stage although these are in hand.

Personal, social and emotional development.

68. Children settle quickly into established nursery routines, and are keen to please the adults who teach them. However, their concentration is often poor, particularly when working alone, and does not improve significantly. Consistent praise from all staff develops children’s self-confidence and encourages them to assume responsibilities. For example, older children prepare drinks and snacks for younger ones. They learn positive attitudes by observing the good relationships between their parents and the Foundation Stage staff. Children rarely disobey instructions. They learn to wait patiently for their turns in activities, and share equipment amicably. Behaviour is good, and is sometimes very good or excellent. While children do not know the moral difference between right and wrong, their behaviour conforms to the high expectations of staff. Minor disputes are quickly settled, and the atmosphere is orderly. Reception class children are encouraged to discuss feelings, but their responses are limited. Children have some awareness of self-care: nursery children know that overalls must be worn during painting sessions and - although many cannot yet manipulate buttons and buttonholes - reception children are learning to dress and undress for physical education session,. They have a satisfactory understanding of Christianity, but learn little about other faiths.

Communication, language and literacy

69. On entry to the nursery, speaking and listening skills are very poor: although most children speak confidently, their answers are often unrelated to the questions asked, and their grammar and pronunciation are poor. In the nursery, many children attain some basic conversational skills. For example, they tell each other what they have done, or are going to do, but do not always listen for responses. Teachers' questions to children are often simple, and may be answered with a single word or phrase. In the reception class, children's vocabulary improves slowly, and they learn, for example, the names of fruits and vegetables. Most children in the nursery listen attentively to their teachers' stories. All children understand that pictures tell stories, and some know that print conveys meaning. When teachers turn the pages of familiar books, children often give single-word answers to questions about the pictures. A few higher attaining children recall some features of familiar stories but not always sequentially. Their progress is limited by inadequate extension activities: for example, they are not taught to recognise other children's names. At the end of reception year, when reading or writing, many children cannot consistently apply the letter sounds that they know, and only a few recognise some familiar words. Improvements are needed in the teaching of reading – particularly phonics – and in the detail of the planning provided for support staff. All children in the Foundation Stage are encouraged to take books home to read with their parents, but the effects of reading at home are not adequately monitored. When reception class parents initial the reading record to indicate that a book is completed, the teacher provides another book for the child without further assessment.

70. Many children have no experience of crayons and pencils before starting in the nursery. They learn pretend-writing by making marks on paper, but the nursery area for writing is under-resourced and underused and progress is too slow. For example, at the time of the inspection, three weeks into the new school year, their workbooks contained few examples of writing or mark-making. An older nursery child, who produced an excellent spontaneous painting of a tiger, could not write her name coherently. Assessment is unsatisfactory. Consequently, relevant targets cannot be set for individuals or the whole class. When higher attaining children leave the reception class, a few can write their full names, but their pencil grip is poor, and letters are formed incorrectly. When they attempt to write sentences, the words are often indecipherable.

Mathematical development

71. On entry to the nursery, attainment is well below the average. Poor skills in language impede some early mathematical development. Nursery children of average attainment count a line of objects accurately to five, but do not recognise the same number when the objects are rearranged. They recognise some figures to ten but number rhymes are not used consistently to familiarise children with the names and shapes of numbers. When they leave the reception class, average ability children count objects accurately to twenty. They understand the concept of subtraction by 'taking two away' from a number, but do not understand 'two less than'. They add together two numbers totalling less than ten, but average children have difficulty in recording their answers accurately. Progress in numeracy is satisfactory. Average ability children in the nursery understand some mathematical language. During the inspection, a child with special educational needs identified 'big' and 'little' pieces of modelling clay. Reception class children have good understanding of positional language. They can place teddy bears behind each other, in front of, and between each other. In a good lesson seen in the reception class, children understood the difference between 'heavy' and 'light'. Nursery children recognise a square shape. At the end of the

reception year, higher attaining children recognise a diamond, and are beginning to recognise some three dimensional shapes. When writing, all attainment groups form numbers incorrectly, and frequently reverse the digits when writing two-figure numbers. For example, during the inspection, a higher attaining child wrote 17 as 71.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

72. On entry to the nursery, children have limited vocabulary and little curiosity. They know simple facts, and the names of many animals and objects, but they have few opportunities to investigate for themselves. During the inspection, no investigative play was observed. In the reception class, children identify many fruits and vegetables. They know the difference between 'hard' and 'soft' but do not understand 'sour' and 'sweet'. In a good cookery session, a learning support assistant asked good questions to develop children's understanding of mixtures of ingredients. Reception class children have a satisfactory understanding of time. In a very good lesson, children knew the sequence of the days of the week, and that Saturday and Sunday were 'special'. At the end of the reception year, children have some knowledge of natural science. They know that animal bodies have bony skeletons, and that plant growth requires soil, water and light. They have some knowledge of the seasons; they know that the seaside would not be suitable for a winter holiday, but they are not aware that the current season is autumn. No model making or material joining was seen during the inspection. Some information and communications technology was seen, and nursery children had satisfactory skills in using the mouse. A higher attaining child used an audio recorder to play back a pre-recorded story through headphones. At the end of the reception year, children have some understanding of the local and wider environments. For example, they know the location of the municipal swimming pool, and they know that the Queen lives in London.

Creative development

73. When children enter the nursery, they do not know the names of colours. This is a teaching priority - related to all areas of learning – and children quickly learn to identify primary colours. During the inspection, older children were mixing secondary colours. Throughout the Foundation Stage, children paint with enthusiasm and much success. For example, a spontaneous painting of a tiger by a higher attaining nursery child included fine detail and excellent perspective. Children's paintings are highly valued and are beautifully displayed in the nursery. All children enjoy music lessons. Nursery children remember the actions associated with many songs, but are less certain of words. During the inspection, in a good lesson, children's participation was excellent when playing instruments and following the instructions of the teacher and nursery nurses. In this lesson, older children identified a tambourine and a rainmaker. In a similarly good lesson in the reception class, children remembered all the words and actions in a number of simple songs. Imaginative play is under-developed in the Foundation Stage; the nursery home corner and the reception class castle are under-resourced, and the outdoor area offers too few opportunities for role-play.

Physical development

74. Children's physical development is satisfactory, although their experiences are limited before they enter nursery. For example, they are unfamiliar with scooters and other wheeled vehicles. Good teaching enables them quickly to develop physical skills, and to make good progress in running, jumping, throwing and catching. In the outside play area, nursery children show good awareness of space. They ride bicycles confidently. During the inspection, a nursery child rolled a full sized motorcar tyre over a long distance, and others

used a variety of small apparatus, and demonstrated some good skills in ball control. Planning for the outside area is not good enough, as it is unrelated to the Early Learning Goals. Children's fine manipulative skills are generally unsatisfactory throughout the Foundation Stage, although their use of paintbrushes is good. In the nursery, their scissor control is poor, and is not consistently corrected. At the end of reception year, they do not hold pencils correctly. Throughout the Foundation Stage, activities are not planned to develop these and similar skills.

ENGLISH

75. Pupils achieve standards that, at the end of both key stages, are below the national average. Nevertheless, this still represents good progress overall, given that attainment on entry to the school is well below average. Despite this overall good progress, it is unevenly distributed throughout the school. It is sound through the Foundation Stage so that, at the beginning of Year 1, standards remain well below average. Rising test results at the end of Key Stage 1 indicate that from this low starting point, progress through this key stage is good. Thereafter, however, progress becomes slower prior to a marked spurt in Years 5 and 6. This uneven pattern of progress is not acceptable, and, prior to the inspection the school had - quite rightly - identified it as an area of concern: if it could be eradicated, standards would further improve. In particular, the work in Years 3 and 4 and in the Foundation Stage should be the focus of attention. Detail of what is necessary in the Foundation Stage has been dealt with in the section of the report that precedes this one. In Years 3 and 4, pupils should be making progress that equates to a full National Curriculum level: from 2B to 3B, for example. Currently this is not the case.

76. Standards in listening are below average although, of course, this does represent progress that is good overall. Listening skills, in particular, are very variable. A significant proportion of pupils in every classroom present their teachers with behaviour that is challenging. They do not listen well as a matter of course, and it is only their teacher's skills that help these pupils – in most classrooms and on most occasions – to listen well enough to learn. Sometimes, however, the learning of all pupils in the classroom is disrupted as a result of the poor behaviour of the few. Standards in speaking are also below average. Few pupils in this school are articulate speakers for their age, and few speak with confidence and poise. The development of technical vocabulary is sound, and most pupils are happy to talk in front of their classmates, albeit quietly.

77. Pupils make good progress in reading, but as with the other elements of English, reach standards that remain below average. The ability of pupils to read the print on a page exceeds their ability to understand what they have read: the limitations in their vocabulary prevent greater comprehension. While some parents are very supportive, and read with their children on a daily basis, many do not. Hence, a larger than acceptable share of responsibility for helping their children to develop as young readers rests with the school. In addition, there remains the potential for greater strides in the Foundation Stage to develop pre- and early reading skills.

78. The greatest variation in progress between one year group and another occurs in pupils' writing. In particular, the quality and quantity of the writing produced by pupils makes a significant dip in Years 3 and 4. For example, the lengthy pieces of writing that most pupils are producing by the end of Year 2 are less in evidence in the two years that follow. This is a shame, because, in Years 5 and 6, it leaves both pupils and teachers with more than their fair share of work to reach the current standards. Progress from the Foundation Stage to Year 6 should be a more even one and the school is right to identify this as an area of concern.

79. The school is – quite rightly – keen to look at the way literacy skills are developed through the school and to review its provision.

- Plan the best possible range of reading and writing experiences for pupils throughout the school, incorporating all curriculum areas. (This should include pre- and early reading and writing experiences for children in the Foundation Stage.) Implement the plan so that pupils' skills are used to support their learning in lessons other than English and, conversely, lessons other than English provide pupils with opportunities to practice and strengthen their reading and writing skills. The school will then be able to use its rigorous monitoring strategies and its good assessment systems to look at the progress being made. This should produce a steadier profile of pupil progress, following a more even distribution of responsibility throughout the school for raising standards.

80. The need for this review should not be construed as inadequate implementation of the literacy hour. It is far from that as the national literacy strategy has integrated well into the school's curriculum. Of the ten lessons observed, the quality of teaching was very good in three, good in one, sound in five and unsatisfactory in the remaining one. Overall the quality of teaching in Years 5 and 6 was very good. It was also very good for the small Year 3 / 4 group of pupils. For the remainder, it was sound overall.

81. The school operates a setting system – three groups in Years 1 and 2; three in Years 3 and 4 (with six pupils withdrawn for three sessions) and three in Years 5 and 6. To ensure that all pupils receive the same quality teaching, staff rotate around the three groups, spending a fortnight with a group before moving on. This may seem an unnecessarily complex setting arrangement, but, as test results clearly demonstrate, it is one that has allowed pupils to make good progress. The pupils say they like it, so it must be judged to serve their needs well.

82. Pupil management is the key factor separating very good teaching from that which is unsatisfactory. A significant proportion of pupils present their teachers with challenging behaviour. Some teachers handle this with great skill, pre-empting the unacceptable behaviour: diverting the potential for it into productive learning. This is done with the help of an infectious enthusiasm, an amazingly rapid pace to the lessons and a strategy that relies for its success on the knowledge that diversion is a much more effective deterrent to unacceptable behaviour than is direct confrontation. If teaching is to be improved, these are the skills that need to be learned and the strategies that need to be adopted by all the staff in the school.

83. Pupils who find learning difficult, those who find it difficult to behave well and those for whom English is an additional language, all make good progress. So, too, do the pupils identified as the most able: they attain well. A Year 4 pupil, for example, empathising about how child evacuees from World War II might have felt, wrote: 'I was really excited but on the train Nick was sick with sadness. All the other trips our Mam came on. So, for comfort, I cuddled him up on my knee...' All pupils have equal – and good – opportunities to learn.

84. The English co-ordinator is new to the job, as her predecessor has just left to take up a promoted post elsewhere. She is enthusiastic and open to new ideas. Working with the schools' senior management team to review the opportunities provided for pupils to develop their literacy skills will be her first priority. In parallel with this development, the good start that has been made to developing pupils' ICT skills in literacy lessons can now be extended into other subjects.

MATHEMATICS

85. Pupils make good progress as they move through the school, so that, by the time they leave, their achievement is approaching - but still below - the standards achieved nationally. The results of the national tests in 2000 confirm this finding. Nevertheless, this represents a major improvement since the 1998 inspection. Termly assessments, consistent monitoring of pupils' learning, and focused target setting have all contributed to achieving this progress. The setting of pupils into ability groups is effective, and allows teachers to match more closely the work they set to pupils' abilities. The sets are fluid, and pupils can be moved at any time in relation to the progress they are making. At the beginning of Key Stage 1 pupils' attainment is well below that which is expected. Despite good progress through Key Stage 1, they still do not reach the expected national average of attainment by the time they are seven. However the results of the national tests indicate that there has been a rapid rise in standards since the 1998 inspection. Pupils with special educational needs, and those with English as an additional language, are very well supported in school and achieve standards that are in line with their abilities.

86. The teaching in Key Stage 2 is variable and ranges from poor to excellent. In the best lessons teachers focus clearly and precisely on what they want pupils to learn. The pace is brisk, teachers' expectations of behaviour are high, and pupils are expected to work hard. Teachers genuinely care for their pupils so that relationships are very good. Lessons are fun. Pupils want to succeed and work hard thus contributing to their own progress. For example, in a Year 5 / 6 lesson, taking place in the computer suite, the teacher made very effective use of the modern technology of an interactive whiteboard. Working in close harmony with an excellent teaching assistant, all pupils - the majority of whom had special educational needs - were inspired and excited while learning multiplication tables. In another Year 5 / 6 lesson pupils of higher ability were presented with a division table in algebraic form that challenged their logical thinking skills. The teacher skilfully built on pupils' reasoning so that a buzz of excitement went round the class as they got nearer to the solution. Pupils' behaviour is very challenging and there is the potential of disruption in all lessons. Where the teacher was less skilful and unable to control this very challenging behaviour it severely affected pupil's learning and resulted in a poor lesson. Further sharing of good practice may be helpful in supporting less experienced teachers.

87. Successful teachers use day-to-day assessment well, and alter lesson plans if they realise that pupils have not fully understood work completed in earlier lessons. In a Year 5 / 6 lesson the teacher repeated work from the previous lesson - multiplying two 2-digit numbers together - when it was realised that pupils' had not understood this operation. In another Year 5 / 6 lesson, work on multiplying and dividing decimals by ten was reinforced instead of moving on to further work that depended on this understanding.

88. The teaching in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory, and sometimes very good. The lack of pupils' learning skills and poor levels of concentration at the beginning of the key stage challenge teachers and slow down pupils' progress. Although teachers are well supported by high quality teaching assistants, many of the younger pupils find it difficult to work on their own. Most teachers focus their planning on clear learning objectives laid out in the national numeracy strategy, and share these with the pupils at the beginning of the lesson. At the end of the lesson, learning is reviewed in a number of ways, including groups of pupils telling the rest of the class what they have learnt. This is effective in building pupils' self-esteem, and in reinforcing and sometimes extending learning.

89. Teachers rightly concentrate on teaching and reinforcing the correct use of mathematical language from the earliest stage, but at a level that pupils will understand. For example $3+2=5$ is read as 'three add two equals five'. The term 'number sentence' is used by the teacher, and therefore pupils understand that they have written down what they have

already done as a practical activity. This may be adding groups of small teddies together or counting dots on a dice. Mental sessions are well used to practise counting skills and to developing quick recall of number facts. In a very good Year 2 lesson, the teacher's well-matched questions were targeted at individual pupils. Although the pace was brisk, pupils were alert as they did not know who would be asked the next question. They were allowed 'thinking time' and were generously praised for their efforts. The teacher's respect and consideration for the pupils affected all the class, and there were few interruptions from other pupils wanting to butt in with answers. Whole class sessions, which did not involve all the pupils all of the time were less successful as pupils found it difficult to concentrate when it was not their turn. For example in a whole class session where a 'bus' was collecting 'teddies' from two 'bus stops', only the pupils in charge of either the 'bus' or the 'teddies' were involved. The other pupils therefore showed little interest in working out the addition required.

90. The rapid increase in the proportion of pupils attaining Levels 2 and 4 in the national tests at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 respectively shows that the school has put a huge effort into raising standards in this subject. This has been achieved in mathematics lessons, and it is now time to look at ways of providing pupils with opportunities to use and develop their mathematical skills in other areas of the curriculum. In addition, standards will be further enhanced if the poor teaching is addressed, as this will enable pupils to make more even progress through the school. The school has rightly identified action on these two issues as being necessary for further improvement.

SCIENCE

91. Standards in science have risen dramatically over the last four years and are now just short of national averages. From 14 per cent of pupils achieving Level 4 at the end of Key Stage 2 in 1997, 73 per cent did so in 2000 (against a national figure of 79 per cent) and 80 per cent did so in 2001. In Key Stage 1, Level 2 achievement rose from 28 per cent in 1997 to 91 per cent in 2000, but fell back to 74 per cent in 2001. Inspection findings show that standards are still below average. However, pupils make good progress.

92. Pupils' attainment is adversely affected because:

- when they start school they have a poor understanding of the world around them;
- they have difficulty understanding the language used in science lessons;
- they are often absent from school;
- not all teaching is of the same high quality;
- literacy and numeracy skills could still be used more effectively to support the work that pupils do in science.

Improvements are taking place at both key stages because:

- the school has adopted a nationally recognised scheme of work that has given a better structure to the curriculum;
- teachers are gaining in confidence as they use the new scheme of work;
- there is rigorous monitoring of planning and teaching;
- assessment of pupils' work and test results is thorough and well used;
- the school bases much of the work in science on allowing pupils to conduct investigations, which helps them develop good scientific habits;
- in the Key Stage 2 national tests, help is given to pupils who have difficulty reading the questions.

93. By the age of seven, pupils' attainment is below average. In Year 1, pupils identify the differences in human development according to age and begin to present information about the colour of eyes of their friends in simple charts. They identify animals and their young

and sort animals using features such as the number of legs they have. Many pupils need help with spelling the correct scientific words and their lack of vocabulary hinders their progress when they sort objects according to how they feel. In Year 2, pupils develop this skill to show the properties of natural and man-made objects. They have satisfactory understanding of how water freezes, can melt and re-freeze. They develop an understanding of how to carry out fair tests when they carry out experiments with chocolate buttons. Pupils learn the conditions that plants need to grow, and name the parts of a flower. Higher-attaining and average-attaining pupils understand well how to make simple electrical circuits. They use symbols when drawing circuits, and recognise circuits that will not light a bulb when they say, "That won't work because you have connected both wires to the same end of the battery." Some average-attaining and lower-attaining pupils need help to record details of investigations. They find it difficult to use the correct words, for instance, when writing about liquids and solids.

94. Inspection evidence shows that standards in Year 6 are still slightly below average but are approaching national expectations. Pupils who have just entered Year 6 have difficulty saying when shadows will be at their longest or shortest. However, they are able to use their knowledge about separating two substances, such as a mixture of sand and rice, and are able to work out that they could use a magnet to remove iron filings if they were added to the mixture. Pupils who have just completed work in Year 6 show sound scientific skills. They conduct tests to investigate the rate at which different amounts of sugar dissolve, recording their findings in tables and graphs. Pupils show a good understanding of some common gases, such as oxygen, helium and carbon dioxide. They know that some gases can be used as anaesthetics, and that carbon dioxide is used to put the bubbles into soft drinks. The most able pupils make predictions about the pitch of the note that will be obtained from bottles containing different amounts of water, and use scientific knowledge and language to explain how sound is caused by vibrations. However, some find it difficult to understand other scientific ideas, for example that changes in substances might be reversible or irreversible. Average-attaining pupils do not always read instructions carefully, and, consequently, misunderstand work such as that on electrical circuits. Lower-attaining pupils have difficulty understanding what replaces the air displaced when a sponge is squeezed under water. They need help to draw graphs using information gathered in investigations. When measuring pulse rate, average and low-attaining pupils know why exercise raises the pulse rate. Higher-attaining pupils suggest that results may vary because some pupils carry out the investigation with more enthusiasm than others.

95. Teaching is good overall at Key Stage 2. Not enough lessons were seen at Key Stage 1 to make judgements about the standards of teaching. However, in the one lesson seen at Key Stage 1, the teaching was of the highest quality. The teacher had high expectations of what pupils could achieve and used praise and humour well to maintain their enthusiasm. Pupils are expected to make frequent judgements about what the teacher and other pupils say by giving thumbs up or down signals. This helps them to make decisions as they try to decide how to conduct a fair test when asked to move a tissue paper fish across the floor without touching it. Very good use was made of the classroom assistant, who worked with a group of higher-attaining pupils, and, by skilful questioning, led pupils to say that a pushing force moved the fish. Good control of pupils was seen in one class at Key Stage 2, resulting in good progress in understanding the relationship between exercise, heartbeat and pulse rate. Pupils were encouraged to use the correct vocabulary related to blood flow, such as ventricle, auricle, valve, vein and artery. They were taught good scientific habits when they were reminded not to use their thumb to take a pulse. Work is well planned for all levels of ability. Teaching was less successful, but nonetheless satisfactory, in a lesson where the teacher did not check to see if all pupils were taking the pulse correctly, and did not explain carefully enough how to calculate the pulse rate.

96. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because they are provided with suitable work and are supported well by teachers and their assistants. Teachers mark pupils' work well, making suggestions about how pupils might improve. However, their expectations vary: some are satisfied with work that others would consider untidy or too little in quantity. Progress in science will be further improved as teachers made greater use of ICT: this is already in hand. Pupils do not use spreadsheets to record information and produce graphs. The school does not have equipment to connect to computers to measure light, heat and sound levels. Apart from that, however, there are very good resources for science.

97. The management of the subject is good. The scheme of work, about to be introduced at the time of the previous inspection, has now been put in place and teachers are gaining in confidence through using it. Teaching and learning in science is checked rigorously by the headteacher and other senior teachers. Good attention is paid to the needs of all pupils, be they those capable of working at higher levels than average or those who have difficulty understanding the work or the language. The attainment of pupils is monitored and assessed well. Given the good monitoring and assessment procedures, and the support for all pupils, the school is in a good position to continue to raise standards in science.

ART AND DESIGN

98. Attainment in art is below that expected when pupils leave school and represents a decline since the last inspection: art has not been a priority of the school since then. The school is very aware of this, and is already taking appropriate action: it has recently adopted a scheme, that, when it is fully implemented, will allow for the progressive development of skills. Currently, pupils have a lack of basic skills in all areas of art, and do not build on or improve skills as they move up the school. Although written work is sometimes illustrated with drawings that are then coloured, these are, on the whole, immature for pupils of similar age. The standards achieved at the end of Key Stage 1 meet expectations.

99. Some teachers in Key Stage 2 lack subject knowledge, and are therefore unable to develop skills progressively. As a result, tasks can be undemanding and pupils do not make sufficient progress. For example, in Years 3 and 4 pupils were asked to produce images of a dream, but were restricted in having no choice of paper or materials to use. No skills were either taught or practised. In addition, four pupils working on one sheet of paper on over-sized tables encouraged bad behaviour. In Years 5 and 6, pupils set up an arrangement of fruit as a subject of still life, but had no knowledge either of the techniques used by famous artists to produce three-dimensional effects, or of the characteristics of this type of painting. They were given no choice of medium, paper size or colour. They sketched using inappropriate writing pencils instead of soft drawing pencils, and the exercise consisted of painting inside the lines using shades of one colour but without discussion about the characteristics of still life painting. The arrangement was removed before painting commenced. The co-ordinators have, correctly, identified the need for staff training to support the introduction of the new scheme of work. Action is planned but has not yet been taken.

100. In the only lesson seen in Key Stage 1, Year 1 and 2 pupils were inspired by very good teaching. They were introduced to a wide range of materials from which they could build a sculpture to go on an island - linked to a story read in their literacy lessons. The teacher caught pupils' imagination and plenty of discussion developed as they worked hard. As a result they produced a wide range of sculptures of which they were very proud.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

101. No lessons were seen during the inspection, and very little evidence was available in terms of design work, finished products and photographs. Teachers' planning lacked detail, so that no judgements could be made on the quality of teaching. At the time of the last inspection, attainment at the end of both key stages was judged to be below that expected for pupils of similar ages, and there is insufficient evidence to judge if standards have risen since that time. The subject has not been a priority for development, but the school has recently adopted a scheme of work that provides for the systematic development of skills, so the school now has the potential to move forward.

102. At the beginning of Key Stage 2 pupils design photograph frames. Although some of the design sheets show elaborate designs for decoration, and tools that will be used, little attention is paid to how the structures will be made to be stable. Photographic evidence of work in Years 5 and 6 shows models of rotating fairground rides made from construction kits as a preparation to designing and making models. No planning or evaluation sheets were available for this work and the photographs were insufficient to judge the quality of the finished products.

103. Pupils in Key Stage 1 design and make models of wheeled vehicles. The small sample of finished models show that pupils have developed cutting and glueing skills, and that wheels have been attached to axles, but in many of these the wheels do not turn and the finish is below that which is expected for pupils of a similar age.

HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY

104. There was the opportunity to observe one lesson in geography, but none in history. From looking at pupils' work and talking with pupils and the subject leaders, it is judged that standards in both subjects at Key Stage 2 are about as expected from pupils aged seven and eleven. Standards are sound in history at Key Stage 1 but lack of secure evidence for geography made a judgement unwise. Standards in history in Key Stage 2 have improved since the last inspection. Other standards are unchanged.

105. In Key Stage 1, pupils learn about islands. They discuss the sorts of buildings and transport they might find on a small island off the west coast of Scotland. A significant number of pupils find it difficult to understand the lifestyle experienced by the islanders. For example, some pupils thought there would be no cars on the island because it was surrounded by water. A higher-attaining pupil, however, explained that cars could get to the island by ferry. By Year 6, pupils look in some detail at Thornaby. The work of pupils who have recently moved to secondary school shows that they have a sound understanding of the problems caused by traffic. They carried out surveys to show traffic flow on roads near the school and presented their findings as graphs. Pupils composed questions to ask residents about their thoughts about traffic. Gifted and talented pupils suggested how the roads might be made safer, by, for example, imposing stronger penalties on law-breakers, installing more speed cameras and improving public transport. Pupils put forward arguments for and against building a supermarket on the school field. They show their ideas of what facilities the supermarket might contain. Pupils support the case for a supermarket by saying the school could increase its income by charging rent for the site, and point out the convenience for mothers who could do their shopping after bringing pupils to school. They counter this by pointing out the loss of facilities for the school, the danger to children from the increase in traffic and that noise would disturb services at the nearby church. Suggestions made by average and lower-attaining pupils are less well thought out.

106. At Key Stage 1, pupils learn to use evidence to find out about the past. They learn of the importance of the discovery of Tutankhamen's tomb and discover how the bodies of important people were preserved by mummification. Drawings and carvings of the gods worshipped show pupils the importance of animals to the Ancient Egyptians. Following the visit of two teachers to Australia, pupils studied the voyages of Captain Cook. They learned that he discovered Australia and how he died. By Year 6, pupils learn about Ancient Greece. Pupils become aware of the influence that philosophers such as Plato, Socrates and Aristotle have had on later generations. Gifted and talented, and higher-attaining pupils show a good understanding of the differences between the ways of life in Athens and Sparta. They explain the democracy of Athens when they write, "Democracy means that power is in the hands of the people, not just a chosen few." Average-attaining pupils show a sound understanding of Ancient Greek customs and beliefs about death and the after-life. They learn about Pheidippides taking the news of the approach of Persian forces before the Battle of Marathon, and how this led to the running of marathon races today. Many pupils enjoy history lessons. An example of this was seen when a pupil in Year 4 was sufficiently inspired to 'mummify' a toy soldier at home, make a sarcophagus in which to place the mummy and write out a description of how he had carried out the mummification.

107. The small amount of teaching seen in geography was unsatisfactory. The teacher used questions well to encourage pupils to make decisions about what types of buildings might be found on a small island, but then limited discussion by giving her own opinion before pupils had had the chance to explain fully what they thought. However, very few pupils have developed a clear understanding of what an island is, and, in the case of a small island, how this would affect the kinds of facilities that might be found there. The children did not understand some of the words used, such as landscape, and the meanings were not explained. Teachers' marking is generally satisfactory, and some is good when teachers make comments that show pupils how to improve their work. The standards of pupils' writing could be improved if teachers provided more opportunities for pupils to practise different forms of writing, particularly in history. An example of what can be achieved was seen in writing about the journey of a Portuguese trader to Benin in Africa, when a more able pupil gave a sense of the uncertainty felt by the trader by writing, "We are all missing our families, but it should be worth it in the end." Teachers make good use of support staff to ensure that pupils with special educational needs make good progress. ICT needs to be more fully integrated into pupils' work in geography and history but the school is aware of this and is taking appropriate action.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

108. Pupils in both key stages are enthusiastic and confident in using ICT, and now reach levels of attainment that are in line with national expectations. At the time of the last inspection, standards were below national expectations and inspectors identified a weakness in the under-use of computers in classrooms and a weakness in the leadership of the subject. Since then the school has improved its hardware, embarked on staff training and employed a specialist assistant and technician to support work in the new computer suite. Leadership is now strong and an ICT team, which includes both teachers and support staff, ensures that expertise on the staff is used to its fullest effect. Staff confidence, expertise and enthusiasm have increased. The school has just acquired an interactive whiteboard (a large computer screen on the wall that responds to touch), which enables staff to teach new skills more effectively directly to a whole class. Although the school still has no sensory equipment to support work in science, this is at the top of their shopping list and will be their next purchase. A strict code of behaviour is in place for the ICT suite, to which pupils respond. It is a combination of the above factors that has enabled the school to move pupils' levels of attainment forward.

109. Teachers' confidence in teaching ICT has improved, and, with the support of the very well qualified assistant, pupils make good progress. Teaching in Key Stage 2 is good overall, and in Years 5/6 is very good or excellent both in terms of teaching ICT skills and in supporting the teaching of literacy and numeracy. In an excellent lesson, pupils were introduced to the use of 'Power Point' (a program used to produce eye-catching presentations). During a humorous and dynamic demonstration by the teacher, the main features were clearly explained. Pupils then made very good progress, due to their enthusiasm and the support received from the teacher and the teaching assistant. The technology was very effectively used by the teacher in a literacy lesson in the ICT suite, in which pupils were required to access and explore a web site to find the poems of Robert Louis Stevenson. After selecting poems of their choice against given criteria, these were copied and saved as documents. Other pupils used editing skills to write their own versions of poems that they had studied. Both of these activities exploited the technology and would have been less successful if attempted using traditional methods.

110. Only one lesson was observed in Key Stage 1, but further evidence was taken from looking at samples of pupils' work and from discussions with teachers and pupils. The school is very well aware that at the beginning of the key stage many pupils have little knowledge of the layout of the keyboard, and they therefore spend a long time actually looking for letters. Keyboard skills are underdeveloped, and it may help pupils' progress in Key Stage 1 if these were addressed at an earlier stage. By the end of the key stage, pupils are confident in loading programs and have learnt a good range of word processing skills - although some pupils are still slow in putting in text. The use of CD ROMs enables pupils to research topics in history, extracting text and pictures. As with Key Stage 2, pupils receive direct teaching in the ICT suite, and this is effective in developing new skills. However, fuller use could be made of the older machines (at present in the classrooms) to provide more practice for some pupils.

MUSIC

111. Attainment in music is in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages. Since the previous inspection, standards have improved in Key Stage 1 and have been maintained in Key Stage 2. During this inspection, three music lessons were seen, covering all year groups. Additional evidence was obtained through discussions with pupils and staff, and by analysis of previous lesson planning. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language are fully involved in all aspects of the music curriculum, and are well supported by other pupils. The school has not retained any previous written work in music, or any audio recordings or displays.

112. In Years 1 and 2, all pupils enjoy singing. In a good lesson seen, they sang clearly, with good understanding of short and long sounds. Experimenting with a chime bar and a drum, they recognised how long sounds stay in the air. They learned how a long sound may be terminated by touching the instrument. Children of average attainment were clear about the meaning of 'vibration'. Resources available for this lesson were very good, but were not fully used by the teacher. At this early date in the school year, pupils currently in Year 3 clearly recollected lessons in Year 2 when they learned the meanings of 'rhythm' and 'volume'. They recalled composing their own music stories about walking in the park.

113. Good singing is extended in Years 3–6. At an assembly during the inspection, older pupils led the school impressively in three-part hymn harmony. The quality of singing is improved by the examples of senior members of staff. In assemblies, they take turns in leading singing from the front of the school hall. Pupils quickly learn words and music, and

the importance of voice projection. Singing in assemblies contributes to pupils' spiritual development. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 compose their own percussion music. In a satisfactory lesson seen, they listened carefully and appreciatively to each other's performances, but had no opportunities for discussion or evaluation.

114. Throughout the school, pupils have very limited knowledge of composers. During the inspection, an average pupil in Year 3 could not differentiate between 'composer' and 'conductor'. In Years 5 and 6, pupils have good understanding of pulse and rhythm. In an excellent lesson, they added rhythmic patterns to a pulse, and used their voices to add melodic features creating the atmosphere of a Victorian mill. This fast-paced lesson was linked to a current history project. Pupils in Year 6 have a satisfactory musical vocabulary. They know the meanings of 'tempo', 'pitch' and 'pentatonic scale'.

115. Progress in music is satisfactory. The recently appointed subject leader has excellent musical knowledge, and she is an excellent teacher. Pupils' attitudes are generally good, and were very good in the excellent lesson. The school's current planning is satisfactory, but is inadequately detailed for new staff and supply teachers.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

116. Standards in physical education are below national expectations at the end of Year 2 and at the end of Year 6. In the previous inspection, standards were judged to be in line with national expectations. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, participate fully in the physical education curriculum. Currently, the school does not have a subject leader. Extra-curricular activities, including football, cricket, and golf, are supervised by two senior teachers and a learning support assistant.

117. During the inspection, two physical education lessons were observed in Years 1/2 and Years 5/6, and a swimming lesson in Years 3/4. The Year 1/2 lesson was unsatisfactory, and pupils made no progress. They performed side rolls and jumps on mats, and higher attaining pupils attempted scissor jumps and forward rolls. Standards of performance were low. The teacher selected pupils to demonstrate the movements, but did not identify individual strengths or ask the class to evaluate them. Attitudes and behaviour were unsatisfactory. Although pupils were attentive when the teacher was explaining the lesson objectives, they soon became inattentive and talkative. Their behaviour was generally immature. For example, they pulled at the teacher's clothing to gain her attention.

118. In Years 3/4, pupils receive swimming tuition at a municipal pool. Few pupils in Year 4 can swim 25 metres although higher attaining pupils confidently swam freestyle and backstroke across the width of the pool, and plunged enthusiastically beneath the surface. The teacher overcame very poor acoustics by crouching on the poolside, speaking quietly and signalling. Other attainment groups were led by a swimming instructor. These pupils walked confidently in the water, and swam with floats. All but two submerged confidently. Attitudes and behaviour were very good at the pool. The school participates in inter-school swimming galas, and pupils occasionally win certificates of achievement.

119. In a satisfactory Year 5/6 lesson, pupils in two mixed ability groups practised basic skills in netball games. Higher attaining pupils passed the ball accurately and caught it cleanly. All pupils understood the theory of marking opponents. Shooting skills were very poor: one goal was scored in the two 15 minute sessions. At all attainment levels, boys were more proficient than girls. Attitudes and behaviour were unsatisfactory for most of the lesson; pupils gossiped when warming-up, when playing and observing. Progress was satisfactory overall because the teacher used her subject knowledge to involve pupils in the skills of the game.

120. The subject policy and schemes of work are satisfactory. Some aspects of the behaviour policy for physical education are unsatisfactory. For example, misbehaviour in a lesson is countered by open-ended 'time-out' from the lesson, and continued misbehaviour is punished by non-participation in a subsequent lesson. Not all teachers implement the policy requirement of silence in the school halls during physical education lessons.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

121. At the end of Year 2, and the end of Year 6, attainment in religious education is in line with the locally agreed syllabus. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language are included in all activities. In this inspection, two religious education lessons were seen. Other inspection evidence included observation of collective worship, interviews with pupils, scrutiny of pupils' work and displays on walls. Teaching in the subject is satisfactory overall.

122. In Years 1/2, pupils know that people pray in various holy places. In a satisfactory lesson seen, pupils knew that a crucifix would be found in a church. They knew that the Koran would be found in a mosque, and should not be placed on the floor. Pupils currently in Year 3 have some knowledge of Jesus, remembered from last year. In discussion, they knew that Christians believe he was the Son of God, and was a healer who looked after people. They could not explain the word 'miracle'. They had some knowledge of the Bible, and related the stories of Noah and Zaccarius. In this school year, pupils in Years 3/4 visited a church. They know that it is central to the births, marriages and deaths of Christians. Displayed work by a previous Year 3/4 class includes Venn diagrams illustrating similarities and differences in the beliefs of Christians and Muslims.

123. Written work in books shows that previous Year 6 pupils knew the story of the creation. They developed their understanding of similarities and differences in faiths. They knew the significance of Hindu and Christian pilgrimages. Progress is generally satisfactory throughout the school.

124. Pupils in all year groups have contributed original writing to an attractive and interesting book of prayers. Pupils in Year 2 have written prayers in the style of the psalms, and have word-processed some Christmas stories. In Year 5/6, pupils have written movingly about natural and man-made catastrophes. Using the Internet to locate prayers from numerous sources, they downloaded prayers by Gandhi and the disciple Matthew.

125. School assemblies are generally Christian in content, and comply with legal requirements. Music establishes feelings of spirituality in assemblies, and pupils sing, pray, and reflect quietly upon current topics. In the best lessons in all subjects, pupils reflect upon their own work, and the work of others.

126. Teachers' planning is satisfactory, but assessment and marking are inconsistent. Teachers often fail to correct errors of grammar and spelling in pupils' workbooks. In the lessons seen, pupils' attitudes were good. Although some links are established with other curriculum subjects, the use of ICT is limited. The acting religious education co-ordinator is hardworking, and has satisfactory expertise and knowledge. Day courses are available to increase her expertise, but the school cannot easily locate supply teachers to cover planned absences.