

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **SWARCLIFFE PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY**

Swarcliffe, Leeds

LEA area: Leeds

Unique reference number: 107944

Headteacher: Mrs C A Lister

Lead inspector: Mrs L Murphy

Dates of inspection: 3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> May 2005

Inspection number: 268018

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	190
School address:	Swarcliffe Drive Leeds West yorkshire
Postcode:	LS14 5JW
Telephone number:	0113 2930275
Fax number:	0113 2930276
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr J P Makin
Date of previous inspection:	19 May 1999

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This community primary school is below average in size and serves an area of council-built accommodation on the eastern outskirts of Leeds. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is above the national average. The majority of pupils are of White-British heritage. A minority of the pupils are of mixed White and Black Caribbean heritage. There are no pupils learning English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs is higher than average. Their special educational needs are wide ranging and include moderate learning, social, emotional, behavioural, speech or communication difficulties as well as multi-sensory impairment and autism. There are no pupils in public care. Although the school has an average proportion of pupils transferring in and out of the school over the academic year, at times transfers affect particular year groups to a greater extent. The attainment of the children on entry to school is well below what is expected of the children's age.

Over the last two years the school has changed significantly in terms of a reduction in the number of pupils on roll and associated reduction in staffing. A new headteacher and deputy headteacher have been appointed since the last inspection and a major two-year building refurbishment programme has recently been completed. The school is part of the Excellence in Cities initiative and Leadership Development Strategy in Primary Schools. The school attained the Healthy Schools award in 2004 and has been an Investor in People since 1997.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
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8922	Mrs B McIntosh	Lay inspector	
25376	Mrs L Alvy	Team inspector	Science Personal, social and health education Music Religious education Foundation Stage Special educational needs
8839	Mr M Edgerton	Team inspector	English Information and communication technology Geography History

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**Swarcliffe Primary School and Nursery is a good school.** Effective teaching and learning, brought about by good leadership and management, mean that although standards are below average the pupils achieve well overall. The pupils' achievement is satisfactory in the nursery to Year 2. In Year 3 to Year 6 it is good. The school provides good value for money.

#### The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The headteacher's very good commitment to including all the pupils in the life of the school;
- pupils are very well cared for, have very good attitudes to learning and behave very well;
- the accommodation and the environment for learning are very good;
- the pupils are given very good opportunities to enrich their learning;
- pupils' attainment in speaking and listening is well below average at Year 2 and below average at Year 6;
- pupils are insufficiently skilled at taking responsibility for their learning and working independently and collaboratively;
- a national programme of intensifying support has focused teamwork and generated an effective range of teaching styles.

In between inspections, because of the disruption caused by a major programme of refurbishment, the school requested support from the local education authority to help it to raise standards. It is only very recently that the local education authority has judged that the school no longer requires extra support. Since the last inspection, satisfactory progress has been made. Key issues have been addressed and, as a result, standards have risen since the national tests in 1999 in mathematics at Year 6. Standards have also risen in information and communication technology at Year 2 and Year 6. They have been maintained in most other subjects but have declined at Year 2 in writing and mathematics. Improvements have been made in the provision for the pupils' personal, social and health education and in ensuring that they have time to reflect on their learning. The care the school provides has improved. The quality of leadership and management is good rather than very good as identified in 1999.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
English	E	E	E	C
Mathematics	E	D	E	C
Science	E	E	E	C

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average  
Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.*

**The pupils' achievement is good.** The children achieve satisfactorily in the nursery and reception classes. In Year 1 and Year 2 the pupils' achievement is satisfactory. It is being held back, despite good teaching, by the well below average level of skills in speaking and listening. In Year 3 to Year 6 the pupils' achievement is good. This means that standards rise from the well below average point on starting in the nursery to below average in English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 6.

At the end of Year 2 standards are below average in reading and well below average in writing, mathematics and science. At the end of the reception year the children are on course to reach

standards well below the goals children are expected to reach by this point. In personal and social development standards are likely to be below the expected level.

Standards at the end of Year 6 are at the expected level in information and communication technology, religious education, art and design, design and technology, geography, games and swimming. No judgement was made on standards in history, music or overall in physical education.

**Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are good.** Strengths are in the very good provision for the pupils' moral development resulting in very good behaviour. Pupils' attitudes are also very good. The rate of the pupils' attendance is satisfactory and punctuality is good.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education provided by the school is good. Teaching and learning are of good quality.** They are satisfactory in the nursery and reception class and good in Year 1 to Year 6. Strengths are in the good procedures for assessment, effective planning, the encouragement given to the pupils and their consequent engagement in learning. The capacity of the pupils to work independently and collaboratively is under-developed.

An effective curriculum is very well enriched through a wide range of activities available outside lessons. The accommodation and resources are very good. There are very good arrangements for the care and welfare of the pupils. The school has satisfactory links with parents and good links with the community that contribute well to the pupils' learning.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Leadership and management including governance are good.** The effective leadership by the headteacher has brought together and nurtured a strong team spirit. The school is well managed and supported well by the governing body. Statutory requirements are met.

## **PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

Parents have a positive view of the school and say it is well led by the headteacher. Pupils say that the teachers are friendly, kind and helpful. As a result the pupils say they are very happy at school and very interested in working hard and learning new things.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

The most important things the school should do to improve are to:

- raise the standards of the pupils' attainment in speaking and listening\*; and
- improve the pupils' skills at taking responsibility for their learning and working independently and collaboratively\*.

\*these aspects have already been recognised by the school

## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

#### Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Standards are below average at the end of Year 6 in English, mathematics and science. Pupils achieve well in Year 3 to Year 6 and satisfactorily in the nursery to Year 2.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards have improved in mathematics at Year 6 and in information and communication technology across the school since 1999;
- pupils' achievement in Year 1 to Year 2 is inhibited by the pupils' weak skills in speaking and listening;
- standards in subjects other than English, science and mathematics are broadly at a typical level by Year 6 because of the good integrated curriculum and practical approach to learning;
- the pupils are not well enough skilled at working individually and in collaboration with others.

#### Commentary

##### *Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2004*

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	25.0 (24.2)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	25.0 (26.1)	27.0 (26.8)
science	26.5 (25.9)	28.6 (28.6)

*There were 25 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

##### *Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2004*

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	13.8 (14.1)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	12.7 (12.9)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	14.3 (14.6)	16.2 (16.3)

*There were 21 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

1. Between inspections standards have varied at Year 2 declining to well below average overall between 2002 and 2004. However, when inspection judgements are compared to 1999 standards have remained at the same broadly average level in reading but have declined in writing, mathematics and science to well below average. At Year 6 standards have improved in mathematics and remained the same in science and English with the result that standards are overall below average. Between 1999 and 2004 standards across the school were adversely affected throughout the two-year building refurbishment programme to such an extent that the local education authority was asked to step in to provide support in raising standards. The school has overcome this barrier and with the external support has begun a sea change in raising standards. As a result in Year 3 to Year 6 the pupils are achieving well. This is because the good leadership and management have brought about an effective force of teachers and support staff that is guaranteeing that the pupils make good progress. At Year 1 to Year 2 the teaching and learning, equally good, are handicapped by the pupils' weak skills of communication. As a result the pupils' achievement is satisfactory.



2. In the Foundation Stage, the children are on course to reach standards that in relation to the early learning goals are well below average. In personal development standards are likely to be below the level expected for the children's ages. No judgement was made in physical and creative development. The children's progress is directly related to the quality of teaching which is satisfactory in the nursery and reception classes. It is strongest in encouraging the children's social development which results in good achievement in this respect and helps the children to more readily adapt to the change of pace in their learning at Year 1.
3. The headteacher, together with the local education authority, has introduced the national Intensifying Support Programme across the school. The outcome of this is that targets are set to support the pupils' learning although these are not always sufficiently challenging for the higher attainers. It means that the pupils have a good understanding about what they are to learn. The target setting in mathematics has helped to raise standards at Year 6 and in English has helped to improve the pupils' achievement. In information and communication technology much improved resources and effective subject leadership have impacted well on the pupils' achievement and standards have improved from the below average levels at the last inspection to be broadly in line with the expected level for the pupils' ages at Year 2 and Year 6. Effective subject leadership and management have generally aided the raising of standards.
4. Pupils who have special educational needs achieve as well as others. They are fully included in the life of the school. The pupils' individual education plans are clearly focused on identified needs although until recently parents, pupils and carers had not made a full contribution to the process of compiling the plans.
5. Standards in subjects other than English, mathematics and science are broadly at a typical level for the pupils' ages at Year 6 because of the well-planned links between subjects and the practical approach to learning across the school. The pupils thrive on the hands-on approach to their learning and it is made even more meaningful by the growing curricular links between subjects which help the pupils to better recall their learning and to begin to apply it in a range of situations. For example, topics in history and geography are often linked to literacy.
6. The pupils have too little confidence in their learning and achievements. They need much help and assurance from adults that they are doing the right thing and thinking along the right lines. Pupils are not well enough skilled at working individually and this takes up much adult time. Neither are the pupils skilled at working in collaboration with others. Although they are often seated in groups they very infrequently work as a unit. A step forward has been made in allocating partners for discussion and this is making sure that all pupils make at least a small contribution in lessons. It is very hard work in Year 1 for the pupils to get to grips with this and they require a great deal of adult intervention just to share very simple ideas with each other.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)**

Pupils have very positive attitudes towards school and they behave very well. Their personal development is good, helped by the overall good provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This is a similar picture to that found at the last inspection. Attendance is satisfactory and punctuality is generally good for the majority of pupils.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Very good relationships help create a happy learning environment;
- In lessons there are too few opportunities for pupils to develop their confidence and independence which results in an over reliance on adults
- staff have high expectations of pupils' conduct throughout the school day; the school deals very effectively with all forms of harassment;
- pupils are encouraged to develop an insight into their feelings;

- pupils gain a good awareness of the cultural diversity of modern British society;
- improved procedures to promote regular and punctual attendance have made a significant difference.

## Commentary

7. Pupils' very good attitudes and values are central to their good personal and academic achievements. The staff have quickly and successfully established a positive climate for learning following disruptions caused by the major building and refurbishment programme. Pupils are very well motivated and enjoy learning because teachers make lessons interesting and fun. The learning mentor has introduced a range of exciting initiatives to stimulate in pupils a desire to want to come to school. Pupils' attendance has improved significantly in recent years. They clearly enjoy being in school and talk with enthusiasm about the range of activities offered. They are keen to participate in activities after school as well as those offered during the school day. In lessons, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to develop their independent skills sufficiently. This means they do not always use their initiative to do things for themselves but often seek reassurance from an adult.
8. Pupils with special educational needs have equally positive attitudes to learning and take a full and active part in lessons and experiences that the school offers. Foundation Stage staff nurture children's personal and social development well, enabling them to form trusting relationships and learn to begin to co-operate, share and take turns but many of the children find it difficult to listen and often speak out of turn.
9. The teachers set high expectations and successfully promote very good standards of behaviour through praise and encouragement as part of the overall very good provision for the pupils' moral development. Pupils have a very clear understanding of the difference between right and wrong. The 'Golden Time' reward is well liked by the pupils, motivating them to do well. Bullying is not perceived to be a problem by pupils or parents but they feel that if any form of harassment does occur, it is taken most seriously and dealt with very effectively by staff. The school is rightly proud of its low-level exclusion rate when compared to other local and similar schools. Only one pupil was excluded for a fixed period last year.

## Exclusions

### *Ethnic background of pupils*

### *Exclusions in the last school year*

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	190	1	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	4	0	0

*The table gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.*

10. Pupils get on very well together and collaborate well in play although their ability to work collaboratively on given tasks is underdeveloped. The pupils are polite and welcoming to visitors and at ease with adults. The school involves pupils in various initiatives which boost their self-esteem and confidence. The pupils are given increasing opportunities to take more responsibility for the running of the school and to contribute to its development. They understand and fulfil their responsibilities of living in a community well. They take on a range of roles and tasks such as becoming school councillors and monitors.
11. A very positive ethos in school promotes spiritual development well and gives pupils a sense of purpose and pride in their work. A good range of assemblies is well planned to promote

tolerance and understanding about moral and social issues that are relevant to the pupils. For example, during the inspection the younger pupils considered the differences and similarities between people, with the message that everyone is unique and special. A whole-school assembly helped increase pupils' awareness of racism as they learned about the Jewish Holocaust. There are good opportunities for quiet reflection for pupils to develop an insight into their own feelings. This is an improvement since the last inspection.

12. Developing pupils' multicultural awareness in a predominantly white area is considered an important school issue. Pupils gain a good understanding of their own cultural traditions and the diversity and richness of other cultures that make up British society. They learn to show respect for others' feelings, values and beliefs through subjects such as history, geography and religious education, and through special themed weeks.

**Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (93.9%) 2003/4**

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.9	School data	0.2
National data	5.1	National data	0.4

*The table gives the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.*

13. Attendance is considerably higher than at the time of the last inspection and during this last year it has improved even further. It is currently above 95 per cent, with a very low rate of unauthorised absence. The school has successfully introduced procedures for promoting regular and punctual attendance that have brought about a considerable rise in attendance year on year and reduced the once high rate of unauthorised absence to a low level. The learning mentor plays a significant part in monitoring pupils' attendance and rigorously pursuing reasons for absence. Pupils are well motivated by the class and individual awards and are involved in monitoring their own attendance weekly. Punctuality has improved and is now generally good with just a few persistent latecomers.

**QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL**

The quality of education provided is good. The quality of teaching and learning is good. The quality and range of the curriculum are good and very well extended through extra-curricular clubs. The care and welfare provided for the pupils are very good. Links with the community are good and those with parents are satisfactory.

**Teaching and learning**

The quality of teaching and learning including assessment is good. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in the Foundation Stage and good in Year 1 to Year 6.

**Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Lesson planning is clear and detailed;
- pupils are given much encouragement and become very well engaged in their learning;
- the use of targets for learning is established although they do not always cater sufficiently well for the higher attainers;
- the pupils' capacity to work independently and collaboratively is a weakness. This has been recognised by the school;
- teachers insist on high standards of behaviour from their pupils;
- support staff are very well deployed to promote the pupils' learning.

## Commentary

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 38 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
1 (3%)	8 (21%)	18 (47%)	11 (29%)	0	0	0

*The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages where 30 or more lessons are seen.*

14. The good quality of teaching and learning identified at the last inspection has been maintained. In the good or better teaching, exposition is clear and lessons are purposeful. This helps to keep the pupils motivated and involved. Good routines are established for managing the pupils and their learning. The lessons have a sense of purpose and the pupils know that they are in school to learn. A mark of the very good teaching is the particularly brisk pace. In the excellent teaching it is the imaginative context for the learning such as when the interest of Year 2 pupils was captured through the setting of pirates and shark-infested waters to bring about very good gains in the pupils' understanding of control technology. When the teaching is satisfactory it includes strengths in the relationships with pupils but weaknesses in the effectiveness of teaching methods.
15. Generally lesson planning is clear and detailed. It is used to make sure that the pupils have a good understanding of what they are to learn and plenty of opportunities are taken throughout the lessons to remind the pupils about the objective of their learning. This provides a good foundation for the pupils to assess for themselves how well they have done at the end of the lesson. Assessment is of good quality overall. The systems and processes are clear and information from day-to-day assessment clearly informs the teaching and learning and is well linked to the targets set. The marking of the pupils' work is variable and is not always sufficiently detailed or analytical. The best is diagnostic, provides clear guidance for improvement and enables the pupils to respond to the marking.
16. The class targets and lists of vocabulary form part of the very good quality displays in each classroom. The displays include many reference charts for the pupils to use and the neat and tidy classrooms provide a very conducive setting for learning. The consistency of the high quality provision in this respect is due to the way that the headteacher has implemented the programme of intensifying support and the way that the outcomes are regularly monitored. All adults involved in the teaching have high expectations of the pupils' behaviour and use the agreed rewards and sanctions consistently. This results in orderly teaching and learning and means that little time is wasted; staff and pupils are able to concentrate well on their tasks.
17. The pupils are given much praise and encouragement. They become very well engaged in their learning because of the variety of teaching styles that are used which help to attract and maintain the pupils' interest and concentration. A focus on the way in which the pupils learn has been rightly identified as the next step. This is in part to improve the pupils' capacity to work independently and in part to build up the skills of working collaboratively. Pupils need much reassurance in their learning and this takes much of the adults' time. The pupils are often content to sit and wait for resources to be given out rather than them taking responsibility for their own needs, for example. This is particularly so in physical education and in the many lessons where teachers give out books and papers rather than expecting the pupils to take on the day-to-day responsibilities for basic resources. The pupils find it difficult to share their learning and problem solving in groups and lack the skills to work as a cohesive group in tackling their learning without much adult intervention.

18. Support assistants are very well deployed to help individuals and small groups of pupils. As a result a good proportion of the pupils profit from receiving direct teaching in the middle of lessons. At the beginning and conclusion of lessons the other adults are also well deployed in assessing the pupils' responses and oral contributions. This recorded information informs the next lesson in the subject well. The skilled workforce of support staff has come about because it is fully involved in the professional development and training that the school regularly provides. Effective questioning by teachers and other adults is based on their good knowledge of the subjects they teach.
19. The quality of teaching is satisfactory in the nursery and reception classes. Planning has been recently revised and careful targets are set to support the introduction of early reading and writing skills although they have yet to fully address the development of skills in speaking and listening. The systems to check and monitor children's progress are good.
20. Pupils who have special educational needs are included effectively in lessons. In addition, smaller groups of pupils are given extra teaching according to their identified need. Planning clearly identifies the inclusion of pupils in lessons and effective teamwork between teachers and support assistants ensures that pupils achieve as well as others.
21. Parents agree that teaching is good and that children are expected to work hard. The pupils wholeheartedly agree that they learn new things in lessons, and that teachers show them how to improve their work and listen to their ideas.

### **The curriculum**

The quality of the curriculum is good. The school provides a very good range of additional activities that adds enrichment to the curriculum. The accommodation and resources for learning are very good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- A stimulating programme of visits, visitors and additional activities enriches the basic curriculum;
- all pupils are fully included in all aspects of provision;
- the implementation of the Intensifying Support Programme is impacting positively on the work of the school;
- good links are made across a range of subjects which broadens the pupils' understanding;
- accommodation is very good;
- the provision of opportunities to improve speaking and listening skills is under-developed. This has already been identified by the school;
- provision for outdoor play in the Foundation Stage has yet to be fully improved.

### **Commentary**

22. The curriculum has been maintained at an effective level overall since the last inspection although there has been good improvement in the development of information and communication technology, leading to a rise in standards. The provision for the pupils' personal, social and health education including relationships and sex education and drugs awareness has also improved and is good. The school has attained the Healthy Schools award in 2004 showing its commitment to encouraging in the pupils a good understanding of issues related to their health. This is much appreciated by the parents.
23. A good range of visits and visitors enriches the learning opportunities for the pupils and the parents are pleased with the extra-curricular provision. Older pupils gain great benefit from a residential visit to an outdoor centre; this has been particularly beneficial in raising the self-esteem of the girls in Year 6. Music projects, multi-cultural events and planned visits by the

police and fire service enhance the pupils' awareness and the responsibility of living in a community. The breakfast club and after-school clubs widen the experience of pupils. The drama club draws a large number of pupils and provides them with excellent opportunities not only to become actors but also to gain confidence in performing in front of each other. The whole range of visits, visitors and additional activities not only stimulates an interest in learning but also makes a strong contribution to the pupils' personal development and their understanding of citizenship.

24. There is a strong commitment by the headteacher and the governing body to including all pupils in the school's provision. This can be clearly seen in the provision made for pupils who have special educational needs and in the work of the learning mentor. The pupils who have special educational needs are fully included in all aspects of activities. The teachers plan work to match the needs of the pupils and enable them to achieve as well as other pupils in the class. The work of the classroom assistants in supporting pupils is subtle and unobtrusive so that those pupils who need help are not made to feel in any way different. In every aspect of the life of the school, teachers carefully structure activities to include all pupils.
25. Throughout the school teachers actively seek ways of linking the different subjects of the curriculum effectively. This enables pupils to see that being able to write or draw is not just a part of English or art but has a useful purpose in other subjects. By recognising the value of particular skills it makes using them even more enjoyable. In Year 2 the pupils spent part of the week exploring a modern version of the story of the wolf and the three pigs. The unit of work was drawn to a dramatic and amusing end as Mr Wolf was interviewed on a mock television documentary and the class were the audience participating in the question time. Artwork is often used to enhance aspects of work in other subjects and information and communication technology is making a powerful contribution to many subjects, particularly with the introduction of the interactive boards.
26. The Intensifying Support Programme is making a good contribution to the curriculum and parents agree with this. Through the commitment of the headteacher to the value of this programme it now provides a strong focus for the work of all staff and unifies the work of the school and the teachers' approach to learning. The quality of the learning environment is very good and aids the pupils' learning through very clear targets and charts for reference. Planning addresses the different strands of the programme and in lessons pupils enjoy and gain real benefit from knowing what the learning objectives are.
27. The headteacher and the governing body have worked tirelessly to improve the school building and now to their credit the school is housed in very good accommodation. Pupils can enjoy spacious facilities of very good quality where the tasteful displays of pupils' work, books, fabrics and artefacts create a warm and stimulating learning environment. This is much appreciated by pupils and parents who are proud of the school.
28. Pupils enter the school with very under-developed skills in speaking and listening and these continue to pose a problem as they move through the school. Many pupils lack confidence and therefore are reluctant to speak out. The school has yet to thoroughly explore ways in which more opportunities can be provided for pupils to engage in conversation and discussion with each other and with adults.
29. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is good with some enjoyable and relevant experiences provided by the effective use of visitors to the nursery and reception class. The school has quite rightly identified the need to extend the provision in the outdoor area because although the Foundation Stage has an outdoor area its use is restricted to fine weather.

## Care, guidance and support

The school makes very good provision to ensure pupils' care, welfare, health and safety. It provides pupils with good academic help and guidance and a high level of personal support. There are good arrangements in place to involve pupils in the school's work and development.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers and other staff provide very good personal support for pupils and this helps them to feel safe and secure;
- health and safety procedures are rigorous and all staff are vigilant in their care of pupils;
- well-targeted academic help and guidance make a positive contribution to pupils' good achievement and personal development;
- pupils take a good interest in their school because there are effective opportunities for them to have a say in how it should be run and where things can be improved.

## Commentary

30. Staff continue to care for the pupils very effectively. The very good and trusting relationships, inherent throughout the school, enable staff and pupils to work very well together. Pupils find their teachers kind and helpful and feel they are looked after very well. The good-natured approach of staff is instrumental in ensuring that pupils feel safe and happy and want to learn and enables them to achieve well. This helps boost pupils' self-esteem and confidence. Staff are well informed in matters relating to child protection. The concern for pupils' welfare extends to the promotion of healthy lifestyles and the health education in the school is good. Pupils are encouraged to drink plenty of water and encouraged to keep fit so they are physically well prepared for learning. Since the last inspection the school has improved its programme for personal, social and health education and this makes a good contribution to the health and general well-being of the pupils. The breakfast club is very well attended by pupils. It encourages good social skills and ensures the pupils arrive punctually and start the day with a good healthy breakfast.
31. Nursery staff make home visits to prospective new entrants to get to know the families and identify needs. Pre-visits and gradual entry into the nursery help to smooth the transition between home and school well.
32. Arrangements for health and safety are very good. Regular inspections of the building and equipment are undertaken and appropriate records are maintained. Daily routines are very well planned and pupils are carefully supervised when at work or at play. On a practical day-to-day level the staff and caretaker are vigilant in checking the building to ensure a safe working environment for the children and promptly deal with any hazards found.
33. The school acknowledges pupils' successes well by celebrating and rewarding those who have made good gains in their academic and personal progress. Pupils who may require additional support are quickly identified and given additional help and guidance. Where necessary individual education plans are in place. The learning mentor is available to help specific children with personal, social, behavioural or emotional concerns that may be hindering their education. As a result the children are helped to overcome their problems and are able to concentrate on their learning. Pupils joining the school during the year are quickly assessed and their needs met.
34. Information about pupils' academic achievements is used well to guide future learning. Staff collect a lot of information about pupils' academic performance and provide suitable programmes to boost their achievement. The older pupils are very positive about the revision classes and feel that they are well prepared for their forthcoming tests. Pupils are involved

well in their own learning and this helps them to gain a good understanding of how they are doing and how to improve their work. The older pupils spoken to during the inspection feel their targets are helpful and give them something to work towards. However, the challenge for the higher attainers is not always well matched to their needs.

35. Pupils are actively encouraged to contribute towards improving the school. They know that their views matter and the school will try to act upon what they say. The school council helps pupils to learn about democratic decision taking and makes a good contribution to life in school. For example, the work of the council was instrumental in the introduction of the healthy tuck shop and a healthier menu for school dinners.

### **Partnership with parents, other schools and the community**

The partnership with parents is satisfactory. Links with the community and other schools are good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Parents have positive views about the school; however, there is more to be done to encourage parental involvement in their children's learning;
- parents are well informed about the school life and the progress their children make but the targets on the annual reports are not written in a very helpful way;
- links with the community and other schools greatly enrich the pupils' learning.

### **Commentary**

36. Parents have positive views about the school and the education it provides for their children. The level of satisfaction expressed by parents through the questionnaire and at the meeting prior to the inspection was high.
37. Parental involvement in their child's learning and the life of the school is satisfactory. Meetings which provide information about their children's progress and events where children are directly involved are very well attended. Very few parents help regularly in school but there are many who will offer assistance on educational visits and assist with specific events when asked. Curriculum workshops have been offered for various subjects and open days for parents to visit the school at work but parental response is low. Although there is no fund-raising committee, parents are generous with their support of the events that the school organises. The carers and toddler group held in school is a good way of getting to know parents from an early stage. The learning mentor is a useful point of contact for parents and has several ideas on how to develop parental involvement.
38. Parents are kept fully informed about school events and issues. They have ample opportunities to meet with staff, formally at consultation sessions and informally at the beginning and end of each day. The governors' annual written report to parents is very well presented and provides a wealth of information about school life. A summary of what pupils have learnt and have done throughout the year make interesting reading. The school provides some useful information about what is taught and how parents can help. Annual written reports to parents give a good summary of pupils' achievements but the targets for future learning are not written in a way that would be helpful for parents to support their children's learning at home.
39. Parents of children who have special educational needs are informed about their progress and the school has recently begun sharing with them their children's individual educational plans. The co-ordinator is trying to develop more parental involvement and support for their child's learning but response is not very forthcoming.



40. The school makes good use of local resources in terms of working with people and visiting places to bring learning alive for the pupils and provide meaningful first-hand experiences. Valuable links with a large-scale local business which sponsors specific projects are very beneficial to pupils' learning and personal development. For example, funds provided have helped purchase water coolers and resources for literacy and numeracy, and support the drug awareness programme. The school works very closely with other schools within the local group, sharing curricular issues and staff expertise, which helps improve the quality of teaching and contributes well to the pupils' learning.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management are good overall. The leadership of the headteacher is good and the quality of leadership and management provided by subject leaders is effective. Governance is good and statutory requirements are met.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher and the governing body, supported by the local education authority, have led the school through a period of considerable turmoil and change to create a vibrant and inclusive school;
- curricular innovation has led to a more focused approach to teaching and learning;
- the school has a committed team of teachers and support staff;
- monitoring by subject leaders is good;
- finances are well managed;
- links with parents are limited.

### **Commentary**

41. Swarcliffe Primary School previously occupied the buildings of a former middle school. Not only were the buildings too large for the school but they had passed their useful working life and were in a sad state of repair. Replacement of these buildings with the current school involved a long period of disruption for the school. This particularly adversely affected the pupils who need consistent routines, an established environment and freedom from change. This period was a real challenge for the school and the headteacher and governors had to work hard to maintain the ethos of a primary school among all the disruption. The local education authority supported the school and suggested strategies that would minimise the effects of the re-building programme. It is to the credit of all involved that there is now a new school with an exciting learning environment where pupils have very positive attitudes to learning and where everyone is fully included in every aspect of school life.
42. As part of the strategy to keep the school on course during this period of change the headteacher was instrumental in introducing to the school the Intensifying Support Programme. This is a government-sponsored programme aimed at raising standards and improving teaching and learning. The results of this programme have been effective in providing a focus for all teachers and clear aims for the new school. Its impact can be seen in the quality of teachers' planning and particularly in the creating of an enhanced environment for learning. Pupils enjoy lessons that have a very clear purpose and where support staff are very well employed to provide assistance for pupils who need help. Classrooms are lively and rich learning environments and communal areas, through high quality displays, reflect the interesting work the pupils are engaged in. Teaching resources are good and the recently introduced interactive boards are adding a new and exciting dimension to teaching.
43. Teachers and support staff work extremely well together and have a clear determination to raise standards through the school. One of the strengths of the school is the use of common approaches to particular aspects of teaching and learning. A very clear example of this is the management of the pupils' behaviour. All staff consistently implement the code for behaviour

and as a result of this common method pupils' behaviour is very good in classrooms and in the general areas of the school. In a school where there are a number of pupils with behavioural problems this is of great credit to the school and to the team approach.

44. Monitoring by subject leaders is good and gives them a clear picture of the strengths and the weaknesses in each subject. Subject leaders monitor and evaluate teaching and learning, teachers' planning is scrutinised in both the long term and the short term, and the quality of assessments and the progress pupils are making are regularly reviewed. Central to the role of the subject leaders in monitoring progress and the quality of education is the scrutiny of pupils' work in each subject. This gives them a very clear view of the progress pupils are making, the quality of presentation and how well teachers' marking gives pupils information about how they can improve. Subject leaders develop action plans which link in with and form part of the whole school improvement plan. The co-ordinator for special educational needs is well organised and effective in ensuring that individual educational plans are of good quality and that the pupils who have special educational needs make the same progress as others in their class.
45. Although links with parents are developing, they are limited. Good links are made with the parents of children coming into the nursery through the home visits and letters keep parents informed about events in school as their children move from class to class. Reports are thorough, although the targets are not always explained well. There are regular meetings with parents about their children's progress. However, there are very few parents involved in the day-to-day life of the school and thoroughly supporting the pupils' learning.
46. Finances are managed well. Falling rolls have created problems for the school as income has decreased but effective plans have been put in place by the headteacher and the governing body to minimise the impact of this. The principles of best value are consistently applied across all aspects of the life of the school, leading to the efficient and effective use of resources. The school spends a broadly average amount on each pupil's education. The gain pupils make from this level of spending represents good value for money.

***Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004***

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	556,400
Total expenditure	556,610
Expenditure per pupil	2,553

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	38,430
Balance carried forward to the next	38,220

## PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS AND COURSES

### AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

47. The provision in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory which is not as good as it was in 1999. The quality of teaching and learning is now satisfactory rather than good. Since the last inspection there has been good improvement in the accommodation and the reception class has now access to an outdoor area. The school recognises the need to develop the curriculum for outdoor play in the nursery and the reception class and it is currently highlighted in the Foundation Stage action plan. Children's attainment on entry to the nursery is well below what is typically expected for their age. A significantly large proportion of children have impoverished communication and language skills. Whilst this is similar to the last inspection the nursery entry data shows limited and declining social and educational skills over a number of years. This results in standards well below those typically expected of the children's ages at the end of the Foundation Stage and adversely impacts on attainment in Year 1 and Year 2.
48. Physical and creative development was not inspected in depth. In **physical development** outdoor activity is satisfactorily planned overall. There is a suitable range of resources including large climbing apparatus and a range of wheeled toys to support co-operative play. Planned activities provide satisfactory opportunities to help children improve their balance and to work at different heights. In one reception lesson in the hall the adults worked together closely to support children's ability to send and receive a plastic ball with control although the poor listening and concentration skills of a number of children restricted their progress.
49. In **creative development** planning provides opportunities for children to take part in an interesting range of activities including the opportunity to take part in and perform in school celebrations. Opportunities to paint, cut, stick and model are readily available in the nursery and the reception classes. In the nursery small groups of children closely observed a snail and, with the patient and effective support of the adults, increased their ability to roll clay to make a spiral to represent its body. In the reception class paintings of a sunflower in the style of Van Gogh demonstrated some careful use of ready-mixed paint. The use of this medium does not afford the children sufficient opportunity to explore the skill of mixing and applying paint.

### PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in personal, social and emotional development is **good**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Home visits provide an opportunity for parents to become partners in their children's learning although there are missed opportunities to capitalise on this sufficiently in the reception class;
- good relationships and clear planning strongly promote and help to develop children's ability to follow rules and routines.

#### Commentary

50. Children achieve well because the teaching and learning are of good quality; however, because of their low starting point, children are unlikely to achieve the goals set for them by the end of the reception year. Effective teamwork by the staff ensures that the children settle well into both the nursery and the reception class. Each class presents an ordered and calm atmosphere with rules and routines displayed and implemented effectively. Parents and carers develop mutual trust with nursery staff through a well-established programme of home visits. Parents are warmly welcomed each morning in the nursery and invited to share in an activity before leaving their children. This provides a good opportunity to develop constructive

relationships with parents and share knowledge and views about their child's development. In the reception class sensitive support and use of positive praise and encouragement help children to understand the importance of careful listening and co-operation with others. Children are effectively encouraged to take turns at speaking and to listen to each other. Most children need to be reminded to listen and many do not have the ability to express an idea or opinion without patient and sensitive intervention. In the reception class children are encouraged to leave their parents at the classroom door and whilst this supports their independence there is presently very little time allocated to build on the good foundations for parental support and involvement started in the nursery.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

Provision in communication, language and literacy is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Staff in the nursery and reception class promote early language development satisfactorily but there is insufficient opportunity for parental involvement with their children's early reading skills;
- planning is detailed and includes target groups for learning but additional practical resources are not always readily available to support early reading and writing skills;
- staff record and monitor children's progress effectively.

### **Commentary**

51. The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory and although children achieve soundly they are on course to attain well below the standards typically expected by the end of the reception year. Achievement is satisfactory over time. Children often have very immature speech patterns and little conversation on arrival at school. Assessments of children's progress are used to plan small groups to target early literacy skills. Older nursery children, with the patient encouragement of an adult, tried hard to increase their understanding of words beginning with the letter 'l' and because the group was small the adult could target individual children's difficulties in associating letter sounds with words. In this instance too few practical resources had been planned to help them to develop this skill more quickly. Adults in the nursery model language for thinking well and encourage children constantly to talk about their play for instance but speech for many children is either immature or poor and gains are often small. In the reception class useful assessments of children's progress are used to build on the skills gained in the nursery. Lessons are introduced clearly and listening is encouraged by the good teamwork between the adults. Skills of reading and writing are planned satisfactorily. Some children found difficulty in retelling the story of Jack and the Beanstalk whilst only higher attaining children could suggest an alternative ending to the story. The teacher's good use of focus questions increased the children's ability to sequence the story but insufficient word prompts were available to support children's independent writing skills. Reading books are taken home regularly but parents are not encouraged to comment on their children's progress nor are there any diagnostic comments in order to guide parents' understanding of early reading skills.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Careful questioning and encouragement support early counting skills;
- counting rhymes and games provide purposeful mathematical activity but the impact is sometimes lost when other tasks are insufficiently well matched to children's needs.

## Commentary

52. Children enter the nursery with little mathematical language and need many reminders to look and listen carefully during simple practical tasks. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Day-to-day assessment is used in the nursery to plan some effective teaching for small target groups of children. Teachers give good encouragement to younger children to count and match numbers to five using brightly coloured resources linked to the current topic. Most children needed much support to complete the task successfully but one or two children were challenged to extend their skills by 'adding on' to the original number and finding the correct numeral. Children benefited considerably from working in a small group and the practical and colourful resources provided helped children to increase their concentration and application. The teaching of daily mathematics lessons in the reception class includes the introduction of clear learning objectives although the teacher does not extend this to help children to understand how they can improve. Children enjoyed singing and playing the game 'Ten in the Bed' and initially they concentrated well. The teacher's use of good focus questions lost impact and challenge for higher attaining children because whiteboards to record answers, for instance, were not available and so concentration waned and children's progress was slowed. Assessments of children's progress are used well to target next steps in learning and children achieve satisfactorily over time.

## KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children enjoy using computers;
- interesting topics enhance this area of learning but planning to include the use of the outdoor areas is under-developed.

## Commentary

53. Children achieve satisfactorily in relation to their prior attainment. They are on course to attain well below the standards typically expected by the end of the reception year. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. In the nursery careful planning, as part of a topic on small creatures, gave a small group of children sound opportunities to develop their language for thinking. They were engrossed, but needed much adult support to help them think about how the snails moved, for instance. Similarly, the teacher's effective questioning gave children the confidence to explore how magnets worked whilst other children engaged in simple role-play in a hospital scenario. Children enjoyed digging for small creatures in the small outdoor garden and made immature marks to record their discoveries. Planning does not yet provide a sufficiently wide range of first-hand experiences to fully exploit the outdoor environment. In the reception class effective use of the computer suite gave children a good opportunity to practise their computer skills. Children were eager to get started so the adult briskly recapitulated on prior learning before letting the children work in pairs to log on to the reading program. A few higher attaining children could do this without much support and were proud to demonstrate this. They made more rapid progress than others who could not share and who easily lost concentration.

## **SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2**

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **good**.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Although standards are below average the pupils achieve well;
- speaking and listening skills are weak and have an adverse effect on the standards pupils achieve;
- teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to develop literacy skills in other subjects;
- pupils have very good attitudes to English;
- the quality of teaching in English is good;
- target setting is making a positive contribution to pupils' progress.

#### **Commentary**

54. When pupils enter Year 1 the majority of them have communication and language skills that are well below average and in all the years there is a significant number of pupils who find learning difficult. The pupils work hard and standards are below average at the end of Year 2 in reading as they were at the last inspection. Teachers and support staff are particularly skilled at teaching reading in small groups. In writing standards are well below average which is a decline since the last inspection. The quality of teaching is good and pupils achieve well in reading although satisfactorily in writing and speaking, being held back by the low levels of skills at speaking clearly and using a wide vocabulary. Pupils continue to work hard in Years 3 to 6. They achieve well and standards have risen to be below average by Year 6. This is the same level as the standards shown in the 1999 national tests. Their well below average attainment in the national tests in 2002 to 2004 at the end of Year 6 does not reflect the good, and sometimes very good, teaching seen during the inspection, or the quality of work found in lessons and in pupils' books. The difference between test results and class work occurs because many pupils lack the confidence to apply the skills they have acquired in lessons, to test situations, and sometimes have problems recalling key parts of their learning. Disruption caused through the building refurbishment programme has also taken its toll. Nonetheless in the national tests in 2004 the pupils reached an average level when their results were compared to schools whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2. Pupils who have special educational needs achieve at the same rate as other pupils due to the quality of support they receive.
55. Speaking and listening skills improve considerably year on year but they still remain a barrier to pupils achieving well in tests. Well below average speech at Year 2 and a restricted range of language inhibit their ability to express themselves, not just in English but when answering questions in mathematics and science. Standards are below average at Year 6. The school is very aware of this significant weakness and the introduction of using a partner for discussion is beginning to improve pupils' confidence. Discussing ideas with another pupil is giving them time to formulate their responses and to have their contributions to larger group discussions ready.
56. In spite of the language difficulties many pupils have, and their lack of confidence and self-esteem, pupils have very good attitudes to their work in English and have considerable enthusiasm for the subject. In lessons they are keen to learn and when asked to move into work groups they do it quickly without any fuss and mostly just get on with their work. Pupils in Year 6 were enthusiastic about reading and could talk about favourite books and authors and how they used the school and local library. This enthusiasm for learning is indicative of the stimulating curriculum in English.

57. The quality of teaching and learning is good and at times very good which is the same as at the last inspection. Lessons are well planned and pupils enjoy the fact that the learning objectives are shared with them and they know what they are expected to achieve. Relationships between pupils and teachers are very good and this enables the lessons to have a strong element of fun and enjoyment without losing the thread of learning. The pace of lessons is brisk and this keeps the attention of the pupils and keeps them involved. Questioning skills are good and provide opportunities for pupils to practise their speaking and listening skills. The introduction of a visual 'story mountain' format has provided pupils with a secure basis on which to plan a story and in Year 4 some pupils were writing the fourth page of their story and thoroughly enjoying the task.
58. Pupils' work is assessed thoroughly and the results are then used to produce group targets for learning. The targets are referred to at the beginning of all language activities so that the pupils are very familiar with the target and have it in the front of their minds whatever the task. This is having a positive effect on the pupils' learning and is giving them a clear focus in their work although the challenge for the higher attainers is not always spot on.
59. The leadership and management of the subject are good. A key feature of the work of the subject leader is the monitoring of the outcomes of pupils' learning, which includes scrutiny of the work they have produced. This provides a very clear picture of how well pupils are achieving, how consistently well work is being marked and which areas of the subject need to receive a higher profile. All aspects of the subject, including resources, are very well managed.

### **Language and literacy across the curriculum**

60. The use of language and literacy across the curriculum is good. There are frequent opportunities for pupils to read and write in other subjects, particularly history, geography and science. For example, in geography pupils wrote a letter to a girl who lives in the Indian village of Chembakolli, replying to a letter received. In history pupils wrote about the problems Henry VIII had with his wives and the solutions he adopted. Careful attention is given to providing a wide range of opportunities for reading and writing across all subjects. Speaking and listening are developing satisfactorily. There is good use of information and communication technology in the development of pupils' language and literacy skills. Word processing is used to enable pupils to draft their work and produce fine copies in print.

### **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Strengths are in the pupils' grasp of methods of calculation;
- skills at solving problems are under-developed;
- the subject is well led and provides an effective system for tracking pupils' progress and setting targets for improvement.

#### **Commentary**

61. The standards attained by pupils in national tests at the end of Year 2 in 2004 were well below the national average and below average when compared with pupils in similar schools. In the national tests of the same year for pupils at Year 6 standards were below average nationally and when compared to results in schools with similar eligibility for free school meals. They were average when the pupils' results were compared to those in schools whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2. The inspection judgement is that standards are well

below average at Year 2 and below average at Year 6. This represents good improvement at Year 6 from the well below average standards in 1999 when mathematics was identified as a key area for improvement. However, it shows a decline at Year 2 where standards are adversely affected by the pupils' limited skills at speaking and using a mathematical vocabulary. Importantly the quality of teaching and learning is good across the school. It brings about good achievement from Year 3 to Year 6. In Year 1 and Year 2 the pupils' weak skills at speaking and listening adversely affect their overall achievement.

62. The subject leader has guided the school well in overcoming historical factors that, between inspections, have adversely affected the pupils' achievements. For example, improved basic resources and a clear stepped approach to teaching calculation have resulted in the pupils' skills at mental and written calculation becoming a relative strength in all year groups. The pupils are well taught to use a good range of computation methods and year on year they broaden their understanding and knowledge of number and algebra. This is helped well by the many opportunities the pupils are given to explain their thinking at the beginning of lessons before they then have time to practise their calculations in independent tasks. The pupils who have special educational needs are included well.
63. The whole-school approach to setting targets based on a thorough analysis of data from tests and other assessments also underpins the pupils' achievements well. Teachers and support staff are clear about what it is the pupils need to learn next and which pupils require extra help to ensure they meet the targets.
64. The effective teaching and learning in Year 1 to Year 6 are based on clear planning and helpful assessment. A good range of examples is provided and resources are used well. In a lesson in Year 3 and Year 4 very good use of an interactive presentation provided pupils with much help in identifying lines of symmetry as well as an appreciation of mathematics in nature when they viewed shells and the faces of animals to find symmetrical patterns. In a lesson in Year 1 very good resources were used to help the pupils come to a better understanding of the value of particular coins. The initial and concluding plenaries are well managed and support staff are well deployed throughout to bring about success in the pupils' learning. The deployment of the teaching assistants ranges from the provision of individual support to enable pupils to contribute to whole class discussion through to leading group work so that pupils have plenty of opportunity to receive direct teaching. However, a relative weakness in the teaching is the development of independence in the pupils' learning. As a result pupils have too little capacity to be self-sufficient in their learning, often being over-reliant on adult help throughout a lesson.
65. The pupils' ability to apply their skills to solve mathematical problems is a weakness. This stems from their generally weak skills at communication, lack of confidence in speaking out and their lack of independence. The pupils need much guidance from adults. Teachers present problems to the pupils in a challenging and methodical way, helping them to come to terms with applying their calculation skills successfully. This was the case, for example, in Year 2, where the teacher carefully helped the pupils to solve a problem by identifying easy steps and the correct mathematical operation required to find the solution. The good quality teaching was lively and provided a logical way for the pupils to tackle the problem and had high expectations that all would succeed.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

66. The pupils' mathematical skills are used well in other subjects because of the links made through planning. For example, Year 6 pupils revised their understanding of graphs during a lesson in mathematics and then applied their knowledge in a science lesson finding out about thermal insulators.



## SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Clear learning objectives give a good start to lessons and so pupils achieve well;
- monitoring and tracking of pupils' progress support a whole school thrust to raise standards although pupils' low level of communication skills adversely affects their progress to higher levels;
- pupils enjoy scientific investigations but have too little opportunity to develop independence in setting up their own experiments.

### Commentary

67. Pupils, including those who have special educational needs, achieve well, particularly so in relation to their starting points, because of good teaching. Careful tracking of pupils' progress shows that standards are steadily improving across the school and pupils' work now shows more age-related expectations. The quality of teaching is good.
68. In the national tests and assessments in 2004 standards were well below the national average at Year 2 and Year 6. Recent changes provide a whole-school approach to targeting skills such as investigation, questioning and problem solving that are slowly beginning to impact on pupils' attainment. Currently more pupils in Year 2 are attaining the expected level than before although their low level of literacy skills still restricts more accurate explanations and use of technical language. This results in too few pupils reaching the higher levels and standards when compared nationally are well below average. However, rigorous monitoring and careful tracking show accelerated progress by Year 6. The majority of pupils in Year 6 are predicted to gain the nationally expected level in the national tests despite the high proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and pupils who have behavioural difficulties in this class. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher levels still remains low so standards are likely to be below average nationally. Overall standards have been maintained from 1999 when national data showed that standards at Year 6 were below the national average at the expected level and fewer pupils than in most schools reached the higher level. Improvement has been satisfactory.
69. Generally pupils' impoverished speaking and listening skills and lack of prior experience mean they have too little information to draw on in lessons but nevertheless pupils' attitudes to science are very good. They clearly enjoy the subject and show a burgeoning confidence in their ability to succeed. In a lively discussion Year 6 pupils praised the adults for the extra support given to them in the form of revision and small group support, for instance. "We have been through everything and we have learnt to interpret data from charts and put it into sentences and questions. We have 'study walls' so that we see and we know," they clearly explained. Curricular planning is rigorous and much is done to help pupils to succeed. Higher attaining pupils have a good grasp of the investigative process for instance, express their ideas clearly and show a wider knowledge and understanding.
70. Teachers and classroom assistants work effectively together to improve pupils' communication of scientific thinking and their ability to record experiments accurately. The detailed planning, good introductions and effective questions for instance are consistent features of lessons. In a good lesson, pupils in Year 1 came to a better understanding of testing, predicting and explaining in an investigation involving magnetism. Very good behaviour and attitudes and the use of paired discussion provided a very happy and purposeful learning atmosphere. Similarly in Year 2 and Year 4 lessons the teachers' effective introductions gave pupils a clear focus to the lesson, so that pupils knew what they were

expected to learn and this provided them with the opportunity to assess their own progress. This is not always followed up sufficiently well in the marking of pupils' work and there are missed opportunities to support self-assessment by commenting on how pupils can improve further.

71. In a very good Year 6 lesson, planning, organisation and good relationships between adults and pupils maximised the opportunities for pupils to consolidate and increase their knowledge, skills and understanding of thermal insulators. The very effective use of an interactive whiteboard using a virtual experiment at the end of the lesson gave pupils the opportunity to check on their predictions, practise their numeracy and literacy skills and extend their technical vocabulary.
72. In lessons particular attention is quite rightly paid to developing pupils' skills of recording observations, predictions and explanations and their use of scientific vocabulary. However, this sometimes leaves too little time for fully developing pupils' independence in planning and organising their own practical investigations.
73. The subject is well led and managed and the curriculum is planned effectively from the nursery onwards. Careful tracking and regular monitoring show that younger pupils are steadily improving their recording skills and older pupils their questioning skills. The use of information and communication technology has yet to be fully developed across the school. Where the new interactive whiteboards are being used science lessons are enhanced and this is helping to build on pupils' knowledge as well as facilitating scientific study effectively. Pupils' confidence and self-esteem, particularly for those pupils who have special educational needs, is promoted well by the rigorous assessment of their progress and the systems put in place to increase their achievement. A clear action plan highlights areas for improvement.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

Provision in information and communication technology is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are in line with national expectations;
- the school has successfully rectified weaknesses identified in the last report;
- teachers have the knowledge, understanding and confidence to teach skills well;
- information and communication technology is used well in the computer suite to support other subjects although the use of the computers in the classrooms is limited.

### **Commentary**

74. The pupils are achieving well and most are attaining nationally expected standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Standards are much higher than at the time of the last inspection. Pupils are now learning more effectively because since the time of the last inspection, the school has greatly improved its resources and facilities for teaching the subject. Teachers now have the necessary programs and the equipment to teach all aspects of the curriculum very thoroughly. Pupils have well planned opportunities to use a good range of equipment that includes good quality computers, programmable toys and, in class, interactive boards. Pupils of all abilities are achieving well in relation to their very limited experience of information and communication technology when they first come to school. Substantial improvements have been made to provision, teaching and learning since the last inspection.
75. The quality of teaching is good and, on occasion, excellent. This is also an improvement since the last inspection. The improvement has come about because teachers have successfully undertaken a range of training and received effective advice and support from the successful subject leader. Teachers structure sessions very carefully and demonstrate new skills and

techniques effectively for the pupils, making very good use of all the resources available to them to engage pupils' interest and involve them in the lesson.

76. A strong feature of the teaching and learning is the attitude of the pupils to their work and the absolute confidence with which they use the computers and other equipment. For example, the youngest pupils took their places at the computers in the computer suite without hesitation or any fuss. They logged on, used the mouse to find the correct program and then proceeded to enter information into a database. The teacher had time for individual teaching as the pupils helped each other and got to grips with their work. Pupils' keenness to be actively involved and to share their understanding with each other improves the quality of their learning. The support of classroom assistants helped those pupils who had special educational needs to make the same progress as other pupils.
77. The new computer suite is an excellent facility and is used to very good effect for all the classes in the school. Classroom computers are not used as effectively to support pupils' learning with many lost opportunities to engage the pupils in extra practice and learning.
78. The subject leader has done a good job in raising the profile of information and communication technology. She brings considerable expertise to the role and has been instrumental in raising the confidence of teachers and level of skills in using the new interactive boards, so that curriculum leadership is judged as good. Resources for the subject are improving all the time.

### **Information and communication technology across the curriculum**

79. Teachers and pupils use information and communication technology well in other subjects. Links with literacy are very good, with younger pupils using word processing to retell traditional stories while the older pupils put together a multi-media presentation to support their topic work. Information and communication technology is widely used to collect and represent information, develop data bases and use them to extract information. As an extension of their artwork pupils design their own tropical fish on the computer and then re-size them and flip the images to change them. Information and communication technology supports a rich variety of experiences.

### **HUMANITIES**

80. In **history** there was insufficient evidence to support overall judgements about provision, standards or the quality of teaching and learning. The scrutiny of pupils' work, teachers' planning, classroom displays and discussions with pupils showed that there is a satisfactory curriculum in place. It is evident that visits to places of interest and the use of good quality artefacts bring the subject to life and engage the interest of the pupils. In discussion pupils in Year 6 could recall many of the things they had learnt in history and they had a sound knowledge of the past. Pupils' workbooks showed very clear links with their work in literacy. Pupils in Year 3 had produced their own book about Egypt and pupils in Year 6 were involved in quite advanced work on the computers building up a multi-media presentation about the Greeks that included using animated illustrations. Work in history is carefully monitored by the subject leader and the work pupils produce is scrutinised to ensure they make good progress.

### **Geography**

Provision in geography is **good**.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good use is made of practical work and visits to places of interest including the local area;
- resources for geography are used well;

- good links are made with other areas of the curriculum;
- weak speaking skills inhibit pupils' progress.

## Commentary

81. Standards in geography are in line with those expected for pupils nationally at Year 6. This is a similar picture to that reported at the last inspection. The pupils achieve well which is an improvement since the last inspection. Teaching and learning are of good quality and have also improved since the last inspection. The well-planned lessons interest and engage the pupils. A wide variety of teaching methods ensures that pupils' interest is maintained and that the pace of lessons is brisk. Pupils' attitudes to the subject are good and all pupils, including those who have special educational needs, achieve well.
82. Throughout the school good use is made of practical experiences in order to give the pupils' learning more meaning. Pupils study the local area and use maps to identify where Swarcliffe is in relation to other places and to identify that it is a part of Leeds. This builds on the work of the youngest pupils who have made simple maps of their routes to school and are able to identify particular places on route. Older pupils prepare for their visit to Whitby by studying specific features of the town and where it is located, what it is famous for and the kind of work done by the people who live there. As well as studying features of the town the pupils work out the best route to get there using their maps and their experience of mapping routes. The study of water has its starting point in the school and the pupils keep a diary of the different ways in which they use water during the day. Practical experiences not only give more meaning to the work but also provide the pupils with opportunities to broaden their own experiences, which are often quite limited.
83. Teachers use a good range of resources for geography, bringing alive areas of learning where it is not possible to pay a visit. Pupils comparing Swarcliffe with Chembakolli, a village in India, watch a video which gives them access to what the village is like. They are able to identify similarities and differences with their own lives and are immediately surprised to find that the school in Chembakolli has a school council, just like their own. Year 2 pupils use a range of photographs to identify the features of seaside towns in different parts of the world and this involves them in using a map and deciding which locations they prefer. Artefacts and books are used well, linking to displays of the topic they are studying.
84. Good links are made with other subjects, particularly literacy and information and communication technology, and teachers are careful in their planning to identify these links. Pupils are encouraged to use books for research and, when they are writing, emphasis is placed on the quality of the vocabulary they use. In one lesson direct links were made with the work they were doing in literacy on using 'premiership words', those words that added more meaning to the text. Pupils needed much help in this because vocabulary linked to the subject was not easily at their finger tips. The work they had done keeping their diaries on water usage was transferred onto a spreadsheet and this was used to help them to analyse the amount of water used for different purposes.
85. Work is carefully monitored by the effective subject leader and the work pupils produced is scrutinised to ensure they make good progress.

## Religious education

Provision in religious education is **good**.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Effective planning helps pupils to study major world faiths and ensures that all elements of the subject are taught progressively through the school;

- pupils' interest and understanding are increased when resources are used effectively, but there is not always sufficient opportunity to support discussion and extend ideas.

## Commentary

86. Pupils' attainment at the end of Year 6 is broadly within the standard expected and similar to that reported at the last inspection. Improvement is satisfactory. Pupils' achievement is good because teachers and classroom assistants work together effectively to develop the pupils' positive attitudes to learning. Pupils who have special educational needs and those with more challenging behaviour are also included very well. Planning shows that religious education is taught in a systematic way and is carefully linked to the locally agreed syllabus.
87. The quality of teaching and learning is good. In a good Year 6 lesson pupils increased their understanding about worship. The teacher challenged them to share ideas about what certain artefacts associated with 'puja' in Hindu worship are used for. Pupils worked hard together, sharing ideas, posing questions and finally reaching conclusions about the intriguing resources that had been provided. Using specific language associated with the task higher attaining pupils gave clear explanations about what each item might be used for, drawing on prior learning from a short video clip. Explanations on the interactive whiteboard gave lower attaining pupils a measure of independence, for instance as they purposefully checked their answers without having to rely solely on the teacher's prompts and support to organise their thoughts. The teacher's well-focused questions challenged pupils to increase their understanding as well as develop a broader explanation of ideas. In Year 2 clear learning objectives provided a meaningful introduction to a lesson on buildings in Christian worship. Whilst teaching and learning consolidated pupils' knowledge and understanding satisfactorily, insufficient time was given in this lesson to the development of speaking and listening skills to help pupils to practise the use of technical language and the extension of ideas.
88. At Year 2 standards are lower than expected for the pupils' age because most pupils' level of expressive language and communication skills hampers their ability to develop a broader understanding. Higher attaining pupils have a sound recall of some of the stories associated with Jesus and begin to make simple comparisons about aspects of the Jewish and Christian religion for instance. However, many Year 3 pupils found great difficulty in identifying similarities between the story of 'Noah' in Islam and Christianity. Examination of pupils' work, however, shows appropriate work, about contrasting religions, religious celebrations and stories for instance. Well-presented work in Year 6 shows good effort and perseverance and the development of a deeper understanding of the idea of God in many forms. Older pupils discussed their work enthusiastically and were respectful and at ease when talking about other religious cultures and beliefs. Marking of pupils' work, whilst positive, gives insufficient guidance as to how pupils can improve their work.
89. Good leadership and management have given a higher profile to the subject since the last inspection. Careful monitoring of pupils' work and teacher's planning has given a clear picture of the subject's development. A current action plan rightly gives priority to the observation of teaching and the development of more detailed assessment procedures, with the review of the Leeds Agreed Syllabus next year.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

90. **Art and design** was not a focus of this inspection and no lessons were observed. Discussions with the subject leader and pupils and scrutiny of work and documentation show that standards are at the expected level for the pupils' ages at Year 6. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection. The curriculum is well planned and careful attention is given to the development of skills. The use of information and communication technology is good. The implementation of the Intensifying Support Programme is reflected very well in the quality of the displays of pupils' work.

91. In **design and technology** no lessons were observed and so no judgements were made on the provision or the quality of teaching and learning. Standards at Year 6 are at the expected level nationally and have been maintained since the last inspection. A strength is in the way that the curriculum ensures all aspects of the subject receive an appropriate weighting. The targets set in literacy and numeracy are reflected well in design and technology with attention being paid to such targets as using instructions.
92. **Music** was not a focus of this inspection and so no judgement was made on provision, teaching or standards. Due to timetabling arrangements no lessons were seen in the subject. However, examination of planning, discussions with teachers and pupils and observation of singing in whole school assemblies indicate that the subject is planned effectively and statutory requirements are met. In addition to work in lessons pupils have opportunities to take part in performances both within and beyond the school day and have access to specialist teaching each week. Provision is enriched by the school's involvement in projects that introduce pupils to a range of other cultures. Music workshops develop their knowledge and understanding of a range of instruments such as woodwind, string and brass although no pupils are provided with instrumental tutoring. Since the last inspection planning has broadened to include music within other subjects such as design and technology, information and communication technology and history for instance. In discussion pupils clearly enjoy performing, listening to and learning about music.
93. In **physical education** the only aspect observed was games. In this the pupils reach an expected level in Year 2 and Year 6. The pupils also reach typical standards for their ages at the end of Year 6 in swimming. The school has done well to timetable two hours of physical education each week although opportunities for competitive sport against other schools are limited. In the three lessons observed the quality of teaching was good in Year 2 and satisfactory in Year 3 to Year 6. Strengths overall were in the management of the pupils' behaviour and the good attention paid to health and safety. Weaknesses were that pupils were not expected to take enough responsibility for their equipment and in Year 3 to Year 6 a significant proportion of the pupils had no kit to change into and missed the lesson. For a minority of the pupils this was a regular occurrence. The subject is broadened through extra-curricular sporting and games opportunities. For Year 6 this includes a residential stay which provides good opportunities for the pupils to participate in adventurous activities. It adds much to their social development as well as their physical skills and stamina.

## **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP**

94. The subject is not reported in depth. There were insufficient opportunities to judge provision in citizenship. The school develops pupils' personal, social and health education well through a good range of subjects and activities. Requirements are met to teach sex and relationships education and drugs awareness. The curriculum is planned carefully to include the youngest through to the oldest pupils. As a result the pupils learn to respect themselves and others in a cohesive school community. Effectively planned topics in each year group allow pupils to reflect on important aspects of personal development so that by Year 6 pupils are encouraged to extend their discussions to such subjects as the promotion of self-image by the media. The school places much emphasis on pupils' personal and social development, considered a minor weakness at the last inspection, and this is now an integral part of the school's provision. As a result relationships are very good and the pupils have a very positive attitude to their work and play.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	3
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>3</b>
Pupils' achievement	3
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)</b>	<b>3</b>
Attendance	4
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	2
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	4
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

*Inspectors make judgements on a scale: excellent (grade 1); very good (2); good (3); satisfactory (4); unsatisfactory (5); poor (6); very poor (7).*