

**INSPECTION REPORT**

**LIGHTCLIFFE CE (VA) PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Lightcliffe, Halifax

LEA area: Calderdale

Unique reference number: 107572

Headteacher: Mr A Berwick

Reporting inspector: Mrs L Murphy  
16173

Dates of inspection: 10 – 13 February 2003

Inspection number: 246693

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Voluntary aided

Age range of pupils: 4 – 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Wakefield Road  
Lightcliffe  
Halifax

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr S Coulton

Date of previous inspection: January 1998

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
16173	Mrs L Murphy Registered inspector	Art	What sort of school is it? The school's results and achievements How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
19446	Mrs S Wood Lay Inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
21045	Mrs S Walker Team inspector	English Music English as an additional language	How well are the pupils taught?
14851	Mr G Laws Team inspector	Mathematics Design and technology Physical education Educational inclusion	
8070	Mr J Haves Team inspector	Information and communication technology Geography History	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
25376	Mrs L Alvy Team inspector	Science Provision for children in the foundation stage Special educational needs	

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

## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Lightcliffe CE (VA) School is a larger than average primary school situated in the village of Lightcliffe on the outskirts of Halifax. It is in an area of mostly social and economic advantage. The school is voluntary aided by the Church of England; a change in circumstance since the last inspection when it was grant maintained. A recent change to its admission policy ensures that children attending St Matthew's church are prioritised a place at the school. The school is popular with parents and is oversubscribed. In all, 419 pupils between the ages of four and 11 attend the school. Of these seven per cent have special educational needs, a figure lower than found in schools nationally. This includes a range of learning and emotional needs. Six pupils have a statement of special educational need. Two per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is also below the national average. Most pupils are of white British heritage. A very low proportion of pupils is from a range of other backgrounds. A very small proportion of pupils are in the early stages of learning English as an additional language.

Many children have a good range of basic skills when they first attend the reception class and their attainment on entry to the school is generally above average. The school is an Investor in People and has been since 1997. A student teacher was completing a final teaching practice in Year 3 during the inspection.

## **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

Standards are above average overall though the good leadership and management mean that standards are already even higher than this by the end of Year 2 in English and are well above average in mathematics by the end of Year 6. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. The school offers a sound level of education for its pupils and provides satisfactory value for money.

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

- Standards in mathematics are well above average by the end of Year 6.
- The quality of teaching and learning in Year 1 to Year 3 is good and pupils achieve well.
- The rate of pupils' attendance is well above average; pupils have very good attitudes to school.
- The curriculum is rich and well balanced.
- The provision for pupils' personal and social development is very good and the pupils form strong relationships.
- Good leadership and management are based on trust and team work.

### **What could be improved**

- Standards in writing by the end of Year 6.
- Standards in science by the end of Year 6.
- The provision for pupils' physical development in the reception classes.

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

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

The school was last inspected in January 1998, since when it has improved well. Standards have been raised in mathematics, information and communication technology, music and physical education though they have declined in geography. The way in which the school works with parents and the behaviour of pupils (which is good) are not as strong as they were in 1998. Good progress

has been made in addressing all the key issues and furthermore improvements have been made in the rate of pupils' attendance, the curriculum, and the provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school is in a good position to improve further.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	A	A	B	D
mathematics	A	B	A	B
science	A	C	C	D

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

The table above shows that in 2002 standards were average or better in each tested subject when compared nationally. When compared to schools in similar circumstances, however, the school's results were below average in English and science because too few pupils reached high levels.

Taking the last five years the trend in the school's results was below the national trend. The school sets itself very challenging targets but may not quite meet them even though standards are rising this year. The targets in 2002 were not met because the school had a higher than usual percentage of pupils who had special educational needs.

Results of the national tests in 2002 for pupils at the end of Year 2 placed pupils at a level well above average nationally in reading and writing and above average nationally in mathematics.

The inspection judgement is that by the end of Year 6 pupils' achievement is satisfactory and standards are well above average in mathematics, above average in English and average in science. By the end of Year 2 pupils' achievement is good and standards are well above average in English and above average in mathematics and science.

In other subjects standards by the end of Year 6 and Year 2 are above average in information and communication technology, art and design, music and physical education. They are also above average by the end of Year 2 in geography and history.

Children in the reception classes achieve satisfactorily and are on course to exceed the early learning goals for their age in language, mathematical development and personal and social development. In all other aspects they are at a satisfactory level.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good: pupils are enthusiastic to come to school and are very keen and interested in what they learn in lessons.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good: pupils behave very well in lessons. Behaviour in the playground is often good natured but boisterous.
Personal development and relationships	Very good: pupils develop into mature and responsible people. The elected members of the school council take their roles very seriously. Relationships are very good throughout the school community.

Attendance	Very good: the attendance rates for the school are well above the national figures. The late arrival of a minority of pupils prevents a prompt start to some lessons.
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## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall with strengths in the teaching of pupils in Year 1 to Year 2. In Year 4 to Year 6 the quality of teaching though never less than satisfactory is variable because of inconsistencies between classes in each year group. In Year 3 it is good.

The teaching of English including literacy is satisfactory overall and good in Year 1 to Year 3. The teaching of mathematics including numeracy is good. In other subjects the teaching is good for Year 1 to Year 3 pupils in science, art and design, geography, history, music and physical education. It is good across the school in information and communication technology. The majority of the very good or better teaching takes place in Year 2 and in the teaching of instrumental music by visiting teachers to individuals and very small groups of pupils.

Key strengths lie in the very good relationships with pupils, well-structured and organised lessons and effective questioning that prompts pupils to think hard. Factors that make lessons sound rather than good are the imprecise match of work to pupils' level of attainment, the inefficient deployment of classroom assistants and in the reception classes the quality of the planning. In these lessons pupils make satisfactory progress overall. The quality of marking is variable across the school.

The teaching of pupils who have special educational needs is effective and pupils learn at a good rate. Pupils learning English as an additional language are taught well. Overall, the school meets the needs of all its pupils though provides insufficient challenge for higher attainers in science.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good: a rich range of opportunities for all pupils. This includes a good range of visits and visitors and extra-curricular activities. The provision for working and playing outside for the reception class children is a weakness.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good: pupils make good progress in relation to the targets in their individual education plans.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good: pupils benefit from the curriculum provided and the clear explanations provided by staff.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good: the school makes effective provision overall and very good provision for pupils' social development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good: the school provides a very caring environment in which pupils of all ages and abilities can learn. The school has effective systems

	in place to support pupils well in all aspects of their school life.
How well the school works in partnership with parents	Satisfactory: The majority of parents are supportive of the school and the work it does. There is an inconsistency in the quality of information shared with parents on their children's progress and in involving parents in their children's learning

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good: and based on trust and team work. The skills of senior managers complement those of the headteacher.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good: the governors take an active role in shaping the school's educational direction and know its strengths and areas for development well.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good: evaluation of the quality of teaching and standards informs the priorities for the school's development though there are some inconsistencies yet to be addressed.
The strategic use of resources	Good: with very good financial planning. The buildings provide an environment which promotes pupils' learning. Staffing, accommodation and learning resources are adequate. The school applies the principles of best value satisfactorily.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children like school</li> <li>• The teaching is of good quality</li> <li>• The school has high expectations of the children</li> <li>• Children behave well</li> <li>• The school helps children to mature and become responsible</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The information given about their children's progress</li> <li>• The school working more closely with parents</li> <li>• The leadership and management of the school</li> <li>• The range of activities outside lessons</li> </ul>

The inspectors agree with the positive views expressed by parents in the questionnaires they returned and at the parents' meeting though judge teaching to be satisfactory overall. The team agrees that more information could be given to parents to help them support their children's learning including information on the progress they make, and that leadership and management of the school could conduct more detailed consultations with parents. The inspection team judges that the school provides a good range of activities outside of lessons and that the school is well led and managed.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1 Children in the reception year enter at levels above those typically expected of pupils of their age in communication, language and literacy, mathematics and personal development. In knowledge and understanding of the world, physical and creative development they are at an average level. Children achieve satisfactorily overall because the teaching is sound. Children's achievement is limited in physical development by not having sufficient opportunities to participate in activities with suitable high quality resources in an outdoor setting. By the end of the reception year, the children are on course to exceed the level expected of their age in personal, social and emotional development, in communication, language and literacy, and in mathematical development. They are likely to meet expected standards in their other areas of learning. This is because though the school has made headway in establishing the revised curriculum for the reception class children it is not fully planned in detail.

2 Pupils make the best progress in Year 1 to Year 3 where the quality of teaching is consistently good across a range of subjects. The teaching is well organised and sets high expectations of what pupils can achieve. The pupils respond well and make good progress in lessons and over time reaching standards that are well above average in English. As a result, standards over the last four years have been at a high level in reading and writing and this level is set to continue this year. In mathematics pupils reach an above average level building up a good understanding of the number system and extending their practical mathematical work well. In science pupils are already at an above average level and are set to reach even higher levels by the end of this school year bringing them in line with the teacher assessments of last year when they were placed at a well above average level.

3 In Year 4 to Year 6 the quality of teaching and consequently pupils' achievement is inconsistent. Though it is never less than satisfactory the pattern varies between year groups and overall leads to sound progress over time and on the whole sound progress from when the Year 6 pupils took the national tests as seven-year-olds.

4 The targets the school sets each year are high though it does not always quite meet them. However, the school analyses its results and takes appropriate action. For example, in 2002 the school fell short of its target in English for pupils in Year 6 by nine per cent. It diagnosed that it needed to improve pupils' writing and this priority then came through into the school improvement plan for 2002 – 2003. The school has set itself a goal of increasing the proportion of pupils in Year 6 who attain at a higher level. The steps it has taken are to investigate the attainment of boys and girls and the underlying reasons why girls do better than boys in English; to extend the range of genres that pupils use and alongside this to concentrate on the basics of grammar and spelling. Nonetheless writing is not used well enough in subjects such as history and geography to provide the experience and practice of writing at length. Neither is writing improved through diagnostic marking of pupils' work by the teaching staff. Individual targets have been set for pupils with varying degrees of success. Overall this is at an early stage and not all pupils know what to aim for next. The targets are used inconsistently across the school.

5 Good gains have been made in mathematics pulling standards up from a below average level at the time of the last inspection. This has come about through clear planning linked well to the National Numeracy Strategy. Demanding tasks are set and pupils rise to the challenge. Many pupils cite mathematics as their favourite subject.

6 In science the average standards attained by pupils at the end of Year 6 means that progress is satisfactory but not as good as in some other subjects. This is in the main because work is not well enough matched to the pupils' needs.

7 Pupils across the school behave well and have very good attitudes to school which means that they really concentrate and get on with their tasks. These facts, together with the very good rate of pupils' attendance are important factors in their success.

8 The school caters well for the needs of those pupils who have identified special educational needs and they make good progress. The pupils get good help from teachers and teaching assistants. Relationships are very good and the support is well organised and so pupils gain the maximum advantage from it.

9 The school is providing a good level of support for the few pupils for whom English is an additional language and this is allowing them to make good progress in picking up English and to make the same progress in other subjects as their classmates. The pupils are integrated well in all activities and make gains in learning, not just in language acquisition but also in developing social skills and confidence as they become increasingly more familiar with the English language.

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

10 Pupils' attitudes to school are very good. They are very keen to come to school and show great interest in their lessons where they settle quickly to tasks and activities. Pupils listen very carefully in sessions for the whole class and eagerly respond to questions, giving answers that are sensible and pertinent to discussions. A good example of this was seen during a Year 3 numeracy lesson where pupils could give the correct answer by drawing on an increasing range of strategies to find the solution. Pupils clearly know what is expected of them and they are often eager to please the class teacher by taking time to present their work well. They work quietly and generally sensibly, usually sustaining concentration whether they are working as individuals, in pairs or in a group. During a Year 1 music lesson pupils worked very amicably together to write and perform short rhythms with percussion instruments. When working in small tutorial groups such as music lessons taught by visiting teachers pupils have a very high level of concentration and this helps them to learn new pieces quickly.

11 The pupils clearly know that the school expects good behaviour and that they are encouraged to show respect to each other, the resources and buildings. Their behaviour in lessons is good and often very good. This is the result of good teaching that interests and inspires pupils to learn. The school is an orderly community and most pupils move around the building sensibly. Although there are occasions when pupils behave inappropriately or make unacceptable remarks, teachers quickly address the problem without distracting from the focus of the lesson. The majority of pupils understand the impact of their actions on others and the resulting outcomes of inappropriate behaviour. Pupils' behaviour in the playground is good with play being good-natured although often boisterous. Due to alterations to the play areas, there was limited organised play led by adults available during the inspection. Pupils say that they enjoy such play and the school feels such provision is having a good influence on the pupils' behaviour. There were five fixed term exclusions during the last academic year when the school rightly followed its procedures to the good of the school community.

12 Relationships are very good throughout the school. Pupils know what is expected and quickly respond to teachers' requests. All the adults who work in the school act as very good role models for the pupils. Pupils are provided with a very wide range of responsibilities, ranging in scope from register monitors to being elected onto the school council. They respond exceptionally well to these opportunities, which are given to most pupils regardless of their age. They carry them out very enthusiastically and are always eager to please. Members of the school council show their initiative by organising simple events to raise funds for the Mara project which is a scheme linking their school with one in Africa. Pupils are very polite to visitors, offering to open doors or help them find the room they are looking for. Pupils show initiative in their learning as seen in a Year 2 lesson in physical education where pupils quickly organised themselves, listened carefully to instructions and shared their ideas with others.

13 The very good attitudes of the pupils and the continuing good behaviour are the result of the very good relationships that have been nurtured by the school and these continue to have a positive effect on the attainment of pupils and the caring ethos that the school has further developed. This is an area of improvement overall since the last inspection.

14 The school's attendance figures continue to be very good. The regular attendance of pupils enables teachers to build on previous lessons thus ensuring continuity and this has a positive impact on the overall attainment and progress of pupils. Most pupils consistently arrive at school on time thus ensuring that the school day starts promptly although a small minority are frequently late. The school regularly emphasises to parents the importance of punctuality and reminds parents that lateness can adversely affect pupils' learning because they might miss the introduction to the first lesson.

15 Because relationships are so strong pupils are accepting of each other and interested in the success of others. This means that pupils who have special educational need or those who are learning English as an additional language get good support from other pupils.

16 Children in the reception classes behave well. Routines are well established in each class and so the children have a positive attitude to their work and are happy and successful in their learning. They share toys and equipment well and play sensibly. Most persevere with the tasks set and for the most part work together harmoniously.

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

17 The teaching tends to be consistently stronger in Years 1 to 3 than in Years 4 to 6. During the inspection, other than some very good teaching in Year 2 the proportions of very good and excellent teaching were boosted by lessons in instrumental music provided by visiting teachers. In these lessons, pupils frequently made very good progress because the teaching offered individual help. Similarly, a small group of lower attainers benefited greatly from very good teaching when they worked as a small group in mathematics in Year 6. The basic skills in numeracy, reading and speaking and listening are taught well and those in writing are soundly taught. Homework is used very well to strengthen what has been learned in lessons, not just in English and mathematics but in a range of other subjects as well. The unsatisfactory teaching noted at the time of the last inspection has been eradicated.

18 The quality of teaching for children in the reception classes is satisfactory. Organisation and preparation are good, but planning does not make enough provision for the needs of individual children, especially the brightest. Relationships with the children are generally good and additional adults are usually soundly deployed in the classroom to enhance the teaching though insufficiently focussed on direct teaching in the shared area. Sometimes, the pace of lessons becomes too slow to hold the attention of the children, especially the boys, and there are times when teachers miss opportunities to develop vocabulary to the full. The teaching of physical development and learning through exploring the outside environment are limited by insufficient detail in the planning and by resources for teaching and learning.

19 In the reception classes lessons in literacy and numeracy are effectively planned for groups of children. The teachers and assistants organise and manage the pupils consistently well so that they feel secure and interested in their tasks. However, in the planning of activities for the shared area, learning objectives are not made clear to children and the tasks do not always fully challenge and extend children's learning. Neither does the planning always identify the role of the adult in both planned and spontaneous tasks thus maximising the opportunity to work with children in their self-chosen activities to encourage their imaginative play and extend their vocabulary in this context.

20 Throughout the school there are several common strengths which contribute to the good and very good teaching and which promote learning successfully. Most lessons are well organised

and run smoothly, with well established class routines and resources ready to hand. Resources are often chosen imaginatively and support the teaching effectively, helping to make lessons stimulating and hold the interest of the pupils. In Year 1 for example, pupils made good gains in their musical understanding in an enjoyable way through the use of puppets whose names were cleverly linked to rhythms. Thus, by playing the puppets' names rhythmically - 'Joe-Crow' and 'Henri -e- tta' they learned about musical rhythms and laid the foundations of understanding musical notation. The very good relationships in all the classes are conducive to learning because they create a relaxed working atmosphere and an expectation of hard work. Consequently, pupils develop the confidence to attempt difficult challenges and to participate fully in discussions because they know their contributions will be valued. Lesson objectives are invariably made explicit to the pupils at the start of lessons so they know what it is they are supposed to be learning and both teachers and pupils can judge whether or not this has been achieved. Often the final part of the lessons is a useful time for drawing together the threads of the lesson, reinforcing teaching points and providing pupils with a valuable opportunity to evaluate not only their own work, but each other's too. At the end of a literacy lesson in Year 4, for example, pupils maturely discussed their work with a partner, making sensible observations for improvement based on what they had been taught, such as identifying overuse of particular words to link phrases and sentences.

21 In the best lessons the teachers give a lively and animated delivery supported by probing questions that really make pupils think. Very often the teacher teases out pupils' responses carefully, not accepting simplistic or superficial answers but continually expecting pupils to expand on their thoughts and articulate them with more precision. In a mathematics lesson in Year 6 the teacher's simple challenge, 'Did you find that statement to be true?' encouraged pupils to check their results as they investigated perimeters, to 'think it through' and not to make assumptions. This approach impacts very well on the quality of speaking and listening in the school and helps to make pupils more articulate at expressing their views. The good, sometimes very good subject knowledge of the teachers makes for high quality teaching, as seen in some class music lessons and in lessons taken by visiting specialists. Expert subject knowledge enables the teachers to provide exactly the right task to fit the pupils' rates of progress, to iron out any misunderstandings and to provide advice and guidance to improve skills not quite mastered. In the best lessons work is matched well to the needs of the pupils, with more challenge for higher attainers and modified tasks for those who need further support.

22 When lessons are satisfactory rather than good it is usually because of one of three main factors. The most common shortcoming is inconsistency between classes, resulting in some lack of rigour. For example the quality of marking varies considerably from class to class and does not always reflect the guidance in the school policy. At one extreme there are for example, mere cursory ticks, sometimes praising work that is incorrect or untidy. At the other extreme, marking is sensitive with developmental comments to help pupils understand their mistakes and help them to improve. Similarly, the quality of presentation is variable being very high in some classes, with an emphasis on neat handwriting and the use of rulers for underlining, whilst in other classes untidy work is accepted. Secondly, teaching assistants are not always deployed to the best effect so their impact on learning is not maximised. In some classes they are deployed very effectively, for example, to work with pupils who need extra help. However this is not always the case and in some lessons they sit listening to proceedings but are not fully involved with pupils. In a physical education lesson in Year 1 the teaching assistants were not clear as to what was expected of them so they were not sufficiently proactive when working with groups of pupils to extend learning fully. The third common weakness occurs when all pupils in a class are given the same task to do, regardless of their attainments. In this situation work is insufficiently demanding for higher attaining pupils and fails to provide sufficient challenge to take their learning forward, whilst pupils who need extra help struggle with work that is too difficult for them, potentially resulting in frustration and loss of confidence. This is illustrated clearly in classes where all pupils are given the same spellings to learn.

23 Pupils who have a statement of special educational need are taught well and they make good progress towards the targets set in their individual education plans. Teachers and support staff know the children well and work closely together to meet these targets. Teaching for other pupils who need extra help is sometimes less successful because planning for individual lessons is not always sufficiently well communicated to classroom assistants leaving them unsure of the precise learning to take place. Those pupils learning English as an additional language benefit from

individual support to develop their literacy and communication skills.

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

24 The quality and range of learning opportunities for pupils are good. The school offers a balanced curriculum which meets all statutory requirements well. In each subject of the National Curriculum there is an appropriate balance of time, with due emphasis on the curriculum for English and mathematics. The total taught time is sufficient and meets national guidelines. The curriculum is enhanced by a comprehensive programme of personal, social and health education and by a wide range of extra-curricular activities. There is a comprehensive range of policy documents underpinning provision.

25 The core curriculum of English, mathematics and science provides pupils with a good range of learning opportunities. The basic skills in each subject are carefully planned and there is a strong emphasis upon developing cross-curricular links though this is not the case in writing. The speaking and listening skills of all pupils are well developed through several subjects of the curriculum. Mathematical skills in number and shape are reinforced through geography and design and technology. Investigative skills, developed through science are also found in history. The curriculum in information and communication technology is a particular strength, providing pupils with a wide range of opportunities to both improve their skills and make good use of them in differing subjects. This development is more pronounced in certain areas than others; for example, being well advanced in history, but requiring more work in science and writing.

26 The school's strategies for promoting reading and numeracy across the curriculum are good and there is a strong emphasis on encouraging speaking and listening activities. Reading is promoted effectively and remains at the heart of much independent study. The development of writing skills in other subjects requires some improvement, to ensure that pupils improve the content, quality and presentation of work in different subjects. The use of number is well supported through activities in information and communication technology, where pupils work with spreadsheets. In geography, pupils have good opportunities to develop mapping skills using co-ordinates and grid references. In design technology, pupils have opportunities to incorporate geometric shape into their work and on computers and to manipulate shape on screen.

27 The curriculum is enriched well in a number of ways. Good use is made of tuition from visiting music teachers. This helps support the school orchestra and choir effectively. A good proportion of pupils also learn to play instruments, such as piano, guitar and violin. The use of educational visits and visiting speakers and performers provide good opportunities for pupils to broaden their interests and gain wider knowledge and understanding. Pupils have good opportunities to visit museums and art galleries. This helps inform their work and encourages independent study. Residential visits support diverse activities such as outside pursuits and improving computer skills. Through the wide-ranging curriculum in physical education, pupils gain access to sports teams and compete in local competitions. Dance is a particular strength within physical education because it is developed well throughout the school.

28 The curriculum for children in the reception classes is satisfactory overall. It is appropriately based on the national guidance for children of this age with the exception of a dedicated outdoor space. Whilst a variety of activities provide children with the opportunity to make decisions for themselves these are not sufficiently well planned or resourced to regularly provide experiences of a high enough quality.

29 The provision for the pupils who have special educational needs has been maintained at a good level since the last inspection. The recommendations of the revised Code of Practice are met successfully and the school pays close attention to the inclusion of all pupils in the activities it provides. Individual education plans are reviewed regularly and new targets set where appropriate. Individual education plans are clear and carefully targeted to the pupils' needs. Where appropriate they are supported by precise programmes of learning. Lesson planning to include this step-by-

step approach is variable, however, and there is some inconsistency across the whole school in how well targets in the plans are linked to the teaching methods used.

30 The provision for extra-curricular activities is good, with considerable take up rates for most activities. There are three information and communication technology clubs, each with a specific focus; one is producing a school magazine, another enables pupils to use a video linked to the computer to produce a play. A range of sports clubs offers soccer, netball and athletics. There are four recorder groups and specific instrument tuition. Residential visits to Winmarleigh Hall provide good opportunities for a range of activity and promote social development effectively as does the Year 6 residential visit to Whitby.

31 All pupils have access to the wider curriculum and the school takes care to ensure that provision is carefully monitored. Pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language receive appropriate support. However, the school does not have a register of gifted and talented pupils. Whilst the curriculum is designed to meet the needs of all pupils, further work is needed to more fully incorporate extension tasks within schemes of work. At specific times of the school year, extra classes boost pupils' attainment as they prepare for the national tests at age eleven.

32 The overall provision for pupils' personal, social and health education including citizenship is good. There are appropriate policies and procedures in place to promote health education. Some elements of provision are within the science curriculum. At other times outside specialists are used. For example, the school nurse provides a range of support for different year groups. The school is currently working towards achieving the 'Calderdale Healthy School Award.' The provision for sex education meets the governing body's agreed policy. This is carefully linked to developing awareness of relationships. Drugs awareness sessions are provided, at an appropriate level, for all pupils. The development of citizenship is met partly through existing curricular provision and also within specific discussion groups.

33 The range of community links is comprehensive. There is good involvement through visiting speakers and performers. For example, the 'Tempus Fugit Educational Theatre' are regular contributors of historical drama. The school regularly sends its pupils into the community as performers of music and drama. There are good links into local sports and cultural clubs. The school maintains links with all seven local secondary schools which pupils transfer to. These links are naturally stronger with some school than others. However, all Year 6 pupils have opportunities to visit those schools prior to transfer and with some there are effective curricular links, principally in art and sport.

34 Overall, the school provides a wide-ranging and rich curriculum which meets the educational needs of all pupils well. Improvements since the last inspection are good and include: the whole information and communication technology curriculum, a wider range of extra-curricular activities and the development of a suitable scheme of work for mathematics.

35 The provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. Clear aims are set out in the draft 'Worship Policy' and these establish a pattern of worship for the school, supported by appropriate resources and including opportunities for prayer and reflection. Assemblies provide good opportunities for specific themes to be explored. They are set within the context of carefully chosen music and simple symbolism. This helps establish a reflective atmosphere. On occasion, pupils have good opportunities to participate, sometimes taking part through drama and speaking; at other times responding to questions posed by the teacher or visiting speaker. There are good links with local churches. The local Anglican clergy play an active role within the school and the local Methodist minister is invited to lead assemblies. Through the curriculum, pupils have good opportunities to gain spiritual insights of a reflective nature. These are found in such areas as science, art and music. For example, when pupils in Year 2 investigated radial patterns in nature and when the orchestra played in assembly. Pupils are encouraged to explore ideas on values and beliefs. A strength of the curriculum is the encouragement of speaking and listening and a growing emphasis upon investigative approaches to learning.

36 The good provision for pupils' moral development is underpinned through clear written guidelines for acceptable behaviour. In addition a policy of rewards helps set a positive tone in recognising achievement and providing opportunities for all pupils to succeed. There is a clear emphasis on encouraging pupils to take responsibility for their actions and parents receive guidelines on what is expected. This is underpinned by the home-school agreement. All staff are made aware of these expectations and receive guidance in managing relationships with pupils. The deputy headteacher works closely with all support staff to ensure consistency beyond the classroom. There is a clear anti-bullying policy and procedures in place to follow up any reported incidents.

37 The provision for pupils' social development is very good. Pupils are given responsibility for their actions and also in performing specific roles around the school. Older pupils carry out a range of tasks, which help promote orderly movement in corridors, assist with assemblies and, on occasion, support the learning of younger pupils. There is a well established, properly constituted, elected school council. This meets regularly and its views are valued by the staff. For example, it plays an important part in determining the direction of the school's charitable fundraising. Pupils are expected to take a significant lead in supporting local and national charities. They are given appropriate support and considerable freedom in determining how best to raise funds. Through the curriculum several opportunities are created which help support social development. These include educational visits and activities within the community. The school has a good reputation for public performance and groups of pupils actively join in community events. There is an expectation, reinforced through the school mission statement, that pupils will act in a sensitive and responsible manner towards one another and develop a sense of personal responsibility and self worth. The school actively rewards pupils who make an outstanding contribution to the local community.

38 The provision for pupils' cultural development is good. Pupils have considerable opportunities to be involved in artistic and musical events. The well-established school orchestra and choir provide good opportunities for this. Through the curriculum, pupils explore artistic styles: for example, studying the work of Paul Klee and using it as the basis for their own efforts. Pupils have good opportunities to explore their own cultural inheritance through visits in the locality and region. For example, they visit the Bradford Industrial Museum and Thackray Medical Museum. There are good opportunities for exploring alternative cultures to their own. Established links enable pupils to visit a local Mosque and to hear speakers from non-Christian faiths. A developing link is with Mara, a region in Tanzania and pupils are actively fundraising to support a visiting teacher from that area to visit Lightcliffe. There is a considerable focus upon African art, some from Kenya and pupils explore this continent through studies in art, geography and information and communication technology. Links with a local Afro-Caribbean community help pupils recognise the changing nature of British society.

39 Overall the provision for pupils' personal development has been considerably strengthened since the last inspection. It plays an important part in setting the positive ethos found within the school. The provision is monitored effectively by the headteacher and deputy headteacher.

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

40 The school continues to provide a caring environment in which pupils can learn. The school has good procedures in place to ensure pupils' welfare, health and safety, and deploys appropriate agencies to support the needs of individual pupils. A senior member of staff is responsible for child protection and ensures that all staff are aware of relevant procedures. All pupils are well known to staff and pupils feel confident to approach any adult if they have worries or concerns. Regular reminders are given to pupils on health and safety matters such as seen in a Year 5 science lesson where the teacher stressed the importance of handling tools in a sensible and safe way. There are clear practices that are followed to report and record accidents. All aspects of health and safety in the school are documented and regular fire evacuation practices are held.

41 The school's procedures to monitor pupils' attendance are very good and this has a positive affect on the school's overall attendance figures. Parents are very clear about the procedures they have to follow if their children are absent from school. Effective systems support all pupils' needs during their time at the school. Pupils' academic and personal development needs are met well through staff knowing each individual child and they quickly recognise any change in behaviour or attitude. Recognition is given in full school assemblies for special achievement or the extra effort shown by individual pupils. Pupils who have special educational needs are well provided for through their individual educational programmes. The monitoring of pupils' behaviour throughout the school is good and pupils are regularly reminded of the school's high expectations. The school clearly does not tolerate anti social behaviour, such as bullying or racism. There are suitable systems to follow if there is any inappropriate and unacceptable behaviour and these are appropriately recorded.

42 The school has developed systems in English and mathematics to assess pupils' work regularly but assessment is inconsistent throughout the other subjects of the curriculum. The school currently analyses available data, including the results of statutory assessment tests. This enables the close tracking of individual pupils, particularly in English and mathematics although it does not fully inform planning to develop pupils' understanding in areas that have been identified. This prevents teachers from refining their lesson plans to develop pupils' knowledge in areas where currently there are weaknesses showing. As a result teachers are not easily enabled to provide pupils with clearly focussed and challenging activities that would result in higher achievement. Targets are set for pupils and shared with parents although these often vary in quality.

43 Effective entry procedures to the reception class help both the children and their parents to experience a calm and positive start to school life. Formal assessment is undertaken as the children start the school and is used to alert teachers to those children who might need extra help. Additional assessment information is carefully recorded in the children's individual profiles and provides a good record of their attainment and progress.

44 The use of assessment to identify those pupils who have special educational needs is good. A range of tests is used starting as children first enter the school so that any concerns about pupils' progress is identified at an early stage. Information about pupils' specific needs is tracked carefully and once individual targets are set these are monitored regularly. More specific tests are used where pupils have an identified problem such as speech or language for instance. The school calls upon external educational professionals as required. Support staff have good relationships with pupils and this has a positive effect on their progress.

45 The school monitors their progress carefully and draws upon appropriate resources to enhance the provision. For example a specialist teacher from the local education authority works productively with one of the pupils on a flexible basis when the school requests extra help. The interpreting services of a local member of the community provides an invaluable link with the parents of a pupil enabling them to be involved in their child's education despite the limitations of their own English. The school is providing effective support for the parents as well as the pupils so that they have a good understanding of what is being done for their child.

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

46 The school and its work are well thought of by the majority of its parents. Most of the positive views expressed by parents are supported by the inspection judgements.

47 The school provides parents with opportunities to become involved in their children's learning. Parents regularly receive information through letters, which are also helpfully posted on the school's web site. Regular curriculum sheets inform parents of areas to be studied during the forthcoming term. Parents of pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 feel involved in their children's learning through the Parent and Child scheme (PACT). This enables parents of younger children to support their children's learning by sharing first hand experiences or artefacts. However, after this, parents

understandably feel less informed as there is no consistent home and school written booklet or diary. Parents also enjoy and appreciate opportunities to share in their children's success through attendance at school productions and sports day although they are not invited to share, for example, in class assemblies celebrating the work and achievements of the children.

48 Parents are fully involved in the well-organised procedures for the pupils' entry to the reception class. A planned programme of visits ensures that the children have a positive start to school life. Parents are encouraged to share in their children's learning by discussing any concerns or helping children to read and write for instance. This encourages a positive attitude to work from an early age.

49 The parents are informed of their children's progress through the annual written reports. There is an inconsistent approach to the quality of information given in these – the better ones clearly outline what pupils understand and the skills they have developed whereas others simply state the areas that have been studied. Targets are set although some are unclear and general, not making clear what parents might do to support their children where they are experiencing difficulty. Parent and teacher consultations enable parents to look at their children's work and discuss their progress and overall development in more detail. Parents of children who have special educational needs are kept fully informed of their children's progress and are involved in regular reviews. They are consulted at all stages to ensure a full understanding of their children's needs.

50 A small number of parents, grandparents, governors and students on work placement help regularly in classes. The school makes them feel welcome, and they feel comfortable and valued for their work by the pupils and staff. The school is supported by the "School Development Association" which is very carefully managed. It organises a range of social and fundraising events to help provide additional resources for the school such as funds for the reception class extension, playground markings and the building of the adventure play area. This group has recognised the need to change its composition to try and provide a more open and approachable group for the parents of the school. The school fully appreciates the hard work and dedication of the group.

51 Partnership with parents is an area that has not developed since the last inspection and many parents understandably feel it is an area they would like to see developed to inform them and involve them more fully in their children's learning. Though the school consults with parents this is not always sufficiently rigorous or timely and so on occasion parents feel that they have had too little opportunity to contribute to change.

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

52 The headteacher is firmly committed to a philosophy based on trust in professional colleagues and to this end leadership is heavily dependent on teamwork. A minority of parents have voiced concerns about leadership but co-operative practices are instrumental in promoting a very positive ethos and a sense of loyalty that is evident across this large school. The school takes its Investor in People status seriously and investing in people is integral to the very good staff development programme and to the management of staff performance. Decisions are made and priorities established after formal and informal discussions have taken place; teachers know that their contributions will be taken into account. The deputy headteacher is fundamentally involved in all liaison both within and outside school. Her skills complement those of the headteacher.

53 The headteacher has successfully introduced a system of self-evaluation that serves the school well. For example, understanding the strengths of staff and making sure they are best placed to meet the pupils' needs. The school meets its aims well and provides opportunity for all to succeed. The good progress made in addressing the key issues from the last inspection has brought about improvement in standards. These have been well planned and securely embedded in the school's work. The school improvement plan has sensible priorities founded on analysis and evaluation. However, it is less clear on precisely when and how the actions will be monitored. For example, it lacks key dates when progress can be checked. However, to counter this the staff and governors review the plan each half term.

54 The governing body is fulfilling its statutory responsibilities well. There is a suitable

committee structure to support the work of the governing body and some of the committees appropriately have delegated powers. The governors' knowledge of the school comes through information from the headteacher and the occasional visit with a particular focus. They know the strengths of the school and where development is needed. The curriculum committee monitors the curriculum well and with the teaching staff collates educational priorities, in the school improvement plan, with governors being involved in decision making at an early stage. Governors are enthusiastic and willing to support the school in all aspects of its work and they are involved in decision making and shaping the direction of the school. However, many parents feel that they are unclear about who the governors are and the work of the governing body and would like to be consulted more by the governors and informed regularly on the work that they do.

55 Information and communication technology, art and design, history, music and physical education are well led. The management of special educational needs remains good. Comprehensive and conscientious records are kept giving a clear picture of the systems and procedures in place. Staff are supported effectively and close contact is maintained with parents and outside agencies.

56 The arrangements for financial management are good. The school has appointed a finance officer to help the headteacher and governors construct, monitor and manage the school budget. This has had a positive effect on financial management. Regular reports are prepared and presented to the governors' finance committee to keep them informed and to aid their decision-making. Educational priorities are very well supported through the school's financial planning. Effective use is made of additional funding for pupils with special educational needs though the school has not received extra funding from any other sources during this financial year.

57 There are good procedures in place to help new staff and to help student teachers develop their skills. They are given relevant documentation to help support them in their work and are provided with a mentor. There is a good number of teaching assistants to work alongside the teaching staff in their drive to raise standards. Strengths in the otherwise satisfactory resources for teaching and learning are in the provision for the mathematics curriculum and in the new computer suite which is well used and managed and has already had a positive impact on the attainment of all pupils. The reception year has improved its resources and learning environment for the younger children since the last inspection although there is still a lack of specified outdoor provision. The school library has a limited range of books. The school enjoys large grassed areas and good hard surface playgrounds, one of which is currently being resurfaced. Teaching accommodation in the school is satisfactory without being generous. It is well maintained.

58 The school has produced a statement of best value to guide its approach when it compares itself to others, challenges its outcomes and makes sure it is competitive in its acquisition of resources. The statement serves the school well though the aspect of consultation is only partly in place and the school's own evaluation has already highlighted this as an area to develop.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

59 The headteacher, other staff and governors should:

(i) Raise standards in writing by the end of Year 6 by:

- establishing and using individual targets for pupils;
- planning the use of writing in other subjects;
- using teachers' marking to diagnose areas for individual pupils' improvement; and
- implementing policies consistently.

*(Paragraphs 4, 71, 75, 76, 78 and 111)*

(ii) Raise standards in science by the end of Year 6 by;

- using assessment to match work closely to pupils' level of attainment;
- marking pupils' work to diagnose areas for development; and
- tracking pupils' progress through the levels of the National Curriculum.

*(Paragraphs 88, 90 and 91)*

(iii) Enable faster progress in pupils' physical development in the reception classes by:

- providing and regularly using outside play facilities to develop pupils' physical and imaginative responses and to explore the outside environment; and
- planning in detail the skills to be developed and the associated activities in outside play.

*(Paragraphs 1, 28, 67 and 68)*

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	69
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	43

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	10	34	24	0	0	0
Percentage	1	15	49	35	0	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

#### Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	N/A	419
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/A	8

FTE means full-time equivalent.

#### Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	N/A	6
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	N/A	28

#### English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	2

#### Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	6
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	6

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.3
National comparative data	5.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	34	26	60

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	31	32	32
	Girls	26	26	26
	Total	57	58	57
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	95 (93)	97 (95)	95 (97)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	31	31	34
	Girls	26	26	26
	Total	57	57	60
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	95 (95)	95 (97)	100 (97)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	33	30	63

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	24	29	30
	Girls	26	23	26
	Total	50	52	56
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	79 (92)	83 (83)	89 (92)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	21	31	29
	Girls	25	26	27
	Total	46	57	56
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	74 (90)	90 (86)	90 (92)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – Irish
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Black African
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British - Indian
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background
Black or Black British – Caribbean
Black or Black British – African
Black or Black British – any other Black background
Chinese
Any other ethnic group
No ethnic group recorded

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
392	5	0
1	0	0
4	0	0
0	0	0
5	0	0
3	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
1	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0

### ***Exclusions in the last school year***

*The table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only. It gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.*

### ***Teachers and classes***

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	17.3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24.2
Average class size	29.8

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

Total number of education support staff	12
Total aggregate hours worked per week	270.5

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	2002 - 2002
	£
Total income	920732
Total expenditure	915340
Expenditure per pupil	2169
Balance brought forward from previous year	15426
Balance carried forward to next year	20818

### ***Recruitment of teachers***

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

Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

### Results of the survey of parents and carers

#### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	445
Number of questionnaires returned	203

#### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	47	45	6	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	35	50	10	3	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	28	64	5	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	22	51	20	3	2
The teaching is good.	27	59	8	1	5
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	13	43	33	8	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	34	51	11	3	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	32	58	8	1	0
The school works closely with parents.	16	48	26	7	3
The school is well led and managed.	16	51	17	6	9
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	27	64	5	0	6
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	12	40	27	13	6

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

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

60 Most children start school in the reception class having attended a wide variety of pre-school settings. Children have a range of skills and knowledge but overall attainment is above that typically expected in knowledge and understanding, creative and physical development it is broadly average on entry. Standards have remained similar to what they were at the time of the last inspection. Pupils achieve satisfactorily and are on course to exceed the early learning goals for communication, language and literacy, mathematics and personal and social development by the time they finish their year in the reception classes. They are on target to attain those in knowledge and understanding of the world, physical and creative development. A small proportion who are higher attaining children exceeds them.

61 Teachers plan together closely to ensure that the children experience the same range of activities across the two classes. Staff work well together as a team but planning is not sufficiently detailed to fully develop the role of the classroom assistants in each area of learning. The curriculum and planning for outdoor play are limited, as there is no area resourced appropriately to give the children the space they need for their activities outdoors. Good teaching and learning opportunities are planned in special activities to enrich pupils' learning such as the 'old fashioned day' which draw together a range of goals. However, planning is not always rigorous enough to provide rich and stimulating experiences of high quality regularly in either self-initiated or adult led tasks.

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

62 In personal, social and emotional development pupils achieve satisfactorily but too few imaginative and exciting practical tasks are planned to quickly move on children's independence and enquiry skills. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Strengths are in the relationships and the way in which children are helped to settle into the school and its routines. Early assessment shows that many children behave well, listen sensibly and higher attainers particularly have well developed social skills already when they enter the reception classes. Higher and average attaining children are also able to concentrate for much longer periods of time. Relationships are good and children play harmoniously together beginning to share and take turns to use equipment. Most dress and undress independently so that little time is wasted when getting ready before or after physical education lessons for instance. The class teachers sensitively help those children who sometimes call out during story or discussion and they quickly follow the mature example of the older children.

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

63 Standards by the end of the foundation stage are above those typically expected overall because the sound teaching is systematic with clear learning objectives planned for each lesson. Reading is soundly taught and parents are encouraged to support their children at home by reading together and completing a diary. Useful comments by both parents and teachers keep everyone informed effectively of the children's progress. Most children are already reading from a published scheme and many can build words by sounding out letters because the teaching includes this satisfactorily in daily lessons. Higher and average attainers can predict what is going to happen next in a story using picture clues with ease and speaking clearly and confidently. Lower attainers need more support in this but still make good attempts to talk about the story they are reading. A lack of use of 'big books' for story telling in large groups for instance means some children have difficulty seeing the pictures and small print so they lose interest become less attentive and learning is less effective.

64 Successful lessons are planned to include listening and speaking skills, reading and writing.

Pupils encouraged by the teacher made good gains as they repeated the story 'We're going on a Bear Hunt'. They remembered the sequence of the story well listening carefully, following the teacher's well-modelled speech whilst enthusiastically trying more difficult words such as 'swishy, swoshy' and 'stumble trip'. Higher attaining and average children ask and answer questions sensibly whilst less mature children need more prompts to do so.

65 Children make sound progress in their early writing skills. Most children can already write their names independently, forming letters correctly and both higher and average attaining pupils can write simple sentences. There are few examples of different forms of writing such as letters, labels or lists for instance. The marking of work lacks a diagnostic focus except when used to provide assessments for the children's individual portfolios.

### **Mathematical development**

66 Children achieve satisfactorily through the sound teaching and learning. The teaching of daily lessons in mathematics includes clear learning objectives for oral and mental work. These engage children's attention and interest. When children worked in small groups lower attainers benefited considerably from the calm support of the classroom assistant when a planned focus task helped them to play a 'fishing game' to reinforce counting skills. Opportunities such as these are limited, however, because there is insufficient emphasis placed on the planning for the development and extension of mathematical skills including the role of the adult and the activities set out for children to use independently. In the classroom higher attainers worked sensibly and independently carefully drawing pictures to show their understanding of time. They could explain the task clearly and most understood the terms, yesterday, today and tomorrow for example. Higher and average attainers can add and subtract numbers to 10 at least. Many can count to 20 and beyond. Most pupils make good attempts at measuring objects that are longer or shorter and higher attainers measure using a ruler. Lower attainers need more support to complete work on time and measure. The children work hard during lessons, concentrating and persevering well.

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

67 Standards are in line with those typically expected. Teaching is satisfactory overall. A suitably planned programme of visitors enriches the curriculum. The children were engrossed when they dressed up and took part in an 'old fashioned day' and benefited particularly when adults challenged children's thinking by using carefully framed questions. Children made sound gains in learning about the passing of time. In a class discussion afterwards higher attainers and average pupils compared features 'then and now' such as how food was stored because there was no electricity. Children use the computer mouse confidently to draw pictures or play games to support their mathematical and language development. The children enjoy the opportunities given but planning for a suitable range of practical tasks in this area of learning is limited partly due to the lack of a suitable outdoor area in which children can experience the weather or creatures in their natural environment. The role of adults in developing the children's language and role play is not well planned.

### **Physical development**

68 In physical development most children reach the expected levels by the time they start Year 1. The quality of teaching is sound though children's achievement is limited by not having sufficient opportunities to participate in activities with suitable high quality resources in an outdoor setting. This also limits their imaginative responses to the outside environment. Children sometimes have the opportunity to use the outdoor space during the teaching session but the school lacks a discrete area for the reception children to play and work outdoors. Furthermore, children's progress is slowed because planning is unhelpful and there is insufficient focus on a precise learning objective matched to children's development. A number of less able children find it difficult to control their hand and eye coordination using a bat and plastic ball in an outdoor session and higher attainers have little idea of following on to keep a game going. Nonetheless they tried their best and listened

well to instructions from the adult. In contrast a more formal lesson in the hall started well because the teacher had planned a clear learning objective and higher and average attainers demonstrated their ability to begin to link movements creatively as they went on a 'Bear Hunt'. In other areas of physical development teaching is also sound for instance children select materials to cut, stick and join sensibly, carefully and independently during a self-initiated task.

### **Creative development**

69 Children's creative work is sound as is the quality of teaching. The paintings of higher attainers show developing detail and care. For example, paintings of a character from the reading scheme show good use of paint and increasing form and perspective. When planning and teaching takes appropriate account of skill development as in effective group work requiring children to draw an old oil lamp the children make good gains in their work. Progress in developing skills through the independent exploration and use of paint and a wide range of media are limited, however. Planning lacks depth and means that adults are not always deployed as effectively as they might be particularly in supporting children's creative and imaginative development. For example two children in the role-play area thoughtfully organised and resourced as an estate agents received very little help from the adults in order to help them to think creatively and imaginatively or to practise and build up ideas, concepts and skills. The planning does not always ensure that time is effectively used working directly with children.

## **ENGLISH**

70 Standards in English overall are higher than the national average. This is borne out by the results of national tests and assessments in 2002 and inspection findings. Standards in reading and writing are generally well above average in Years 1 and 2 and have been so since 1999, comparing favourably with similar schools. In Year 3 to 6 standards are above average. By the time they are seven years old pupils are achieving well and rapidly building on the good level of skills they bring when they first start school. By the age of 11 their rate of progress has slowed down and achievement is satisfactory rather than good.

71 In Years 4 to 6 standards have been consistently well above the national average between 1999 and 2001. However, test results in 2002 dipped and, whilst almost all the 11-year-olds reached or exceeded the expected levels for their age, when compared with their counterparts in similar schools, they did not perform as well as they should, mainly because too few pupils achieved the higher levels. Some pupils do not achieve consistently as well as they are capable because there is variation in the quality of teaching and there is not always enough challenge for the brighter pupils. The school is rightly concerned about this and steps are currently being taken to raise standards, particularly in writing. Standards now are similar to those seen at the last inspection, although writing is not as good.

72 Speaking and listening are promoted well enabling the pupils to become confident and increasingly articulate. The majority of pupils speak in lucid, grammatical sentences with good diction. They listen attentively and courteously to their teachers and fellow pupils and respond thoughtfully to questions and points of view. There is a real strength in the way pupils articulate their observations in conversation and class debates and many can argue their point of view convincingly. Throughout the school pupils have good opportunities to discuss issues, to respond to questions and to communicate in pairs and groups. When given the chance to be involved in drama and improvisation they achieve well. Of particular note is the mature way in which pupils evaluate the work of their friends in a critical but sensitive way, making constructive observations about the work and suggesting improvements. Because pupils are used to speaking or reading aloud in front of the rest of the class they tend to be confident and mature, as when pupils in Year 2 worked in pairs very sensibly to improvise a scene between two characters in a story. This activity not only developed their speaking skills, it prepared them very well for the more challenging task of writing a play script and enhanced their social skills as well. The good promotion of speaking and

listening helps those pupils learning English as an additional language to extend their vocabulary. The quality of questioning helps to draw out a better understanding which pupils can then use in their written work.

73 Pupils' attainment in reading is well above average by the age of seven and pupils achieve well. By the age of 11 standards are above average, with satisfactory achievement. Pupils throughout the school read with great confidence and expression, with few qualms about reading aloud in class. The younger pupils read with very good levels of understanding and they use letter sounds correctly as a matter of course to help them to decipher new words. Tricky, irregular words such as 'wriggling' and 'squiggled' posed no problem at all to an above average pupil in Year 2. The higher attainers make thoughtful inferences from the text and the majority can discuss the characters and plot of a story. A few pupils are a little more hesitant with their reading, but are generally accurate, employing a good range of strategies to deal with difficult words. By the time they are 11 pupils are very familiar with methods of accessing information from books, for example, by using indexes and contents. They know how to skim and scan text for information and cite an interesting range of favourite authors, explaining candidly why they enjoyed a book or the work of a particular author. The school benefits from a high level of parental interest in reading and most pupils, particularly in the younger year groups, are supported well at home. This helps to raise standards. Parents value the home and school reading systems which provide a good link with the home and give pupils an understanding of how well they are doing though these are better used in Year 1 and Year 2 than in classes of older pupils. A good number of pupils are members of the public library and say they enjoy reading; indeed, as one pupil put it 'No-one could stop me reading'. The monitoring of pupils' reading habits at the top end of the school is less effective than with younger pupils and a few boys say they rarely take books home to read.

74 Through its analysis of test results the school has noted a disparity between the scores of boys and girls, with girls outperforming the boys. This has been a matter of concern and positive steps have been taken to try to eliminate the variation, through further staff training and consideration of the different learning styles of boys and girls. Books have been reviewed and replenished to provide more reading material that better appeals to boys who are reluctant readers. These developments have yet to be evaluated carefully to measure their effect on standards.

75 The school is aware that writing is the least strong aspect of English and is working towards an increase in the number of pupils reaching the higher levels in national tests. Writing has been a focus for development throughout the school in the past year with an emphasis on broadening the range of types of writing. As a result teachers are now providing more opportunities for pupils to write in a variety of ways. Early indications are that standards in writing are improving but pupils' writing in a range of genres is still a relatively weak aspect of English. There is much emphasis on developing the skills of spelling, punctuation and grammar and most pupils achieve the expected standards in these aspects of English. Displays in classrooms are used to good effect with helpful reminders to pupils about particular features of grammar or spelling together with aides-mémoires to help them write accurately. Good use is made of computers for word processing pupils' work, which gives an attractive finished product. Pupils compose their writing directly onto the screen, amending the text as they go. Many pupils in all classes write with imagination and flair on a variety of themes, often using colourful and descriptive language. Writing increases in length and complexity as pupils grow older so that by the time they are 11 most are reaching the expected standard. However, insufficient use is made of writing in other subjects such as history and geography and this limits the opportunities pupils have to write at length.

76 Teaching is sound overall but there is some variation between classes and it is more consistently good in Years 1 to 3. In these year groups it is of good quality. In some classes higher up the school teachers are less demanding about such features as standards of presentation or accuracy of spelling and punctuation, resulting in a lack of rigour. This results in some pupils not attaining as highly as they might. Variations in expectations occur from class to class, for example in the quality of presentation, the use of lined or unlined paper, pencil or pen adds to the inconsistency. Although the majority of pupils form their writing carefully in their handwriting books in a neat, uniform style, very often the skills are not transferred to their other written work, which in

some cases is untidy and erratic. The quality of marking is inconsistent and this means that pupils do not always have written guidance to which they can refer to help them improve.

77 When teaching is very good it is underpinned by very good knowledge of English, very precise objectives, thorough planning that gives variation to hold pupils' interest and a lively pace. When these features come together in a lesson, pupils make very good progress. A good example of this was when pupils in Year 2 worked on play scripts. The pupils had very mature attitudes and shared their sensitive and well considered opinions confidently both orally and in writing. The lesson worked well because it was well planned for all levels of attainment. A particular strength in the teaching was the way in which the discussion was orchestrated, with ample opportunities for pupils to contribute their own thoughts and ideas. Teaching is less successful when all pupils in a class tackle the same activity, regardless of their levels of attainment. This holds back the progress of the higher attaining pupils.

78 The management of the subject is strengthening over time although monitoring of standards is not comprehensive enough to give a real idea of where strengths and weaknesses lie. Although the National Literacy Strategy is well embedded in the school's systems, staff, rightly, continually update and review their practice with writing a current focus of attention. The school library has an adequate range of material to suit the ages and tastes of the pupils, although a couple of older pupils remarked that they found the books boring. The school is well aware of the need to replenish and renew the stock and this is an ongoing challenge. However, although the school policy states that all classes use the library for research purposes in practice this is not always the case, and so the resource is not used to best advantage. The policies that underpin English are not always consistently implemented and this is one of the causes of the differences in quality of teaching and pupils' achievement. For example, the use of individual targets is at an early stage and not yet helping to raise standards.

## **MATHEMATICS**

79 Raising standards in mathematics was a key issue in the last inspection report. Teachers throughout the school have tackled this effectively. Standards at the end of Year 2 are above average and well above average by the end of Year 6 thus matching overall levels of attainment in national tests in recent years. This is in part due to the rigorous planning stemming from the National Numeracy Strategy. Mental mathematics sessions are now conducted at a good pace and contain good levels of challenge. For example, pupils in Year 5 continue to double numbers that contain decimals, with the best in the class able to double from 1.6 through to 819.2 in their heads. They can tackle mental arithmetic using a range of strategies that teachers have introduced systematically.

80 The curriculum is now well organised. The use of a commercial scheme ensures regular consolidation, particularly in number and shape. However, teachers try to ensure that work matches the needs of all pupils and choose activities accordingly. This attention to detail requires intensive preparation. In a Year 1 class, the teacher organised work at six different levels, so that all pupils could move sequentially through tasks set at appropriate levels. In Year 6 three sets have been formed to allow pupils of similar attainments to work with one another. This is working well.

81 The other concern in 1998 was the lack of investigational work. This is now being addressed in all classes. Problem solving is built into the schemes of work and pupils are increasingly expected to organise their own work. For instance, the top set in Year 6 worked on congruent triangles for homework, and during the follow up lesson accepted the challenge of determining the relationships between the areas of triangles and rectangles.

82 High standards are being achieved by both boys and girls because teachers and pupils work as partners in well-organised lessons. Teaching is effective rather than inspirational. One very good lesson was observed with the lowest set in Year 6. The teacher knows the needs of all the pupils and adjusts planning daily. This ensures that everyone understands the fundamental

principles of the topic and can therefore conduct an investigation successfully. This level of concern is leading to good progress across the school for pupils with special educational needs. Support staff also play a significant role in this. For example, pupils with learning difficulties in Year 4 were helped by the informed advice offered when calculating area.

83 The positive attitudes of pupils is a significant factor in the good progress being made. Even the youngest pupils are able to work independently and are prepared to ask questions when they are unsure. Whole class discussions are often enlivened by the infectious enthusiasm of the group, as when a Year 3 class practised a partitioning exercise using three digit numbers. The pupils at Lightcliffe love a challenge. Even when the pace of a lesson drops – as happens sometimes when explanations are too involved – they are patient and do not try to distract others. In group and paired work, they have very good levels of co-operation and help each other sensibly.

84 Written work is generally well set out. By Year 2 pupils show a real pride in presentation as they tackle some quite complex problems in, for example, number patterns and money problems. This careful approach is maintained in Year 3 to Year 6. Marking is often good, giving pointers about how to improve. Sometimes, however, it consists of page after page of ticks (mainly) and crosses (occasionally) and encouraging comments but is insufficiently diagnostic or challenging.

85 Assessment strategies still require some fine tuning. The committed co-ordinator recognises this and is working on the refinement of the half-termly assessments and target setting processes. Currently, these do not have a significant impact on strategic thinking. The potential of new technology to stimulate learning has not been fully explored. All members of the senior management team contribute to the management of the subject. This teamwork is helping to provide a sound framework within which teachers can work effectively.

## **SCIENCE**

86 Standards are at expected levels by the end of Year 6 matching those in the national tests for 11-year-olds in 2002. The attainment of seven-year-olds is at present above the national average rather than the well above attainment shown in the national assessments in 2002. However, analysis of pupils' work and discussions with teachers suggest that the present cohort of Year 2 pupils is on target to attain similar high standards by the time they move to Year 3. Standards for both seven and 11-year-olds remain similar to the last inspection. Pupils of all levels of attainment, including higher attainers, pupils who have special educational needs and pupils learning English as an additional language achieve well in Year 1 and Year 2. Factors supporting this are the consistently good teaching of well planned, interesting and stimulating activities linked to the progression of scientific skills.

87 Pupils achieve satisfactorily by Year 6 and the quality of teaching is sound overall. Where there is good teaching supported by marking for instance that challenges and helps pupils to extend their scientific knowledge as in Year 3 they achieve well. Recent analysis of tests have shown that older pupils who failed to attain the higher levels have difficulty in describing precisely why something happened. Those who failed to achieve the expected level or who only just made it find it difficult to interpret information from graphs or diagrams so resulting in an average rather than a higher standard of attainment overall. These issues still remain and though suitable plans are now in place to address these aspects they have yet to impact fully on standards.

88 There is now a more balanced and detailed range of learning experiences provided. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Pupils are progressively taught a good balance of investigation, experimentation, knowledge, skills and understanding in each aspect of the curriculum. In each year group and in each class pupils are systematically building up an understanding of how to communicate facts, ideas and opinions although teachers' marking is still inconsistent in helping pupils to improve their own learning and performance. Where it is used effectively it develops and extends pupils' thinking as in Year 3 where the teacher's marking

required the pupil to consider the length of the shadow at a particular time of day by re-reading data off a chart. In contrast in Year 5 and Year 6 whilst teaching provides satisfactory opportunities to experience investigative work for instance marking rarely supports the development of progress. For example, in Year 5 when investigating conditions for germinating seeds average and below average pupils recorded the experiment with too little accuracy and detail. Absence of suitable questions or constructive comments when marking work missed opportunities to increase pupils' skills in scientific enquiry through presenting evidence to a higher level for instance.

89 Pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 are taught well and as a result produce carefully presented work across a good balanced curriculum. Above average and average pupils in Year 2 record their results neatly and legibly using scientific vocabulary where appropriate in drawings charts and tables for instance. They are beginning to link the collection of evidence to simple scientific ideas and to evaluate evidence and consider whether tests or comparisons are fair. For example in discussion Year 2 pupils confidently describe the process of making toast or bread as an irreversible change. Higher attaining pupils also understand that the properties of some materials such as glass make them suitable for specific tasks - a characteristic typical of achievement at a higher level. Use of assessments at the end of a unit of work give teachers a clear picture of pupils' progress and the identification of groups by attainment means that work can be matched to pupils' needs.

90 Whilst teaching in Year 3 to Year 6 is satisfactory overall it is unclear how assessment is used to plan the next steps of teaching particularly for pupils of different levels of attainment. Whilst pupils across the school complete a good amount of work there is clearly a lack of enthusiasm for the subject as the pupils reach Years 5 and 6. Higher attainers in Year 6 clearly have a good understanding of scientific concepts such as the difference between solids, liquids and gases or that some living things depend on others to survive such as seen in their work on food chains. In discussion with Year 6 pupils only a few pupils retained the natural curiosity and excitement seen in the Year 2 pupils when visitors were used to help pupils to understand the use of drugs in scientific as well as human terms. Behaviour on this occasion was exemplary and learning fun and so pupils consequently worked all the harder. Whilst behaviour and attitudes are good overall in Year 4 to Year 6 and most pupils work well together or independently there is more enthusiasm and interest generated by the pupils in Year 2 and Year 3 for instance particularly where teaching challenges and fires the imagination of pupils for the subject.

91 Science has not had the highest profile recently as a result of national initiatives such as literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology. Rigorous procedures for tracking progress have yet to be developed as they have in English and mathematics. The capable co-ordinator supports staff effectively by providing detailed lesson plans and the recent analysis of tests have led to a better understanding of how standards can be improved further. Literacy is used well to support the subject although the use of information and communication technology has yet to be developed reliably across the school.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

92 As was found at the last inspection, standards are above those typically expected of pupils aged seven and 11. Strengths are in pupils' attainment in painting, textiles and the use of information and communication technology to enhance their work. Pupils with special educational needs are given appropriate help in their work and make the same progress as others in their class.

93 The effective teaching of pupils in Year 1 to Year 2 means that they achieve well. This was the case in Year 2 when pupils worked on textiles using stitching to make radial patterns on a card for Mothers' Day. The quality of teaching was good because it was well planned and at the beginning of the lesson time was set aside to talk about the work. Pupils came to a better understanding of radial patterns in nature because resources such as a halved orange were used well in demonstration. The work was well linked to the study of cold wintry colours and radial

patterns in snowflakes and pupils improved their understanding of how to use blues, whites and grey to portray cold. Embroidery by other craftspeople was shown to set high standards. Because independence was very much encouraged pupils got better at threading needles, choosing appropriate yarn and placing stitches carefully. They helped each other very well, sharing skills and ideas. A sense of spirituality pervaded the lesson as the teacher explained 'It is a peaceful job, take care and think about your embroidery'. Pupils took such good care that in a class of 28 pupils not one sewing needle was dropped on the floor, the atmosphere was quiet and lent itself to pupils producing work of good quality – which they did.

94 By the end of Year 6 the quality of teaching is satisfactory and pupils achieve soundly. The pupils have a good understanding of how to adapt their work to achieve a desired effect and know full well that it is worthwhile to take their time over a number of lessons to produce work of good quality. For example, they understood the need to make bold statements on their Greek masks and used papier mâché carefully, building up the shape and detail and adding colour to bring out the finer points. Higher attainers were good at adapting their work in progress while middle attainers tended to stay with their original design. Lower attainers were at times frustrated when their work did not meet their high expectations. Pupils responded well to the challenge because relationships were good and the teaching provided clear explanations and demonstration of techniques and processes. The task was linked to pupils' study in history though the planning for the particular lesson was brief and did not identify extra challenge for the higher attaining pupils.

95 Pupils' creativity is nurtured through providing time to find out about other artists and then using time well to develop their creative responses through a range of media. Pupils' attitude to art is good. The pupils in Year 5, for example, used homework very well to explore the life and work of Paul Klee. This provided a good starting point for their class work. Pupils paid much attention to mixing beautiful shades of colours to portray their ideas after the style of Klee producing some individual pieces of good quality.

96 The subject is well managed and has maintained standards over a number of years even given the school's focus on English and mathematics. The poor teaching found at the time of the last inspection has been eradicated. A full and interesting curriculum is on offer to the pupils and underlying this is a clear focus on teaching particular skills alongside developing pupils' knowledge of art and artists. A greater emphasis is placed on non-European cultures which has broadened the subject well, for example visual stimulus is selected to cover a range of cultures and also the work of men and women artists. There are effective links between art and other subjects - history and design and technology in particular and this helps pupils to attain a better understanding of the world about them. The use of sketchbooks is inconsistent across the school, which means that pupils have too little opportunity to see the development of their work at different points in time. Assessment is at an early stage and is one reason why the challenge for higher attainers in Year 3 to Year 6 is not always clear.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

97 Due to the restrictions of the timetable, it was only possible to observe two lessons, both in Year 3. Judgements are based on these observations, discussions with pupils in Year 2 and Year 6, scrutiny of work from all year groups and examination of teaching records and resources.

98 Standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are similar to those seen nationally. The real strength is in the making element. Some of the constructions are of high quality. Early skill development is evident when Year 1 pupils interpret 'My cat hides in a box' and Year 2, where sturdy house frames build on their study of the Great Fire of London. Moving circus vehicles show good use of axles. Pupils talk animatedly about their 'clay queen' models of Elizabeth 1.

99 The lessons in Year 3 were of high quality. The teachers planned lessons together and this ensured that pupils in both classes experienced the same content. Pupils with special educational

needs were well catered for. The teaching demonstrated good subject knowledge and very effective classroom organisation. The pupils were totally immersed in making musical instruments, in both lessons showing high levels of concentration and independence. The guiros and maracas are made in the convincing shape of birds and animals. One of the strengths in this year group is that teachers ensure that pupils generate their own ideas and develop their own designs. After finishing their product, they conduct a suitably detailed evaluation. This also happens in Year 5 for example, where evaluation sheets are used to ensure pupils think about how to improve their designs for slippers. This good practice is not evident across the whole school. Several of the products in some classes are clearly copied from models presented to them.

100 Often the models link in with topics in other subjects. For instance, in their study of the Spanish Armada, pupils in Year 4 produced realistic models of ships. Elizabethan framed houses in Year 5 illuminate their studies of the Tudors. The control aspects emerge strongly in Year 6 as pupils construct torches involving the use of switches and an understanding of circuits. Imagination is allowed to blossom as torches are shaped to resemble a rocket or a train or a miner's lamp.

101 The knowledgeable and experienced co-ordinator has devised some interesting resources. A pack entitled 'Get Back Alive' has proved very popular with pupils in Year 6 as they work out how to survive after being stranded. This also involves food technology, which is taught at a very basic level in the school. These older pupils clearly enjoy the fun involved in a 'wake-up' alarm for granddad. One pupil's attempt is to devise a system whereby you "wind the cotton to his leg, so that the pulley can lift him upside down." Creative models on this theme were on display in the school foyer during the inspection. Evaluations for these are informative and often amusing but this level of assessment is used inconsistently and insufficiently linked to a rigorous marking strategy.

102 At the last inspection, the use of assessment was an issue, and remains so. Standards are similar and the design process is still underdeveloped. The potential of information and communication technology has not yet been fully explored. Progress since then is satisfactory.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

103 Standards are above national expectations by Year 2 and pupils' achievement is good. This is because there is effective teaching of basic geographical skills and pupils gain good insights into the locality. By Year 6, standards are broadly typical for pupils' ages. At the time of the last inspection pupils made good progress by Year 6; now pupils' achieve satisfactorily though a number of pupils attain higher standards and make good progress in oral work. Pupils progress well when being taught specific skills, such as map reading. However, there is not always a sufficient geographical focus in their written work.

104 By Year 2, pupils are able to draw simple maps, using basic symbols and accurate labels. They make good use of information and communication technology to record their journey to school and, with teacher support, identify the location of their own homes on a classroom display. They gain good insights into village life in Kenya, helping them understand the local economy and family life. Their work on Masai tribal homes provides good opportunities to compare village life with their own experiences. This includes a valuable study of diet and food sources. A particular feature of their work is self-evaluation enabling pupils to identify what they have learnt. Higher attainers in particular thrive on using self-evaluation. The good standards achieved are a result of knowledgeable teaching which draws upon imaginative resources. Good use is made of information and communication technology and basic skills are carefully taught. Pupils work hard and clearly enjoy their work, taking care with presentational skills.

105 By Year 6, most pupils have an appropriate understanding of environmental issues and of land use. Pupils make valid comparisons between contrasting coastal areas, through a study of Whitby and the surrounding area. However, some written work lacks detail and does not sufficiently explain geographical issues. For example, written accounts focus too readily on the social aspects of a residential visit, rather than the impact of physical and environmental issues upon the lives of local people. In discussion, pupils more readily identify these geographical factors and middle and

higher attainers readily use terminology linked to the subject. Many pupils are able to calculate six figure grid references accurately and use these to locate features on a map. This is because basic skills are taught effectively and consolidated thoroughly through practice. Standards of teaching are satisfactory overall, with examples of good teaching being evident. For example, topics such as the 'water cycle' are carefully taught and this enables pupils to gain a clear understanding of its influence upon weather conditions. Residential visits provide good opportunities for pupils to work collaboratively and these promote personal development well. The success of these is due to the careful organisation and hard work of the staff.

106 The curriculum is enriched by educational visits and work within the locality. It promotes an understanding of non-European cultures well and also supports pupils' personal development effectively. Assessment procedures, though satisfactory, require further development to inform future planning and identify specific tasks for more able pupils. The new co-ordinator is quickly establishing a clear view of both standards achieved and priorities for the future. For example, resources are in need of some improvement to ensure all areas of the programme of study are fully covered.

## **HISTORY**

107 Standards are above national expectations by Year 2 and pupils' achievement is good overall. Pupils are introduced to an appropriate range of historical skills and effectively taught. By Year 6, standards of attainment broadly match national expectations and a number of more able pupils' work exceeds those expectations. Overall achievement is satisfactory with some good progress also being evident. Speaking and listening skills are good and whilst many pupils discuss their work competently, there is not always sufficient depth and quality in their written work.

108 By Year 2, pupils understand that people and places change over time. They recognise that a sequence of events can indicate this; for example, changes in forms of transport. Pupils construct a simple time-line, using words and illustrations, in the correct sequence of events. They are effectively taught to develop basic investigative skills; for example, using photographs to examine the past. The study of famous characters from past eras provides good opportunities that enable pupils to consider motive, cause and effect. For example, the stories of Guy Fawkes and Florence Nightingale provide pupils with an understanding of what they did, why they did it and the impact of their actions. Because teaching is good, pupils acquire secure levels of knowledge and understanding and develop a varied range of skills which ensure good progress overall. This is further supported by positive attitudes pupils have towards their studies.

109 By Year 6, pupils acquire an appropriate range of skills. They have a clear understanding of cause and effect; for example, recognising how the Roman invasions changed British society. Pupils develop their ability to empathise, by studying famous characters and events. For example, they write interesting accounts in the role of English sailors facing the Armada. Pupils recognise the importance of evidence and use a variety of research techniques well. For example, good use is made of computers to study topics such as the Greeks and Romans. In Year 5, pupils study primary source material, old ledgers, reports and photographs to build up a picture of their own school during the late Victorian period. Whilst gaining useful insights into this period, pupils do not always have sufficient contextual understanding to make the best use of these materials. A study of Ancient Greece, in Year 6, makes appropriate use of the Internet to research this topic. Pupils speak knowledgeably about it, but their written work lacks detail and does not fully reflect the level of knowledge and skills that many pupils possess.

110 The overall standard of teaching is satisfactory in Year 4 to Year 6 and is good in Year 3. This is because appropriate levels of evidence are used particularly well and carefully planned tasks are matched to pupils' differing abilities. In all year groups, pupils respond positively when presented with stimulating material. For example, in Year 5 they record a video presentation on Egyptian mummification, carefully demonstrating and explaining the technique. In Year 6, a number actively participate in a professionally led drama presentation on Greek life. All staff take considerable care to use a variety of approaches to learning. Pupils gain considerably from this, both in academic and social development.

111 The curriculum meets statutory requirements well and is enriched through educational

visits, the use of the locality and visiting speakers and actors. However, the choice of topics, through Years 3 to 6, does not always provide the best match to help pupils achieve the higher levels of attainment in respect of their age. Assessment procedures are well developed, making very good use of a portfolio of work to both judge standards and provide guidance for staff. The co-ordinator provides good and thoughtful leadership; she has a clear set of priorities and gives a clear lead to other staff in developing ideas. Overall, older pupils make better progress with oral work than written work, because the school has not yet identified sufficient challenging written tasks for more able pupils. The overall improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

112 Standards are above national expectations by Year 2 and by Year 6; pupils' achievement is good. For the more able pupils, standards are well above national expectations by Year 6 and their achievement is very good. Their success is a result of a number of factors, which include good teaching, the pupils' positive attitudes towards learning and the richness and variety of curricular provision.

113 By Year 2, most pupils have good levels of competence with their basic skills. They know the main functions of the keyboard and control the mouse with confidence. They edit text, inserting appropriate punctuation and altering letter size. These basic skills are taught well, so that the pupils make rapid progress across a range of applications. Pupils use these skills well to write a variety of narratives. For example, colour poems, by selecting a suitable colour to illuminate key words. Pupils competently incorporate graphics to improve presentational skills. They know how to insert pictures and they produce attractive greeting cards to celebrate Christmas. The variety of work develops steadily because the teaching staff have good knowledge and understanding of information and communication technology and receive useful guidance through the scheme of work. Pupils move on to experiment with line and colour, and quickly master the skills to select a background colour and then overlay it with line drawing. Some impressive work is informed by the school's interest and focus upon Africa. Pupils draw clear images of African faces and add jewellery as decoration. This effectively supports the development of their understanding of non-European cultures and underpins their wider personal development.

114 The overall quality of teaching and learning is good in Years 1 and 2. This is because the staff have benefited from good quality training. They have a secure knowledge of the subject, are well organised and aware of the curricular requirements for this stage of learning. They provide many good opportunities for all pupils, in different subjects, for example in literacy, geography, art and design and design and technology. Great care is taken to ensure pupils use language related to the subject and understand the routines for safe use of equipment. Pupils are very keen to learn and work together in a collaborative manner. They express themselves clearly in discussion and are able to say what they do well and what they need to improve. Higher attainers are especially good at self-evaluation. There is effective use of day-to-day assessment by staff and this means tasks are well matched to pupils' attainment

115 By Year 6, most pupils are confident and competent in working with a wide range of programs. These enable them to use information and communication technology in a number of curricular areas. These include literacy, numeracy, history, geography and art. The basic skills are taught extremely well, and the technician has an important role in this process. Pupils save their work in individual folders and possess the skills to quickly access these, select the file they need and work within a specific program. A good range of written tasks is completed. These include stories, poems and descriptive text. For example; pupils are able to lay out work in a particular style, re-creating a newspaper or magazine. They combine text with graphics well, sometimes using the Internet or CDROM to select illustrations for their own written work. Pupils are carefully supervised to ensure they can only access suitable material and are made clearly aware of the need for caution when using the Internet.

116 In developing an understanding of control and monitoring, pupils have good opportunities to develop their skills with a floor robot and also on the screen. By Year 6, they are able to control sequences of events, such as traffic lights. Pupils are carefully taught to use spreadsheets and the middle and higher attainers compile and manage data effectively. This supports the development of their numeracy skills well. They use a spreadsheet with the Internet to plan an educational visit, selecting a venue and then determining the details of costing and travel arrangements. This requires pupils to make use of 'search engines' and pupils begin to recognise the importance of precision when entering key words and phrases. A residential visit to Whitby provides the stimulus for pupils to create a presentation which includes the use of hyper-links. These skills are also used to tell the story of Anne Frank.

117 The high standards achieved result from good overall teaching in Years 3 to 6 and the increasing application of information and communication technology across the curriculum. Skills are taught extremely well, in some classes by the class teacher and elsewhere by the very competent technician, working with groups. The use of information and communication technology is more commonly found in certain subjects than others, but the school is actively seeking to widen its use. Staff training is thorough and the co-ordinator has an important role in leading this. Where standards of attainment are particularly good, those pupils not only possess very good skills, but also use information and communication technology imaginatively and competently across a range of applications. They form sensible judgements on how best to use these resources and they have a very clear view of their own strengths and areas for development. The positive attitudes of pupils and their desire to learn is an important factor in the high standards being achieved.

118 The curriculum is of very good quality in the range of opportunity it provides all pupils. There is an appropriate policy statement and also an 'Internet Access Policy', which provides clear guidelines for all staff. The curriculum is enriched by very good extra-curricular provision and resources. This enables pupils of all ages and attainments to make good progress and achieve high standards. The curriculum promotes literacy and numeracy well and increasingly provides good cross-curricular activities. In addition it promotes all pupils' personal development well. This is because it encourages pupils to think, to become independent learners and to collaborate with one another. Assessment procedures are still being developed. The school is currently designing and using some effective assessment tasks for older pupils. Further work is needed to link the outcomes of these with medium term planning. The co-ordinator provides good leadership and is supported well by the headteacher in promoting the subject across the curriculum. There has been significant progress since the last inspection and overall improvement since then is very good.

## **MUSIC**

119 Music plays an important part in the life of the school. Many pupils are able to participate in musical performance and tuition beyond their ordinary lessons. Parents greatly value this enrichment to the curriculum and enjoy the quality of the musical performances. Standards throughout the school are higher than typically expected and pupils achieve well, making good progress in widening their repertoire of musical skills and their understanding of musical forms. As they move through the school they become increasingly proficient in creating music with untuned percussion instruments, sometimes recording their compositions very effectively with simple pictorial notation to represent the quality and duration of the sounds. The pupils are especially good at evaluating their music critically, looking for ways in which it could be improved. Throughout the school the pupils sing sweetly and tunefully, often in two parts. Pupils' attainment in instrumental work is higher than average, with many pupils achieving highly for their age.

120 The teaching is good overall; very good or excellent in about a third of lessons, particularly when taken by visiting specialists. The quality of teaching is greatly enhanced by the good levels of teacher knowledge and enthusiasm by all staff involved in the music curriculum and this is a key factor in the success of the subject. Hallmarks of the good teaching are the very good relationships with pupils, imaginative tasks that provide scope for pupils of all attainments to achieve well and the

management of group work, which provides opportunities for pupils to co-operate, discuss and share ideas. When teaching is good rather than very good the pace of learning is not quite as brisk because there are periods of inactivity as groups take turns to rehearse, tape record and finally listen to the taped performance.

121 Resources are used creatively to enhance the lessons, as was seen in Year 2 when a taped broadcast was used judiciously to provide a lively prompt for singing and musical accompaniment. This was complemented by the teacher's own contributions which expanded and reinforced the teaching points in the broadcast very effectively. As a result the lesson was very well paced, interesting and pupils enjoyed their learning. An additional feature was the inventive way in which the teacher illustrated how stringed instruments worked with a simple visual effect of string stretched between two chairs. This illustrated clearly the principle of plucking taut strings to make a range of sounds, and set the scene nicely for two pupils to demonstrate how they play their violin and guitar. The lesson worked particularly well because the teacher maintained the momentum with interesting questions and interjections and judged precisely how long each component should last to hold the pupils' interest.

122 In lessons taken by visiting specialists pupils make very good strides in their learning because of the intensive guidance and correction afforded by the very small groups coupled with the teachers' own high levels of musical expertise. The school is rightly proud of the achievements of the orchestra, which provides an opportunity for a significant number of the pupils to enjoy performing and making music together. The repertoire is varied and the pupils involved read musical notation proficiently, playing rhythmically and accurately. Under the guidance of the enthusiastic co-ordinator the school provides an extensive range of extra curricular musical activities such as the choir and recorder groups and it is involved in numerous musical events in the community and there are frequent musical concerts that enable pupils to share their musical talents. Since the last inspection the provision for music has improved as the curriculum has widened and there is now a useful system of assessing and recording pupils' achievements. The subject contributes greatly to the overall ethos of the school.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

123 Since the last inspection, standards have improved, particularly in dance and gymnastics. There are many talented pupils in the school who bring with them skills that they develop at home and in the community. For example, the quality of movement in dance routines is enhanced by balletic interpretations, mainly by girls. Teachers have a good understanding of how pupils can explore different moods and feelings in their dance sequences. As a result, those in Year 1 interpret the story of Little Red Riding Hood with flair. In Year 2, pupils discuss thoughtfully the effect that music has on their movement. One describes it as "Music makes the atmosphere real." In a very good lesson, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, interpret different music well showing an awareness of mood and rhythm. By the time they reach Year 5, pupils are showing great creativity. Groups produce very imaginative performances on a range of themes such as World War 2, karate or 'Grease.' Boys are as good as the girls in their development of motifs and sequences. These pupils are also devising choreographic records of their movement.

124 The ambitious approach to physical education is epitomised by attempts to introduce a programme, whereby pupils assess the performance of others in a structured way. Although a Year 6 lesson did not capitalise on pupils' natural ability, the seeds of analytical thinking were sown.

125 Overall, teaching is good and accounts for the above average standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Teachers who are confident in their subject knowledge teach the best lessons. All teachers manage pupils well and pay attention to safety issues, but those who have limited subject knowledge organise lessons less effectively. In these lessons activities are often arranged so that these teachers retain control rather than extend pupils' horizons.

126 Pupils generally approach lessons with enthusiasm. They dress smartly and appropriately and respect the performance of others when they demonstrate their skills. Pupils in Year 2 showed remarkable control and maturity when setting out apparatus for a very successful lesson in gymnastics. No games lessons were scheduled during the inspection. However, there was good attendance at the after-school soccer club, well organised by a parent, and netball club. Good levels of ability were evident in both sports. Although swimming is only provided in Years 3 – 5 virtually every pupil in Year 6 can swim 25 metres.

127 The enthusiastic co-ordinator has been responsible for a number of innovations. She has fostered strong links with two local high schools and seven other primary schools in a 'Family Development' initiative. Gymnastics, rugby, cricket and basketball are all being promoted. Aware of the need to help other teachers, she has organised demonstration lessons and offers advice freely. At the end of the inspection week, pupils in Year 5 were heading off to Winmarleigh Hall near Preston for a programme of outdoor education. The school is actively seeking to improve changing arrangements for older pupils. The three-year development plan promises further enhanced provision, particularly in assessment.