

INSPECTION REPORT

KNOPLAW FIRST SCHOOL

Newcastle

LEA area: Newcastle

Unique reference number: 108450

Headteacher: Mrs P Dutton

Reporting inspector: N A Pett
17331

Dates of inspection: 8th – 12th May 2000

Inspection number: 182231

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First School
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 9
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Hillhead Parkway Chapel House Newcastle-upon-Tyne
Postcode:	NE5 1LH
Telephone number:	(0191) 267 4453
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr M Brown
Date of previous inspection:	21 st November 1994

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
N A Pett	Registered inspector	Mathematics History Information technology	Standards How well is the school led and managed?
G Watts	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?
C Whittington	Team inspector	English Design and technology Physical education Music Special educational needs	
Mrs O Cooper	Team inspector	Under fives Science Art	
B Downes	Team Inspector	Geography Religious education Equal opportunities	How well are pupils taught? How good are the curricular and other opportunities?

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Inspection Quality Division
The Office for Standards in Education
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is situated on the western side of Newcastle. It caters for boys and girls aged between 4 and 9 years old age and serves its immediate area, which is an area of established housing estates and some new developments. There are 295 pupils on roll and it is larger than the average size for primary schools, nationally. Pupils come from the full range of socio-economic backgrounds and the number of pupils eligible for free school meals is below the national average. The ethnic heritage of the pupils is mainly white European, although the percentage of pupils not having English as their first language is above the national average. Twenty-nine pupils are identified as having special educational needs and one pupil holds a statement to address specific needs. These figures are well below the national average. Attainment on entry at under five is below the expectations for their ages for over a half of the children. The school's aim is 'striving to achieve excellence'.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This very good school is working exceptionally well to achieve its aim. Standards in National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 1 are well above the national average and above the average for similar schools. Standards seen in work during the inspection are generally above the national expectations by the end of Key Stage 1 and by the time that the pupils leave school at the age of nine. Pupils' progress is very good. Teaching is of a high standard. The leadership and management set very high expectations, which are met well by the committed staff. The school gives very good value for money.

What the school does well

- Achieves high standards through the very good progress made by all pupils.
- Teaching is of a high standard.
- It encourages and achieves very high standards in pupils' attendance, behaviour, attitudes and values.
- It provides a very good quality of education.
- It cares very well for its pupils and provides exceptionally well for their personal development.
- Has a very good partnership with parents.
- Is effectively led and managed, enabling it to achieve its aim.

What could be improved

- There are no key issues for consideration. The school recognises that it can improve even further:
- its work in information and communication technology;
 - its work with the most able pupils.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has effectively addressed the key issues set in the last inspection in 1994. The provision for early years, the accommodation, the school environment, the roles of the coordinators and some aspects of teaching are issues from the last report that have all been resolved. Most notable is the recent provision of a computer suite. Since that inspection there have been significant changes in staffing, including the promotions of the deputy headteacher to the post of headteacher a year ago and the acting deputy headteacher to the permanent position in March. In the six year period, the school has evaluated its own priorities for improvement and these have led to the very good ethos and reaching of the very high standards which now exist in the school. Good standards in pupils' work have not only been maintained but have shown significant improvements.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 7 year olds based on National Curriculum test results.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
Reading	A	A*	A*	A
Writing	A	A	A*	A
Mathematics	A*	A*	A*	A*

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

This table shows the standards which, when compared to all schools and similar schools, have been consistently well above the national average and they are often very high. The proportion of pupils who achieve above the national average is high. Both boys and girls achieve well above the national average and the trend for improvement is better than the national average. In comparison with similar schools the results are well above average in reading and in writing and very high in mathematics.

Standards seen during the inspection are generally above national expectations by the end of Key Stage 1 and by the time that the pupils leave the school at the age of nine. Standards in English, mathematics and science are above national expectations. In information and communication technology, standards in the large majority of the skills are at least in line with national expectations and for a significant majority of pupils, standards are better than the average. Standards in religious education are above expectations for the pupils' ages. In all other subjects, pupils achieve standards, which always meet expectations and many pupils exceed this level. The school's targets are high and are being achieved. The school recognises and is taking appropriate action to develop further its work with higher attaining pupils.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have very positive attitudes towards their work and teachers. They enjoy school and work hard.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	The behaviour of the very large majority of pupils is very good at all times.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils show responsibility towards others and for their work. They collaborate well and have very good relationships with teachers and each other.
Attendance	Good. The overall attendance figures for the last year were higher than the average for primary schools nationally. Unauthorised absence is lower than the national average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-9 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Good	Very good

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

The teaching for children under five is consistently good and addresses the areas of learning for these children very well. Teaching in Key Stage 1 is good, challenges the pupils and enables a significant majority to make very good progress. At Key Stage 2, the teaching is very good, overall, ranging in quality from good teaching to examples of outstanding teaching. It is through higher expectations and a better pace to learning that teaching is better in this key stage. Overall, teaching is always satisfactory and in 67 per cent of lessons it is at least good, being very good in 16 per cent of lessons and excellent in 11 per cent of lessons. The scrutiny of pupils' work shows that teaching is consistently good over time in all age groups. Literacy and numeracy are taught well, with very good use of both skills in other subjects across the curriculum. This approach enables pupils to understand their work and enhances their learning. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well through the effective partnership between teachers and learning support staff and potentially higher attaining pupils are often being well challenged through extension work. This high quality of provision leads to the good standards pupils achieve and teaching is a significant strength of the school.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. There is very good provision for literacy and numeracy both within the specific subjects but also in links with other subjects in the curriculum. Science is well provided for and there is effective coverage of the foundation subjects. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities and swimming is well provided for.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Arrangements are managed well by the coordinator and the learning support staff are deployed well.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Effective support is provided and these pupils achieve as well as their peers.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good provision is made for all aspects of pupil' personal development. A particular strength is the provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Teachers also maintain a very good overview of pupils' personal development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The overall care is very good and is seen as a strength of the school by the parents.

There is a very effective partnership with parents, in terms of support and involvement in their children's learning. A significant number of parents, carers and volunteers support school activities. The provision for information technology has rapidly improved in recent months, enabling the school to cover activities so that the requirements of National Curriculum are almost met. The monitoring of all aspects of pupils academic and personal development is monitored well and good use of the information is made to enhance pupils' progress.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very effective. The headteacher has a clear vision for the school and provides, through her partnership with the deputy headteacher and the staff, a clear educational direction for the school.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors fulfil their responsibilities effectively through a good partnership with the headteacher and staff.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Effective. National test results are analysed and further testing systems are applied to ensure that pupils are making appropriate progress.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. Financial and staffing resources are very well deployed to ensure that the school provides the best opportunities for its pupils. The school achieves very good value for money.

The headteacher is a very good manager. She provides an outstanding example of commitment to staff and pupils. Through the effective school development plan, priorities are identified and action plans are appropriately carried out. Within the overall management the roles of the senior staff and coordinators are appropriate. The governors carry out visits to inform their decision making and there is a governor linked to each subject. Targets are set for all staff. The school applies the principles of best value to ensure that every opportunity exists for the children and pupils. This effective management leads to the very high standards being achieved.

There are sufficient staff who have appropriate qualifications and experience to teach the age range and the curriculum. Subject expertise is good. The accommodation is adequate to meet the needs of the curriculum, especially with the recent conversion of space to create a computer room, which is very well resourced. Learning resources, overall, are good and are used very well. The display of pupils' work is exemplary and adds significantly to the learning ethos of the school.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The very good standards which their children achieve through good teaching. • The excellent ethos. • Homework challenges and extends pupils' learning. • The improvements to the accommodation. • Their children are encouraged to be responsible. • Their involvement in the life of the school. • That the school is well led and managed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The details relating to their children's progress.

Forty six parents attended the pre-inspection meeting and a high percentage of the questionnaires were returned. The overall view of the parents is that the school is providing exceptionally well for their children in relation to both academic progress and personal development. The inspection evidence confirms these positive views. Reports provide a sound picture of pupils' progress and, linked with the school's open door policy, inspectors judge that they enable parents and carers to gain good levels of information as to their children's progress.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. Results in the 1999 National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 1 show that, in relation to the levels expected for their age, standards were very high in comparison with the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. In teacher assessments in science, standards were well above the national average. The percentage of pupils who achieved higher levels in reading was above average, as were the percentage of pupils achieving this level in science. Overall, the teacher assessments reflect the final test results. Results have been consistently above the national average over the last four years. In comparison with similar schools, results were well above the average in reading and writing and very high in mathematics. There is a slight difference between the performance of girls and boys, but both are achieving well above national expectations. The trend for improvement is better than the national trend.
2. The attainment of children on entry as rising fives is below the expectations for their age in all of the desirable learning outcomes for about a half of the children. For other pupils who enter the school during Key Stage 1, their attainment on entry reflects the full range of prior attainment. There is a significant minority of pupils who have special educational needs as well as pupils of high prior attainment. By the time the children reach statutory school age their standards are at least in line with average standards in the Desirable Learning Outcomes of language and literacy, mathematics, their knowledge and understanding of the world, physical activities, creative activities and in their personal and social development. A significant majority exceed this level. This effectively prepares them for their work in the National Curriculum.
3. Inspection evidence shows that attainment, by the end of Key Stage 1 and by the time the pupils leave the school at the end of Year 4, in all aspects of English is above national expectations for the large majority of pupils. Many pupils' speaking and listening skills, in particular, are outstanding. They display a good vocabulary which they use appropriately, for example, when they speak about their experiences and ideas during discussions in the literacy hour and in lessons in general. By Year 4, higher attaining pupils read books that are challenging and display their wide range of interests. Pupils read with fluency, expression and accuracy. Standards of grammar, punctuation and spelling are good and the style and content of pupils' writing, for example, reports, creative writing and poetry, are well above national expectations. For example, some of the written work observed in Year 4 was the equivalent of that normally found in Year 6. Standards of handwriting are consistent throughout the school and overall standards of handwriting are good. Literacy is developed extensively across the curriculum and this cross-curricular element is a strength of the school. In history, pupils write about the Tudors and Egyptians and during one lesson, pupils in Year 4 wrote superb accounts speculating as to the cause of Tutankhamun's death. In religious education they write very well about other religions. In geography, there are written accounts of visits made into Newcastle and, in mathematics, pupils compose their own problems.
4. In mathematics, attainment by the end of Key Stage 1 and when the pupils leave the school is well above national expectations for the majority of pupils in all of the attainment targets of numeracy, shape, space and measure, using and applying mathematics and in handling data. Pupils' numeracy skills improve as they move through the school. Opportunities are given to apply these skills in other subjects, for example, in science, geography and design and technology and standards are overall in line with expectations. In science, by the end of Key Stage 1 and by the age of nine, pupils' attainment is above national expectations. They can carry out a fair test in their investigations, can explain what they have discovered from their work and use an appropriate scientific vocabulary.
5. Attainment, overall, is in line with national expectations for the majority of pupils in information and communication technology by both the end of Key Stage 1 and by the time the pupils leave the school. Very good opportunities are given to use computer skills in English, mathematics and in science. Standards in religious education are above expectations for the pupils' ages.

Standards in art, geography, history and physical education are above expectations and in design and technology and in music they are in line with expectations.

6. The standards achieved by pupils with special educational needs are good in relation to their prior attainment and the targets set for them in their individual education plans. Progress is often very good due to the good level of support received. Teaching and other support is good. The work is carefully planned and is matched well to the needs of different individuals. Individual education plans are relevant, helpful and reviewed regularly. Some are very specific and when pupils make the necessary progress, for example, one pupil who has coped brilliantly with spellings and is making excellent progress, they leave the register.
7. Those pupils identified as having a potential for high attainment are similarly targeted with individual education plans and make good progress. Work set for these pupils is often through extension activities, is challenging and makes significant demands of them. In a minority of instances, teachers do not always check sufficiently to ensure that these pupils are achieving their tasks successfully, but the overall provision is good.
8. Children aged under five are making very good progress in all of the areas of learning. In Key Stage 1, pupils make at least good progress and often very good progress. At Key Stage 2, the overall progress for the majority of pupils is at least good and frequently very good. In English, mathematics, science and information technology, progress is very good across the year groups. This reflects the very good balance of work, which frequently meets the differing needs of the pupils. Since the arrival of new resources, pupils' progress in information and communication technology has improved and the large majority of pupils have acquired good basic skills and many in Key Stage 2 have quite advanced skills for their ages. The use of computers across all subjects enhances opportunities and progress. Whilst it was possible during the inspection to observe lessons for all classes in English and mathematics it was not possible to observe a significant number of lessons in all other subjects. Through a scrutiny of pupils' work the evidence shows that progress is generally good in all other subjects with instances of good and very good progress. Progress in art geography, history and religious education is good and in design and technology and physical education it is always satisfactory.
9. Overall, the progress being made and the standards being achieved show improvement from the last report. The school's demanding targets are being met and the standards being achieved by the pupils clearly show that the school is working exceptionally well towards achieving its aim of excellence.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. Pupils' attitudes to school are excellent. As they come into school in the morning and at the end of break times, their eagerness is very evident. In the opinion of parents, virtually all pupils enjoy school and this is borne out by conversations with pupils. They appreciate very highly the efforts of the staff to give them an exciting and rewarding experience. Teachers can start lessons promptly because all pupils are enthusiastic. After lesson introductions, they move quickly to start their individual or group work because they enjoy it and are keen to learn more. They concentrate well and work hard to solve problems. They are enthusiastic about doing things outside the classroom, taking a strong part in extra-curricular activities.
11. The behaviour of pupils is very good. In lessons a quiet word is occasionally necessary to keep pupils focused on their activity, but, generally, teachers need to spend very little time on this and can concentrate fully on their teaching. This has a very positive impact on the good rate of learning seen in the majority of lessons. Pupils' behaviour as they move around the school and in assemblies is exemplary. Even the very youngest children, for example when entering the hall to start a physical education lesson, display excellent but appropriate discipline for the occasion. Behaviour in the dining hall is also excellent and the meal gives pupils good social experience. Pupils have the opportunity to discuss the reasons behind school rules and fully accept their validity. There have been no exclusions of pupils in recent years. Books and other resources are valued and treasured and pupils treat the property of others with great care.

12. The personal development of pupils and the relationships within the school are very good. Pupils willingly accept responsibilities offered and, on many occasions, volunteer to clear up or help around the school. They often identify what needs to be done and do it; they compete to be allowed to help. In class, the strong rapport between adults and pupils is a very noticeable feature of almost all lessons. Pupils are confident that the teachers are there to do their best for the pupils and they, in turn, respond by giving of their best. Pupil relationships with all adults in the school and between pupils are excellent. Within lessons, pupils show respect for those less able and help them when necessary with sensitivity. In the playground, pupils of all ages play well together and the needs of younger pupils are respected by older ones. There are very few even minor incidents of conflict, either deliberate or accidental. Within lessons, pupils work well to support each other, discussing problems and making suggestions to each other about improving their work. They do this with ease and confidence. Pupils recognise that there are many different ways of life and beliefs. They are used to discussing these and willingly accept the equality of all and the right to choose their own way of life, within the constraints of consideration to others. No incidents of racism, bullying or social exclusion were observed during the inspection. Pupils confirmed that these were rare; minor incidents were handled with sensitivity and rigour by the school.
13. The overall attendance last year was above the national average for primary schools and there is very little unauthorised absence. Although some pupils arrive after the official start time, most are in lessons by the time the register is called.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

14. The quality of teaching is good, overall, and it makes a positive contribution to pupils' achievement and progress at all levels of attainment. It is always satisfactory. In nearly seven out of ten lessons, teaching is at least good, often very good, and in over one in ten lessons it is excellent. At Key Stage 1, teaching is good, overall, and it is good or better in over half of the lessons and very good in nearly one-fifth. At Key Stage 2, teaching is very good, overall, and it is good or better in eight-tenths of the lessons, very good in one-fifth and excellent in one-fifth. At Key Stage 2, the overall expectations of the teachers and the pace of lessons lead to the higher quality of teaching.
15. Teachers have a very good subject knowledge and understanding of the curriculum. This is seen, for example, in the teaching of the national literacy and numeracy strategies where a range of teaching methods is used. These include whole class teaching, oral work and discussion, written work, visual resources and group work. This has made a significant contribution to raising attainment not only in mathematics and English but also across the other subjects of the curriculum. Knowledge and understanding of other subjects is also very good, especially in Key Stage 2. This can be seen in the use of art and information technology, for example, to support other subjects as well as being taught in their own right. Teachers have very high expectations for work, as well as behaviour. Pupils in Year 3 science lessons, for instance, are expected to know and use the correct terms for various types of rocks and to be familiar with how they were formed.
16. Lessons are planned well and planning meets the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs, those for whom English is an additional language and higher attaining pupils. Work is generally matched well to individual needs, either a specific task or a simpler version of the whole class topic. Learning support is very good and, in many instances, pupils support each other in their learning. Teachers' explanations and instructions are clear so pupils can feel confident about what they are doing and can work on their own initiative where necessary. Well targeted, thoughtful questioning, seen to particularly good effect in numeracy lessons, encourages pupils' speaking and listening. Teachers make sensible use of praise to raise pupils' confidence.
17. Very good management of pupils, achieved without fuss and with good humour, is a strong feature of all the teaching and pupils are able to work without distraction. Very good relationships between pupils and with their teachers are a strength of the school. Pupils find their teachers helpful, fair and approachable and this contributes to the happy and purposeful atmosphere in the school.

18. The use of time, support staff and resources is very good. Little time is lost during the day even when pupils are changing or going to and from breaks. Lessons start on time and the vast majority move at brisk pace. In the minority of lessons where teaching is satisfactory rather than better, it is usually because the pace of the lesson is not as fast as it could be. This is seen, for example, in some lessons where teachers are diverted from their planning into discussing other issues. Occasionally, there is a more limited range of teaching strategies so that pupils become slightly restless and the pace of the work drops. Non-teaching assistants and a number of parent helpers are well briefed and deployed effectively.
19. Teachers' use of assessment is good across all subjects. Pupils' work is regularly marked and corrected, but marking is not always used to inform pupils of their strengths and weaknesses or to give indications of what they need to do to improve. Relevant homework is set where appropriate to consolidate and extend pupils' learning.
20. The quality of teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection, when teaching was "sound or better" in 75 per cent of the lessons observed. All of the teaching is now satisfactory or better and a high proportion is now good, very good or excellent. It is a significant strength of the school.

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

21. The curriculum for early years follows the prescribed areas of learning and is good. The breadth, balance and relevance of the school curriculum are very good in both key stages. The overall time allocated to the curriculum is broadly in line with that recommended at both key stages. Although the time allocated to English is above that usually found, the consequent reduction in time for other subjects has not had an adverse effect on attainment. The curriculum gives excellent equality of access for all pupils. The teaching strategies for literacy and numeracy are very good. Whilst there is no discrete course for personal, social and health education, aspects of citizenship are very well covered in other subjects. Provision for health education, sex education and education concerning drugs misuse is effectively covered in science lessons. The appropriate statutory curriculum is in place with the exception of information technology, where the overall depth of study has been inhibited by a lack of resources. Progress is very good since new resources have become available. Planning is in hand to remedy this deficiency. There is very good provision for pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language.
22. The school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities and sport, which are available mainly to pupils in Years 3 and 4. These include board games, an art club and a computer club. There are instrumental lessons for pupils and a recorder group. The school provides a range of sporting activities that includes roller hockey, football and netball, with teams competing against local schools.
23. There are very strong links with the local community and the school's parents' association makes a very positive contribution to the school. Pupils visit local churches and mosques as part of their work in lessons and the annual Lord Mayor's Competition plays a prominent part in school life. There are also visiting musicians and artists.
24. Provision for the pupils' social, moral and cultural development is excellent and that for spiritual development is very good. This whole area is a strength of the school and the key principle of aiming for excellence, linked with the philosophy that we are 'all different – all equal', runs through everything. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. The policy covering 'Quality Education' stresses an ethos where 'the child is at the centre of everything'. This philosophy is evident in practice throughout.
25. The school makes very good provision for spiritual development. Ideas are valued highly and pupils are sensitive to the needs and feelings of others. There is a very good understanding of different religions, from visits to mosque, church and temple to an appreciation that we all celebrate in different ways. One classroom has an interesting display depicting 'awe and

wonder'. Collective worship meets statutory requirements. All staff take assemblies in turn and time is given during each assembly for pupils to reflect on attitudes and values.

26. There is outstanding provision for moral development. Pupils are aware of what is acceptable and unacceptable, understanding the difference between right and wrong. They respond appropriately to praise and blame and some are able to put themselves in the other person's place, to appreciate what he or she is feeling. Classrooms contain simple rules and reminders such as, 'Try to behave responsibly, even when the teacher isn't there!' Teachers are very good role models and this has a beneficial effect on the overall social and moral development within the school.
27. There is excellent provision for social development. Most pupils play happily together and demonstrate respect for adults and for each other. Relationships are excellent and pupils co-operate very well both in the yard, where they play well together and in lessons, where they work to help and support each other when appropriate. This is reinforced through 'friendship recipes'. A strong sense of responsibility and independence are particularly encouraged through the opportunities provided within the school, whether taking registers, helping to tidy classrooms, look after younger pupils, particularly at playtimes and lunchtime, or in the general work that is set during lessons. The pupils collect for a number of charities, including a nearby hospice. Pupils' social development is further reinforced through their study of 'green' issues in Year 4.
28. There is excellent provision for cultural development. Multi-cultural awareness is encouraged successfully through a wide range of values and attitudes. There are numerous displays around the school to reinforce this, particularly through the study of other religions. Good opportunities are taken to study other cultures, for example, the Chinese New Year. Visitors to the school bring an added dimension, whether through Franciscan monks, modern dance and theatre groups or a parent introducing an appreciation of Indian food. These all contribute to a positive understanding of other people. Local culture plays an important part in learning, through a study of Newcastle. During the inspection, the school was successful in its entries for the 'Lord Mayor's Cup', a competition that celebrates Newcastle as a multi-cultural city.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

29. The school has very good procedures for ensuring that its pupils are well cared for. All staff are trained in first aid and if pupils are ill or have accidents at school they are well looked after. Systematic health and safety risk assessments and equipment checks are carried out and the school is a safe environment. Staff are aware of precautions to be taken when undertaking tasks in curriculum areas such as design technology. Child protection procedures, which meet local guidelines, are in place and the designated teacher has been trained in their use. The absence of bullying is a consequence of the school's appropriate emphasis on a caring environment and robust action should any incident occur.
30. The monitoring of pupils' academic and personal development is very good. When children start in the reception class they are assessed and then again at the end of the year. This allows good evaluation of learning in that year and provides confirmation of the need for additional support for pupils. In the rest of the school, pupils' reading and spelling ability is assessed each term and recorded in an on-going record. Progress in mathematics and science is also well monitored and recorded. A portfolio of moderated work assists assessment in English. Subject co-ordinators also keep a record of progress to help them in supporting their subject. Other subjects are also monitored, but less formally. Staff use their very good knowledge and relationships with their pupils to monitor their personal development, which is then recorded in the pupil's report. This information is maintained in a pupil's personal record. Behaviour is generally only informally monitored and recorded, but these procedures are, none the less, very effective. Overall, registers are well maintained. At morning registration, teachers leave registers open too long and the small minority of pupils who are late are given a presence mark. This does not allow the school to record lateness in order to assess its impact. In the afternoon session, registration is formally taken towards the end of the day. This presents some risks in relation to any emergency that may occur.

31. The school provides effective support and guidance in raising pupils' achievement throughout the school. Teachers use their assessment of progress in lessons and at the end of the topic, to modify the content of subsequent lessons. There is very effective analysis of a wide range of tests to ensure that the needs of all pupils are met. For example, in the area of special educational needs, higher attaining pupils and those who experience learning difficulties are both given individual education plans. Teachers maintain very good records in relation to pupils' academic and personal development.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

32. Parents are generally very satisfied with what the school provides and achieves. A high proportion of parents returned the questionnaire and a significant number attended the pre-inspection meeting. The parents are very enthusiastic about the school and views expressed were very positive. Informal discussions with parents outside school at the end of the day were also very positive. These positive views are confirmed by the inspection.
33. The school's links with parents are effective. The quality of information the school gives parents is good. When children start in the reception class, parents are provided with booklets telling them how their child will be taught and giving advice on supporting this at home. Parents find these very useful. They are kept well informed of what is happening in school with regular newsletters and curricular information is given each term. Pupils' annual reports meet statutory requirements and give good information about what the pupil has achieved that year in the main subjects. A minority of parents expressed concern about the quality of information regarding pupils' progress. The school recognises that formal opportunities when parents can discuss their children's progress with teachers should remain under review. Reports contain brief comments about the other subjects as well as a good insight into the pupils' personal development. They give a clear view of attainment against expectations at the end of each key stage and there are often no written targets to aim for in the following year. Parents have the opportunity to comment in writing and add achievements outside school to the pupil's record of achievement. Parents are further able to support their children through extensive discussion with the class teacher in which privacy is ensured. All parents take advantage of this.
34. Parents have a good impact on the progress of their children at school and at home. Most parents support their children's learning by hearing them read at home, although this tails off for many after the end of Key Stage 1. Many parents support homework. The school provides materials for support at home, for example mathematics packs, but these are not always used well. The school has issued a Home-School Agreement after extensive consultation. There is a strong "Friends association" that raises very substantial amounts for the school and organises social events. Funds have been used to provide additional resources, for example, stage equipment and computers. The community spirit is enhanced by the use of funds to ensure that all pupils can participate in educational visits. A significant number of parents and volunteers help within the school, for example with hearing pupils read and in practical lessons. Their contribution is highly valued and has a positive impact on pupils' standards.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

35. The school's aim of achieving excellence is shared by all involved with the school. The rigour and momentum seen in lessons and in the general life of the school during the inspection and through a scrutiny of pupils' work shows that this aim is being realised.
36. The school is very well led by the headteacher who has been in post for one year, having previously been the deputy headteacher. All associated with the school have great confidence in her work, which contributes extensively to the high standards which are achieved. She has a very clear educational vision and plays a distinctive role in the life of the school through her exceptional commitment to the staff and pupils. She is equally well supported by the deputy headteacher, who was appointed to the substantive position in March. Their quality of leadership has led to the effective improvement in the school through addressing the key issues from the last report and through identifying the school's priorities. There has been a significant change in staff

since the last inspection. The current staff are a committed team of colleagues who provide the headteacher with very good support.

37. The overall style of leadership encourages all pupils, from the youngest to the oldest, to express pride in their work and to have the confidence to willingly and easily explain to visitors what they are doing, showing good knowledge and understanding. There have been improvements, which have been initiated by the school through its own evaluation. These include provision for more talented pupils, the construction of a computer room to extend pupils' opportunities in information and communication technology, and better classroom provision provided by a temporary building. Overall, school improvement has been good and there are appropriate plans to bring about further changes, for example, in the community facilities.
38. The governors are appropriately involved in the management and leadership of the school. For example, the governors with responsibility for literacy and numeracy have made visits to monitor the standards and quality of education to inform their decision making and all governors are linked to a subject. Statutory requirements are met, except for meeting the full requirements for information and communication technology, although the school is very aware of this issue and is taking appropriate action. Information in school documents does not always make the necessary comparisons between school statistics and national statistics, although the school is reviewing its documentation in line with statutory requirements. The good partnership between the headteacher and governors is effective in promoting the very good quality of education throughout the school. Whole-school policies are in place and there is a process for review to ensure that they contain sufficient structures for guidance, monitoring and evaluation.
39. The monitoring of teaching, test results and the impact of staff development on classroom practice, is effective in identifying appropriate areas for development and the setting of targets. Subject co-ordinators work effectively as they concentrate on curriculum development and resource management, with some opportunities to monitor actual teaching. The National Curriculum has undergone significant revision since the last report and overall policies and schemes of work take into account these changes. The schemes of work have shown good improvement, are detailed and well implemented. Many of the subject co-ordinators have been in post only for a short time. Their roles in monitoring the planning in their areas are appropriate within the time scales. Whilst some co-ordinators monitor teaching, it is mainly carried out by the headteacher, deputy headteacher and numeracy coordinator, partly as a component of staff development for the setting of targets and improving teachers' skills.
40. Special educational needs are managed well throughout the school. Good records are kept and there are efficient procedures for the identification, monitoring and review of pupils' progress. Parents are involved fully in this process. There is a governor with an interest in pupils with special educational needs who is regularly involved.
41. The whole-school development plan is a very detailed and effective document and contains a comprehensive approach for development. It is strategic, through its links with finance, and sets targets for future years. It is well linked to the staff development plan to ensure that the staff have the skills required to implement the changes listed in the main plan.
42. The school is appropriately staffed and there is a very good match of experience. Learning support staff are well involved in planning and through their work enhance the learning opportunities of the pupils and children. Very good use is made of parents who willingly give of their time to support teaching and activities in a wide range of contexts. Administrative staff make a very positive contribution to the day-to-day running of the school. Staff development and the induction and support for newly qualified teachers are very good. The school has the potential to provide very effectively for initial teacher training and has appropriate links with training institutions.
43. The accommodation is broadly adequate for the number of pupils and to meet the needs of the curriculum. Recent refurbishment and modifications have enabled the construction of a good computer room. The addition of two classrooms contained within a prefabricated building has been very beneficial. Access to the school for physically disabled pupils is sound. The accommodation is very well maintained by the caretaker and cleaning staff. There are no graffiti

and very small amounts of litter. The overall quantity of resources is good. The learning environment is enhanced by the exemplary standards of display of pupils' work.

44. Financial planning is sound and effectively linked to the development plan to make it strategic. Specific funds for special educational needs and funding allocated to the school from National Standards Funds have been targeted effectively and are having a positive impact on the learning opportunities provided by the school. The headteacher and governors seek the best possible values, being very conscious of the limitations of their budget. Taking into account the unit costs, the standards being achieved through effective teaching and the overall very positive learning ethos, the school is giving very good value for money.
45. Overall, the management and leadership of the school are providing very good structures to enable the school to achieve its aim and to maintain the momentum in the future. The very good learning environment and positive ethos are a reflection of this leadership.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

46. There are no specific key issues for the school to attend to, as it has recognised its strengths and weaknesses and within the school development plan it has appropriate action planned. The responsive approach by the headteacher indicates clearly that there is potential for the school to improve even further. Thus, the areas listed for where the school might improve are minor issues and are:

- extending the provision for information and communication technology – the computer room is to be networked in the next school break and this will enable pupils to have access to more software and enhance their work;

(paragraphs 21, 37, 38, 74, 95-99)

- extending the target setting for individual pupils - which has already begun through the setting of individual education plans for higher attaining pupils;

(paragraphs 7 and 60)

- updating the school documentation to ensure that all results are compared with National Statistics.

(paragraph 38)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	57
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	22

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
11	16	40	33	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR-Y4
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	n/a	295
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	n/a	18

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR-Y4
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	n/a	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	n/a	26

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	4

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	4

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.2
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	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	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	1999	29	28	57

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	29	29	29
	Girls	27	27	27
	Total	56	56	56
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	98 (98)	98 (98)	98 (100)
	National	82 (80)	83 (85)	87 (86)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	29	29	29
	Girls	27	57	27
	Total	26	56	56
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	98 (98)	98 (100)	98 (100)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	2
Pakistani	1
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	289
Any other minority ethnic group	3

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	0	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR-Y4

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	11
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26.8
Average class size	29.5

Education support staff: YR-Y4

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	46

Financial information

Financial year	1998/99
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	£
Total income	428163
Total expenditure	412050
Expenditure per pupil	1369
Balance brought forward from previous year	11040
Balance carried forward to next year	27153

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	295
Number of questionnaires returned	226

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	64	34	3	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	63	35	2	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	63	34	0	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	50	45	4	0	0
The teaching is good.	68	30	1	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	42	45	12	1	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	71	26	2	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	79	20	0	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	52	41	7	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	69	29	1	0	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	64	33	1	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	50	35	6	3	6

Summary of parents' and carers' responses

Overall, comments were very positive.

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

47. All children under five are admitted in the September following their 4th birthday. There are currently 14 under fives who are accommodated in the reception classes alongside children who are already five. The weakness in the deployment of staff identified in the previous report has been overcome and the provision is now good, enabling the children to make rapid progress and achieve well. The accommodation has been improved since the last inspection to provide a large practical area, which is shared by both classes. This new area enables practical and more formal activities to take place at the same time and so the children have a balance of activities directed by adults and practical tasks. On entry to the reception class the children are attaining just below average levels for their ages in the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. Virtually all the children are on course to exceed the level expected nationally by the age of five in all the areas of learning.

Personal and social development

48. The school places a strong emphasis on developing personal and social skills. The staff set good role models for the children and create a calm, welcoming atmosphere which helps the children to settle quickly to school routines and to gain independence. The self-registration system operates well and most children remember to post their names on arrival. The children are confident in moving from one activity to another, in approaching all adults and in selecting extension activities. They work well as part of a group, help each other when necessary and most sustain their concentration until tasks are complete. This is evident when two children are putting letters in alphabetical order. They share the letters and work well together to get most letters in the correct place. The behaviour is very good and already the children have some understanding of what is right and what is wrong. They wait patiently for their turn to speak and in playing games and tidy away sensibly at the end of lessons. They show a sense of awe and wonder at the growth of seeds and the way tadpoles change into frogs. They respond quickly to instructions from teachers and care what other adults and children think of them. All of the children are likely to exceed the expectations for their age by the time they become five. The teaching of personal and social skills is good every opportunity is taken to promote the development of these skills, either with individuals, groups or whole classes. The staff themselves work well as a team, setting good examples in their relationships with one another.

Language and literacy

49. The children make particularly good progress in developing their skills in language and literacy and many have already reached the level expected by the age of five. They speak with clarity and some confidence and are able to express their ideas clearly for their age. During literacy hours, which have been adapted well for these young children, they demonstrate their ability to listen carefully to stories and to the views of each other. Higher attaining children are reading confidently and can discuss the stories they have read and are beginning to suggest what might happen next. Average attaining children are reading books from the early levels of the reading scheme and using their knowledge of letter sounds to attempt unfamiliar words. The children's phonic skills are significantly lower than other aspects on entry and the teachers overcome this by placing strong emphasis on developing these skills. Most children now know all the letter sounds. Lower attaining pupils are learning to recognise whole words and can pick them out in their reading books, which they enjoy sharing with adults. The children are becoming confident independent writers. The higher attaining children are beginning to write simple stories using some punctuation accurately. Average attaining children are beginning to write sentences showing some understanding of sentence structure. Lower attaining pupils copy underneath adults writing and are beginning to attempt to write words themselves. The adapted literacy hours are helping the children to make good progress in developing their skills in spelling. Children are taught to form letters correctly from an early stage and most do so. Writing is legible and becoming even in size. The scrutiny of work showed very good progress in developing writing skills over time. The teachers are secure in their understanding of the National Literacy

Strategy and of how young children learn to read and write. This in turn leads to the children becoming confident, independent writers. The quality of teaching is never less than good and sometimes very good and this helps the children to make good progress and achieve their potential. The teachers have made many learning resources themselves which are closely matched to the needs of groups of children and which make learning fun. This is a further strength of the teaching. Children who have English as an additional language are well supported by adults. This is evident in a game involving rhyming words, where additional support is given which enables full participation in the game.

Mathematics

50. The children are on course to exceed the national expectations by the age of five. Through counting rhymes and games they soon become confident in counting to 20, with higher attaining children counting beyond and recognising higher numbers. Most children recognise numerals to 9 and write them correctly. The average and higher attaining children can add and subtract numbers within 20 using apparatus and are also developing mental strategies. For example a group working with the teacher learn to take away from 20 by counting backwards. The children are beginning to use mathematical language such as bigger than and more to describe size and quantity. They can repeat patterns using up to 3 colours, recognise shapes such as circles, squares, triangles and rectangles and are beginning to recognise solid shapes and their properties such as will or will not roll. They know the days of the week and have some understanding of times during the day. Higher attaining children can record the time in hours. The children can work independently when completing written tasks involving subtraction from 20 and sustain their concentration even though they find the task challenging. Teachers have high expectations of all the children and this is evident in the good progress made during the year. The teaching is never less than satisfactory and the scrutiny of work indicates it is often good. The children are encouraged to record their work for themselves, which increases their understanding of mathematical signs. Extension tasks are readily available for children who finish quickly and these help in consolidating prior learning.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

51. Through a wide range of experiences the children gain knowledge and understanding of the world around them and the rate of learning is good. By the age of five, most children are likely to have exceeded the expected level for their age and be working within the National Curriculum programmes of study. The wide range of experiences provides a good foundation for historical, geographical, scientific and technological learning. The children gain knowledge of different materials and their uses from studying what you would wear to go to the park in different weathers. They explore different materials and equipment and use their skills in cutting out, joining and folding, such as when making rabbits with folded paper bodies. A visit to a local park provided opportunities to learn at first hand about the wildlife and how the animals survive in all weathers. They can classify animals, for example those with four legs and those with fins and recognise that humans and animals grow and change. They followed a nature trail in the park, collecting small creatures for closer observation. They have also compared photographs of the park long ago with photographs of how it looks today to compare change over time. They recognise seasonal changes and the effects on what we wear. They have designed and made their own miniature gardens with features of interest such as slides and ponds. The children use computers and tape recorders independently to consolidate their prior learning, for example in number recognition. The children's natural curiosity is fostered well through first hand experiences. The quality of teaching is good; many first hand experiences are planned which interest the children and stimulate learning. Children often ask questions about how things work or happen to extend their knowledge and understanding.

Physical development

52. The children's physical development exceeds the level expected by the age of five. They move confidently and imaginatively with control and increasing co-ordination. They play happily outside with the other infant pupils showing awareness of space and of others. The children are integrated slowly into playtimes with older pupils and no problems have been experienced to date. There is small apparatus for use out of doors, but no wheeled toys. The children can run,

jump and climb and make use of the apparatus in the hall to develop these skills. Their skills in balancing are good for their age and some can do forward rolls. They grasp small pieces of equipment such as pieces of jigsaws or beads for threading with increasing control and grip pencils firmly when writing or colouring. They handle tools safely in the sand tray to fill containers and use different construction equipment to build models. Time in the hall is used for dancing, music and movement and acting out stories. When entering the hall for assemblies they walk sensibly in line and sit down, allowing sufficient space between themselves and the next child. The teaching in this area of learning is good. The children gain confidence in moving in large spaces and in using the apparatus as they receive plenty of encouragement and support.

Creative development

53. The children have many opportunities to explore colour, texture, shape and sound. There is a good range of musical instruments for them to investigate the different sounds that can be made. The children enjoy singing songs from their repertoire. They have made collage pictures of animals and patterns, using a range of materials of different textures. Their painted self-portraits include facial features, hair, hands and feet and most can apply paint without smudging the colours. They understand that mixing one colour with another produces a third colour. The role-play areas are changed frequently and are attractively set out. The children show an increasing ability to use their imagination, for example when working in the garden centre. The quality of teaching is good and helps the children to express their ideas and develop their creativity.
54. The co-coordinator for the under-fives is effective in overseeing the standards and provision. The policy for under-fives has been updated recently and already takes account of the new national guidelines. The co-coordinator has rigorously monitored the teaching in reception classes and improvement is evident as a result. There is a good range of resources available and these are used well to support the children's learning in all areas. The information from baseline assessment is used in planning the curriculum and frequent assessments of the children's attainment are carried out and recorded to check on the rate of progress. There has been good improvement in the provision for under fives since the previous inspection.

ENGLISH

55. The results of the baseline assessments carried out on entry to the school show that, with some exceptions, many children enter the school with standards in phonics and early reading skills which are below the national average. Pupils make excellent progress and leave at the age of nine with standards which are well above those expected of pupils of this age. Some of the written work observed in Year 4 was the equivalent of that normally found in Year 6. Many pupils' speaking and listening skills, in particular, are outstanding. The previous inspection found that standards in speaking and listening and reading were 'generally sound and frequently high', and there has been an overall improvement over the past six years. The school was criticised for extensive use of worksheets: this is no longer an issue.
56. At the end of Key Stage 1, the standards of attainment in all areas of English are well above the national average. The results of the national tests in 1999 confirm this. These standards are maintained through the two years of Key Stage 2 and pupils leave the school at the age of nine with standards of attainment that are correspondingly high. Pupils with special educational needs are supported very well and make excellent progress. Within the school there are a number of pupils with the potential for high attainment. These pupils, too, achieve well.
57. Skills in speaking and listening are encouraged throughout the school and standards are high. Pupils respond well to the many opportunities provided and consequently they are very competent and confident. Pupils have a good understanding of language, both the meaning of words and parts of speech. For example, in one Year 3 lesson, pupils had very good understanding of the text read and many were able to give 'their' as an example of a plural possessive pronoun. When asked why Mr Fox is not frightened of a fieldmouse, an answer was, 'Because he's a carnivore.' When asked what part of speech 'as cunning as a fox' was, many knew that it is a simile.

58. Standards in reading are good throughout the school. Non-fiction skills are correspondingly high, although the lack of a full school library limits opportunities for understanding non-fiction classification. Many pupils name and compare authors, talking about their favourites. In Year 2, these authors included Milne, Rowling, Dahl and others discovered in a public library. They take books home regularly. Although pupils read with great expression when in class shared-reading sessions, this is not always the case when reading independently. Year 2 pupils have written book reviews and character profiles of a local author. Parents and volunteers are involved in some classes and make a positive contribution to the teaching of reading.
59. Attainment in writing is high, both at the end of Key Stage 1 and when the pupils leave school at the age of nine. Pupils write for a wide range of purposes, with extensive use of writing in other subjects across the curriculum. Handwriting is clear and consistent, although pupils are not taught to join their writing until Year 3. Pupils in Year 1 recognise and name punctuation, including commas, apostrophes and speech marks. Spelling is generally good, with pupils using dictionaries and word books appropriately. Pupils are aware of the various strategies for reading and spelling unknown words. In one class, when asked what to do if they want to use a word they cannot spell, pupils' answers included, 'using phonemes', 'breaking it into little pieces', 'sounding out letters', 'using a dictionary' and 'just trying it'. They understand 'genre', and Year 4 pupils read parts of their accounts of Tutankamun's death to illustrate what style they had used. Many of the tasks are relevant to the pupils' interests, as, for example, in the reception class, where pupils correctly addressed postcards to be posted to their homes. Word-processing skills are high. Year 2 pupils have looked at language which is used for a specific purpose connected with shopping. They have visited Newcastle city centre and are producing a book about it.
60. Pupils with special educational needs are given very good support, which helps them to achieve very well for their abilities. Work is suitably targeted so that they succeed. Pupils with the potential for high attainment are equally identified and given suitably challenging tasks. They too achieve well. In a minority of lessons, teacher's expectations of these pupils are insufficiently high, relying too often on the pupils to set themselves extension activities. This does not ensure that each of these pupils achieves as well as might be expected in every task.
61. During each week, the school allows more time for English than is usual. This time is offset by the strong cross-curricular links which allow extended writing to cover other subjects, such as science, history, geography and religious education. This not only gives more time for teaching English skills, but also puts much of the pupils' work into a relevant context. The national literacy strategy has been adapted to allow greater emphasis on extended writing. The findings from this inspection and the school's results in the national tests show that this is very effective.
62. One of the contributing factors to the high attainment in English is the enthusiasm of teachers and pupils for this subject. Pupils concentrate very well, whether working independently or with others. They are mutually supportive, appreciating and criticising each other's work. The quality of teaching is never less than satisfactory. A Key Stage 1, around half is good, and, at Key Stage 2, all teaching is good or better, with some very good and excellent lessons. In these lessons, the qualities of questioning and high expectations lead to very good progress. Lessons are planned well and the objectives are shared at the beginning, so that pupils are aware of what they have to learn and teachers check learning effectively in summary sessions. Pace is brisk and humour is an important feature of some lessons, contributing to making learning enjoyable. Teachers have good questioning skills, which explore opinions and make the pupils think.
63. The co-ordinator has a positive impact on teaching and learning. She moderates pupils' work, sees planning and observes teaching. This ensures that the teaching and consequent attainment are high. There is a useful policy and improvement plan and the governor with a particular interest in literacy is supportive and involved. There is a good range of books within the school, most distributed between classrooms.

MATHEMATICS

64. In the 1999 National Curriculum assessments at the end of Key Stage 1, attainment was well above the national average in comparison with all schools, and for similar schools. The percentage of pupils achieving the higher level was above average. There is a trend for

consistent improvement. The National Numeracy Strategy has been well implemented and adopted to meet the needs of the school.

65. Standards by the end of both key stages are above expectations. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils understand the language of number and respond very well to questions. Pupils in Year 1 can do appropriate addition and subtraction. By the end of Year 2, pupils can calculate accurately and efficiently. They can work out arithmetic calculations mentally and at good speed. The majority of pupils can recognise patterns, understand place value and carry out calculations for odd and even numbers. By the end of Year 4, pupils are very competent in the four basic rules of calculation, mentally working out problems involving large numbers. They can identify patterns in numbers and use mathematical language to describe what they are doing. A significant number can handle data collected from simple questionnaires and use information technology to illustrate their work. Standards in numeracy are, overall, above expectations and are used to good effect in subjects across the curriculum. In the scrutiny of pupils' work, the use of number and graph work in geography, science and in design and technology are very clear. Information technology is being increasingly used to support and involve number work.
66. The attainment of the large majority of pupils in shape, space and measuring is above expectations by the end of Key Stage 1 and by the time the pupils are aged nine. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils can recognise and accurately name a variety of shapes, such as cube, cuboid, circle, sphere and hexagon from three-dimensional models, accurately explaining the characteristics of each shape. By the end of Year 4, pupils understand more complex shapes and use the correct vocabulary, for example, of right angle, triangle, and the properties of more complex mathematical figures.
67. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good. Most are well motivated and show an interest in their work. Pupils concentrate appropriately and keep working through the lesson. Most classrooms are busy and pupils are keen to get on with their work. Pupils generally persevere well when difficulties arise. They are eager to answer questions in whole class introductions, in the summary sessions at the end of lessons and in mental arithmetic.
68. Teaching is always at least satisfactory, often good and occasionally outstanding. Planning identifies learning objectives and an appropriate amount of time is spent on the teaching of numeracy. Teachers have appropriate subject knowledge and recognise the need for teaching number systems and include a variety of activities and vocabulary. There is good use of questioning to challenge pupils and to develop their knowledge, understanding and skills. Timed targets are used in some lessons and the best lessons end with a summary session to check pupils' understanding, often to good effect. The National Numeracy Strategy, has been effectively implemented and modified, enhancing pupils' progress. In the best lessons, teachers' have high expectations of what the pupils can achieve and the pace is challenging.
69. This leads to good and often very good progress which pupils make. Progress in written calculation is good, with pupils writing out lesson objectives and the questions that they are working on to ensure effective recall. This also enhances their progress in literacy. Work is very well presented with all calculations being shown. The good quality of the teaching enables pupils to make good progress in understanding and applying mathematics. They are developing the ability to develop different mathematical approaches and overcome difficulties. Pupils with special educational needs are given very good support, which enables them to make good progress. Teachers are setting work for more talented pupils, although they recognise that this is an aspect which requires further development. Assessment records are well kept and good use is made of resources. Marking is used to show pupils what they need to do to improve. Homework is used effectively.
70. The subject is effectively co-ordinated and the overall management enhances the standards being achieved. National Curriculum requirements are met. Resources are good. Since the last inspection there has been a positive impact of teaching which has raised standards.

SCIENCE

71. Standards in science are well above the national average at age seven and remain well above the level expected for pupils' ages by the time they leave the school. The weakness in reception and Key Stage 2 classes identified in the previous report, the overuse of worksheets, has been remedied and standards have risen. Inspection findings confirm the very high standards shown in teachers' assessments of pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 in 1999. Nearly all pupils are on target to reach the level expected by the age of seven with a significant majority of the pupils likely to achieve the higher level. High standards are sustained in Key Stage 2 where pupils' investigative skills improve noticeably from the challenges they are set. Over time in the school, pupils make very good progress in gaining knowledge and developing investigative skills as a result of the teachers' high expectations, good pace in lessons and positive attitudes to learning. Most pupils are achieving their full potential, including pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language.
72. In each year group the planning includes a balanced coverage of all the attainment targets and provides clear progression in the acquisition of knowledge and the development of skills. There is a brief period for revision of prior learning before moving onto the next stage. The good planning is clearly reflected in pupils' workbooks. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils have some understanding of fair testing which is evident when investigating the effect of forces on materials. They have investigated the movement of a toy car on different surfaces. They have studied different habitats and from their findings understand why some plants can live in ponds. They can name the parts of a plant. From their study of materials they can sort objects into those which are magnetic and those which are not and understand the difference between natural and man-made materials. They carry out experiments to determine the effect of heat and cold on materials, understanding that some changes are permanent and others are not. By the time pupils leave the school, they have extended their knowledge and deepened their understanding in all aspects of the subject. They understand the difference between vertebrate and invertebrate animals and have extended their knowledge of organisms and their habitats. They understand food chains and are able to classify creatures. They devise their own experiments for investigating ways of keeping drinks hot, analysing the data thoroughly. They understand soluble and insoluble substances and reversible and irreversible changes. They can make electrical circuits and draw accurate circuit diagrams for both parallel and series circuits. In an excellent lesson in Year 4, pupils develop their understanding of friction and the concept of gravity when using cars on a slope to devise a fair test.
73. Throughout the school, the pupils show enthusiasm for the subject, especially for practical activities, and this helps their rate of learning. They rise to the challenges set and by Year 3 can produce their own tables to record their findings. They learn from each other by questioning the purpose of including certain headings in tables and this deepens their understanding of recording findings. They work well together carrying out experiments and are willing to share their findings with others. They show good awareness of safety aspects, for example, when devising an experiment to test how easily rocks can be worn away. They know that banging rocks together may cause small fragments to break off.
74. The quality of teaching is very good, with examples of excellent teaching in Years 3 and 4. Teaching is rarely less than good. There is secure subject knowledge and, in the best lessons, very good preparation. This enables teachers to be confident in their teaching, relax and enjoy the lessons with the pupils. This creates a climate that is conducive to learning for everyone. In return, the presentation of work by the pupils is of a high standard. When drawing rock samples, for example, pupils make good use of their observational skills and their knowledge of different rocks to discuss which they are drawing and how they might have been formed. In good lessons, some features of excellent teaching are evident but there is less emphasis on pupils taking responsibility for their own learning and completing tasks within the time available. There is effective use of big books to introduce topics, for example forces in Year 1 and electricity in Year 2 and these lessons support the development of skills in literacy. Writing up of experiments supports the development of writing skills, although occasional over-direction does not support independent writing skills or inform teachers what pupils have learned from lessons. The use of information technology is limited at present; the school has purchased some suitable software, but is awaiting the networking of computers before it can be used effectively. Pupils are

assessed at the end of each unit of work and their results monitored to check that good progress is being maintained.

75. The subject is well co-ordinated and much work has been done to implement the national guidelines whilst meeting the school's needs. The coordinator monitors planning and advises colleagues, which enhances planning and teaching. Assessment materials have been produced, are effectively used and rigorously evaluated to determine their suitability. Action is being taken to improve upon the work already done.

ART

76. It was possible only to observe a small number of lessons in art. From these observations, the work on display, teachers' planning, observation of extra-curricular activities and talking to pupils, judgements can be made. Standards in art exceed the level expected by the end of Key Stage 1 and by the time the pupils leave the school. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The enthusiasm of the headteacher, who is the art coordinator, has been the driving force in raising standards. She has led by example, provided in-service training and given support to individual teachers where necessary. This has improved the quality of teaching and the development of pupils' skills and knowledge. The work on display throughout the school is indicative of these above average standards and does much to provide a stimulating ethos in which pupils want to learn and achieve their potential.
77. Over time in the school, pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs make good progress, particularly in developing skills and techniques in painting. In this aspect standards are particularly high as seen by the paintings on display around the school. Pupils make good progress in understanding colour mixing, the use of thick paint and colour washes and how to use different size brushes to achieve the desired effects. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils can copy 'a dark pool' by Dame Laura Knight and 'sunflowers' by Van Gogh showing good use of colour, line, tone and texture. Their paintings of owls show effective use of brush strokes and colour. They create an interesting model of the city centre using cardboard boxes. They use charcoal to sketch parts of buildings showing attention to detail. The good rate of learning continues in Key Stage 2 where bright colours have been used successfully in paintings of Rama and Sita. Good links are made between art and history and when studying the Tudors, pupils draw and paint people in Tudor clothes, developing close observational skills and matching colours closely to the original. They successfully make three-dimensional models of Tudor houses and Viking ships. A range of materials were used to create a large dragon when studying the Chinese New year and folded paper techniques were promoted through making individual dragons. Clay masks of a high standard have been made, depicting comedy and tragedy. Pupils mix paint with glue and explore mixing colours to create eye-catching designs. Pastels have been used to develop skills in colour smudging and create pictures of aliens. There is little evidence of pencil sketching from the work on display. However, the scrutiny of work showed evidence of these skills in other subjects, for example in science and history. Pupils create pictures using textiles with flowers sewn on and tie and dye patterns.
78. The pupils enjoy their art lessons and show respect for the materials available, taking care not to spoil the work of others. They express opinions about the materials they wish to use, such as when they prefer paint to pastels as it is less messy. They are willing to accept advice from teachers and show their appreciation of the efforts of others. They assess their own work with regard to the original intentions, suggesting how it could be improved. The art policy has a positive influence on pupils' attitudes and learning.
79. The quality of teaching in lessons is at least good. The work on display indicates some very good teaching of skills in painting and the development of observation skills. Good demonstrations and support help pupils in developing skills. Early intervention prevents disappointment and provides encouragement. Lesson planning shows a wide range of activities with particular strengths in the links to other subjects which supports pupils' learning in many other subjects. The range of resources available is good and is used well throughout the school. The curriculum policy document is a good document, has been updated recently and already takes account of the requirements of Curriculum 2000. This supports the good quality of teaching.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

80. Too few lessons were observed in design and technology to allow a judgement to be made on the quality of teaching and learning. Sufficient examples of pupils' work were available, to assess their designing and making skills. These are generally in line with that expected of pupils by the end of both key stages and reflect the findings of the previous inspection.
81. In the reception class, pupils design parks using stones, grass and models. In other classes they have designed millennium bridges and cars and have produced weaving, batik, Chinese dragons, Viking ships and, in Year 3, some very impressive mosques. Many pupils plan carefully, adapting their designs as appropriate and evaluating the finished product. Pupils have worked together co-operatively, sharing the tasks. Pupils use a suitably accurate vocabulary and know how to use tools and equipment safely. At Key Stage 2, pupils build on their skills when designing and making products. They produce clear instructions for making artefacts, selecting suitable materials to make models. All pupils have suitably well-developed skills in their ability to cut, bend and glue materials. They evaluate their work as it develops and apply an effective range of problem solving techniques. Pupils modify their designs to improve the quality of the finished product and use and handle tools correctly. The subject also makes a good contribution to art, as pupils use skills to complete their work. Year 3 pupils, for example, designed and made very good models based on pictures of The Golden Temple at Amritsar. Overall, pupils have a sound understanding of the processes.
82. Teachers have clear expectations of achievement and progress. They have a sound knowledge and understanding of design and technology skills. Teachers plan to give all pupils, including those with special educational needs, equal access to the curriculum. The work provides challenge that promotes effective and systematic development of skills. Pupils make good progress. This is evident from the increasing quality of work on display around the school.
83. There is a succinct but thorough policy written by the new co-ordinator and this, together with a useful and relevant improvement plan, shows that design and technology is a developing subject.

GEOGRAPHY

84. Because of timetable arrangements it was not possible to observe any teaching at Key Stage 2 during the inspection. Judgements for this Key Stage are based on scrutiny of pupils' work, discussions with pupils and discussions with teachers.
85. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 and at the end of Year 4, is above that expected of pupils of the same age. There are no significant differences in attainment between boys and girls or across different levels of attainment. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language attain good standards and make very good progress. Evidence from the inspection shows that attainment is rising over time.
86. At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have a good factual knowledge and vocabulary. Pupils can identify different types of buildings in different areas and can say what building materials were used. In their study of different types of retailing they write accurately about the characteristics of various types, such as open air markets. Pupils in Year 1 were doing interesting work on traffic patterns in the area around the school. Pupils make good use of basic graphs to show their results from this and other work and this adds to their numeracy development. By the end of Year 4, pupils can use basic maps to find direction and can use grid references. They can describe different types of settlement and how they came to develop. They understand basic weather patterns and can record the weather using simple graphs and charts. Pupils are also beginning to develop their information technology skills across both Key Stages and routinely use computers to produce pictures, graphs and charts.
87. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 is good and there is no unsatisfactory teaching. From available evidence, the quality of teaching in Key Stage 2 is also good. The teachers have good knowledge and understanding of the subject and this is shown in the good factual knowledge which pupils gain. They plan their work to provide challenging activities which increase factual

knowledge and also provide opportunities for pupils to think for themselves and develop their skills of investigation and interpretation. Pupils enjoy lessons and respond to the challenges provided. They have very good attitudes to work and written work is invariably carefully done and well presented. Teachers manage their pupils very well, with quiet authority, good humour and tact. Classroom organisation of pupils and materials is usually good, but, where teaching is satisfactory rather than good, it is because this aspect of teaching is not managed as well as in other lessons. Marking is regularly done, but teachers do not always indicate to pupils how they might improve their work. There is a strong emphasis on pupils beginning to develop independent learning and on research and interpretation skills. This provides a very good basis for the work to follow.

88. The subject makes a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. In many lessons there are opportunities to study the world and its wonders and to reflect on the environment. The various visits have both a strong social and cultural emphasis. There are good resources available for the subject and this contributes to raising standards. The subject co-ordinator has been in post for only a few months and has not yet had time to make a substantial impact on the subject, but the overall leadership and management are good.
89. The previous report pointed to an over use of worksheets in lessons and this has been corrected. The good standards mentioned in the previous report have been further enhanced and the subject has made good progress since that time.

HISTORY

90. Judgements are based on a limited range of lesson observations, a scrutiny of pupils' work and displays, teachers' plans, and discussion with pupils and teachers. Standards by the end of Key Stage 1 and by the time that the pupils are aged nine, are above expectations.
91. In Key Stage 1, pupils display an appropriate understanding of time lines. They know about the differences in the design of buildings and the materials used in the building of homes in Tudor periods as compared to today. They have a good understanding of how toys have changed over time. They know about the great fire of London and the lives of famous people, such as Florence Nightingale. Thus, they are acquiring a working knowledge of the past, which aids the development of their cultural heritage. In Key Stage 2, pupils can effectively explain about the great empires of the past, with reference to the Vikings, Romans and Egyptians. They can explain about the life styles of these peoples and how they have influenced developments in civilization. Some pupils understand and explain the differences between primary and secondary sources. They can use appropriate vocabulary and explain the words that they are using. Good use is made of information technology in creative writing and reporting.
92. The pupils have positive attitudes and are very willing to talk about their work, which they obviously enjoy. Displays are very stimulating and pupils are proud of their work. They behave very well, answering and asking questions with great confidence at both key stages.
93. Pupils in both key stages make at least satisfactory and often good progress and, by the time the pupils leave the school they have developed a good level of knowledge and understanding of historical facts. Teaching over time is good. In the lessons seen, it is at least satisfactory and occasionally good. Teachers plan effectively and make good use of resources. Expectations are sound. They enhance pupils' progress when they provide a good range of artefact for the pupils to handle.
94. The subject is effectively coordinated for planning and resources, which enhances the overall provision and contributes effectively to pupils' progress. Monitoring of teaching is less well developed, but it does not have an adverse effect on pupils' opportunities. The scheme of work is good and provides effectively for the two year cycle. Resources are good. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

95. The recent opening of an information and communication technology room has allowed the school to positively develop the opportunities for teaching and for pupils' progress and attainment. The school recognises that the requirements of the National Curriculum have not been fully met at either key stage, as resources have not enabled it to teach the entire programme of study. It is now making very good progress and this issue is well on its way to being resolved.
96. Attainment by the end of Key Stage 1 and by the end of Year 4, in word processing, desk top publishing, control technology and in data handling are at least in line with and often above expectations. For example, pupils in Key Stage 1 log on, enter and store information and select options, using icons and tool bars. All pupils observed can use a paint program competently and carry out simple word processing. They can program a turtle to show control technology. In Key Stage 2, pupils experience a similar approach to beginning their sessions on the computers but their progress in word processing, in the use of a digital camera to paste and stick images into their texts and to prepare and print the finished product is good. Good links are being established with the National Literacy Strategy and in other subjects to use computers to illustrate work. Most notable is the success gained by Year 4 pupils in a local competition where their use of information technology to illustrate their research with a school in North America was of an exemplary standard. Pupils can effectively use a data handling package and create an appropriate range of graphs to illustrate their data. A minority can effectively deduce findings from the information.
97. Pupils' attitudes are very positive. They work with enthusiasm and are proud of their achievements. The software holds their attention for long periods. They respect the equipment. Behaviour is good.
98. In the dedicated lessons the quality of teaching is never less than satisfactory. In a significant minority of lessons, teaching is often good and, occasionally, very good. Lessons are very well planned to improve pupils' competence in information technology. All pupils are being taken through a well planned programme to ensure that they have a common experience, acquire the basic skills on which to develop their use of computers and have the confidence to operate a range of programs. The work is challenging and expectations are very high. Very good use is made of the resources. A scrutiny of pupils' work shows developing use of computers throughout classes in the two key stages. This teaching is leading to the very good progress at both key stages. Pupil management is good.
99. The subject co-ordinator has established a clear policy, setting out the steps in the knowledge and skills which are to be taught to ensure that there is a systematic whole-school approach to evaluate pupil's attainments in information technology. The expertise and knowledge of teachers' is variable, but all staff are participating in a school based course to improve their skills. Overall, subject expertise is satisfactory. The school now has a good ratio of computers with advanced functions and the plans to network the new computer suite in the next school break will enhance the access to a wider range of software.

MUSIC

100. Standards in music are in line with those expected of pupils of this age. This reflects the findings of the previous inspection.
101. Pupils sing with great enthusiasm, whether in assemblies or lessons. In lessons, all are fully involved, they share instruments fairly and wait patiently for their turn. They know the names of various percussion instruments. They are beginning to recognise volume, pitch and the sounds made by different instruments. There is less evidence of work which develops their appraisal and compositional skills. All pupils have opportunities to consolidate and develop their skills and understanding.
102. Teachers' planning is thorough and there is a good match of task to meet pupils' differing needs. The scheme of work provides effective procedures for assessing pupils' progress in performing,

composing and in their knowledge and understanding of music. It indicates the provision of a balanced range of activities, which includes listening to, appraising, performing and composing. There is good equality of opportunity and access to the curriculum for all pupils. Music makes a positive contribution to pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development. A published scheme is used which, although helping teachers who lack confidence in the subject, is sometimes inadequate in explaining different concepts. For example, a Year 1 class listened to a variety of sounds from one of the scheme's cassette tapes. Pupils were then expected to classify these as 'high' or 'low', with no median against which to compare these judgements. In another class, pupils found 'high' and 'low' referring to volume, rather than pitch.

103. Pupils benefit from a variety of instrumental lessons, including recorders, guitar and violin. There is a school orchestra based on these instruments which performs in assemblies and achieves high standards. A minority of pupils take the opportunity for instrumental lessons.

104. The subject is effectively coordinated and this is maintaining standards.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

105. Standards in physical education are generally in line with those expected nationally. This reflects the findings of the previous inspection. There are distinct strengths within the subject. Although a limited range of physical education lessons were observed during the inspection, evidence from planning and timetables shows that a wide range of activities are covered.

106. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils perform simple skills with safety and begin to control the linking of actions. By the time pupils leave the school at the age of nine, their skills in controlling movement are developing well. Their ball skills, whether in hockey or football, are good. By the time they leave school, most pupils can swim. Pupils are encouraged to be self-critical and to evaluate each other's performance.

107. The quality of teaching is generally good. Teachers know their pupils well and tasks are set which often ensure good progression for each individual. Lessons are planned thoroughly in stages which include warming up and cooling down, all pupils are fully involved and are enthusiastic. They listen attentively, co-operate and concentrate well, trying hard to succeed. Praise is used effectively, lessons are enjoyable and the pupils' behaviour is good. Physical education makes a positive contribution to pupils' personal development through the teachers' expectations of behaviour and in the support that the pupils give to each other.

108. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and monitors teachers' work effectively. Pupils in Key Stage 2 benefit from a wide range of extra-curricular activities, including fast-moving roller hockey. There are fewer opportunities for younger pupils. Pupils participate in a range of competitive activities within the area. Overall, standards and provision have been enhanced since the last inspection.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

109. At the end of both Key Stage 1 and Year 4, attainment is above that expected of pupils of the same age nationally. There are no significant differences in attainment between boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs and those pupils for whom English is an additional language, make very good progress and achieve good standards.

110. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils know the main festivals of the Christian calendar including Christmas and Easter and are beginning to understand the significance of some celebrations. Pupils are able to talk about right and wrong and express their ideas clearly and confidently. They are introduced to other major world religions in this key stage. For example, in Year 2, pupils extend their knowledge and understanding of The Torah as part of their work on Judaism. By the time pupils leave the school at age nine, they know accounts of the Old Testament, such as those of Noah and of David and Goliath. Pupils study the parables of Jesus and are familiar with the moral and religious principles which are contained in them. In both Years 3 and Year 4, pupils study other faiths, such as Hinduism and Islam, and they are familiar with the main symbols associated with major world faiths. Pupils are confident in discussions, speaking clearly

with good vocabulary. Linked with effective written work, there are good links to extend pupils' literacy.

111. Pupils have positive attitudes. They respond very well to opportunities to extend spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. In nearly all lessons, there are opportunities for pupils to reflect on other religions and on moral stories. Pupils have very good opportunities to develop social skills through discussion in class, taking turns and working together.
112. The quality of teaching is never less than satisfactory and in three-quarters of lessons it is good or very good. A strong feature of all of the teaching is the very good class control that is achieved without fuss and with good humour. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour. In the best lessons, planning is thorough, work makes good demands of the pupils and time is very well used. Teachers make very skilled use of question and answer sessions, which develop pupils' knowledge. For example, higher attaining pupils benefit from this approach and produce pieces of extended written work of high quality. The teaching leads to very good progress and attainment. Where teaching is less successful, time is not used as well. Teachers consistently enhance pupils' literacy through written work
113. The curriculum follows the locally agreed syllabus. The co-coordinator shows good leadership in planning and resource development. She does not have structured opportunities to monitor teaching, although this is done by the headteacher. There are a number of trips to local churches and mosques, which provide both cultural and social education. Very good displays enhance the learning environment. This management supports the development of the standards being achieved.
114. The previous report was very positive, referring to good standards and, the significant contribution to the school's ethos and to pupils' personal development. Overall, these standards have been enhanced.