

# INSPECTION REPORT

**Whinstone Primary School**  
Stockton

LEA area : Stockton on Tees

Unique Reference Number : 111656

Headteacher : Mr Peter Smith

Reporting inspector : Mrs Jane Randall  
T1471

Dates of inspection : 29<sup>th</sup> November – 2<sup>nd</sup> December, 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 707084  
Inspection carried out under Section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school :	Infant and Junior
Type of control :	County
Age range of pupils :	3 - 11
Gender of pupils :	Mixed
School address :	Lowfields Avenue Ingleby Barwick Stockton on Tees TS17 ORJ
Telephone number :	01642 750318
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Appropriate authority :	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors :	Ms. Jenny Beaumont
Date of previous inspection :	December 1994

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mrs J Randall – RgI	Art Religious Education	Attainment & Progress Teaching
Mr J Hallett - Lay Inspector		Attitudes, behaviour and personal development Attendance Support, guidance and pupils' welfare Partnership with parents and the community
Mrs T Aspen – Team Inspector	Mathematics Music	Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
Mr J Puckrin – Team Inspector	Geography Physical education	Leadership and management The efficiency of the school
Mr A Margerison – Team Inspector	Design and technology Information and communications technology History Special educational needs	
Mrs J Mitchell – Team Inspector	Science Under fives	Staffing, accommodation and learning resources
Mr R Willey – Team Inspector	English Equal opportunities	The curriculum and assessment

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## MAIN FINDINGS

### What the school does well

Attainment in English, mathematics and science is above average by the time pupils leave the school.

- Progress is good across the school.
- Attainment in art is well above that normally found and often outstanding, particularly in Year 6 and the art club.
- Attainment in religious education is above that normally found.
- The quality of teaching is good overall.
- Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment are very good.
- Provision for pupils under five is excellent.
- The quality of the curriculum is very good.
- The leadership, management and ethos of the school are excellent.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent.
- Attitudes, relationships, and behaviour are very good.
- Pupils' personal development is excellent.

### Where the school has weaknesses

**There are no key issues for the school to address but, in the context of its many strengths, the minor points for improvement contained in the report should be considered as the basis for the governor's action plan which will be sent to all parents or guardians of pupils at the school.**

### How the school has improved since the last inspection

Since the previous inspection the school has made considerable progress in all the key issues for action. There has been good improvement in the quality of planning, teaching and organisation. Classroom organisational strategies have been reviewed to ensure that methods are most effective and efficient for purpose and the age and stage of development of pupils. The monitoring of planning, organisation, teaching and learning provides teachers with staff development points and is effective in raising standards. In most lessons challenge is provided for the most able pupils through a careful match of tasks to their prior attainment, open-ended tasks and investigation, extension tasks and target setting. These initiatives have a significant impact on progress and attainment. Science is now given an appropriate emphasis in the curriculum. Standards are rising steadily across the school. The school evaluates itself well and acts on the findings. It has a very good capacity to sustain and improve on its high standards.

## Standards in subjects

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds in 1998 based on the National Curriculum tests:

Performance in	Compared with all schools	Compared with similar schools
English	A	C
Mathematics	B	C
Science	B	D

<i>Key</i>	
<i>well above average</i>	<i>A</i>
<i>above average</i>	<i>B</i>
<i>average</i>	<i>C</i>
<i>below average</i>	<i>D</i>
<i>well below average</i>	<i>E</i>

The results show that in 1998 standards in English were well above average when compared with all schools and average when compared with similar schools. In mathematics they were above average when compared with all schools and average when compared with similar schools. In science standards were above average when compared with all schools and below average in comparison with similar schools. In 1999 in English, mathematics and science, a higher percentage of pupils achieved higher levels than in 1998. The inspection findings indicate that attainment in English, mathematics and science is above average. In information and communications technology, standards of attainment meet national expectations at both key stages. Attainment in religious education is good and meets the requirements of the Local Education Authority Agreed Syllabus. Progress in all other subjects is at least satisfactory. It is very good in art at both key stages. Progress is good in geography and history at both key stages. In physical education pupils make good progress at Key Stage 1, particularly in dance and gymnastics. Progress in music is good at Key Stage 1. The progress of children under five is good in all the six areas of learning.

## Quality of teaching

Teaching in:	Under 5	5 - 7 years	7 - 11 years
English	Very good	Very good	Good
Mathematics	Very good	Very good	Good
Science	N/a	Good	Good
Information technology	N/a	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Religious education	N/a	Good	Good
Other subjects	Very good	Very good	Good

The quality of teaching across the whole school is good. In 22 percent of lessons teaching is satisfactory, in 34 percent it is good, in 29 percent it is very good and excellent in 10 percent. In 4 percent of lessons teaching is unsatisfactory. Teaching in the classes for pupils under five is very good. All lessons were at least good, half were very good and almost a third excellent. At Key Stage 1 the overall quality of teaching is very good. In 19 percent of lessons it is satisfactory, in 37 percent it is good, in 28 percent very good and in 16 percent excellent. At Key Stage 2 the overall quality of teaching is good. 27 percent of lessons are satisfactory, 35 percent good, 26 percent very good and 5 percent excellent. Five lessons were unsatisfactory.

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

## Other aspects of the school

Aspect	Comment
Behaviour	Very good, showing respect for each other and for adults.
Attendance	Good, well managed and monitored.
Ethos*	Excellent.
Leadership and management	Excellent – very strong leadership and management promote a rich curriculum and commitment to high standards of attainment within an excellent environment for learning.
Curriculum	Very good – rich and diverse.
Pupils with special educational needs	Very good provision leading to very good progress.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	Excellent – very significant contribution to progress and personal development.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Good- a very stimulating environment makes a significant contribution to progress.
Value for money	Very good.

\* *Ethos is the climate for learning: attitudes to work, relationships and the commitment to high standards.*



## The parents' views of the school

<b>What most parents like about the school</b>	<b>What some parents are not happy about</b>
I. The majority of parents are appreciative of all aspects of the school.	II. A minority of parents feel that the school does not keep them well informed about their children's

The inspection findings agree strongly with parents' positive views of the school. The number and range of extra-curricular activities are about average and the school also undertakes ambitious and successful projects such as the millennium art project and the European project. Pupils' reports are informative and detailed. The school operates an "open door" policy whereby parents can discuss their child's progress when they wish. More formal opportunities exist to discuss pupils' work by appointment on special open evenings.

## KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

There are no key issues for the school to address but, in the context of its many strengths, the following minor points for improvement should be considered as the basis for an action plan:

modify the objectives of the National Numeracy Strategy to match the higher levels of attainment of pupils entering Key Stage 2; (paragraph 94)

develop a structured approach to diagnosing behavioural difficulties; (paragraph 40)

make available equipment for the use of motors and control technology; (paragraph 127)

## INTRODUCTION

### Characteristics of the school

- 1 Whinstone Primary School is situated on the largest private housing estate in Europe on the edge of an industrial town. The nature of the housing means that the school has a higher than usual number of pupils moving in and out of the area and this makes comparisons of pupils' results between the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 more unreliable than in some schools. The number of pupils on roll is 505 and there are 76 part-time nursery pupils. The number of reception pupils under five is 27. The school is much bigger than average. The full range of abilities is represented on entry to the school but most pupils' prior attainment is average. Sixteen pupils speak English as an additional language but are fluent in English. Fifty-two pupils in the school plus one nursery pupil are on the school's register of special educational needs and three pupils have statements of special educational need. This is below the national average. Six point seven percent of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals and this is below the national average. The pupil-teacher ratio is 23:1 and the average class size is 26.6 pupils. Pupils join the nursery class as soon after their third birthday as a place is available and enter full-time school in the reception classes in either the September or January of the half year in which they become five.
- 2 The aims of the school are centred on the provision of a caring, nurturing and educationally developing environment.
- 3 In conjunction with the Local Education Authority and using school data collected about each year group, targets have been set for the end of both key stages. The targets for eleven year olds for the end of the current school year are for ninety five percent of pupils to gain Level 4 or higher in English and for ninety three percent to gain Level 4 or higher in mathematics and science. The school has set a target of twenty six percent of pupils to reach Level 5 in all three subjects. Good progress is being made towards achieving these targets.
- 4 Present priorities for the school in its development planning are:
  - to continue the analysis of test results and to look for ways they can be improved, particularly at Key Stage 2;
  - to develop a policy for the systematic monitoring of the curriculum, standards and the quality of teaching and learning ;
  - to continue to review policies and schemes of work;
  - to continue to look at planning and assessment to improve achievement;
  - to develop and integrate the Literacy Hour into the curriculum in order to deliver a broad and balanced curriculum;
  - to introduce the Numeracy Hour;
  - to continue to keep 'the arts' and personal and social development in a position of importance.

## Key Indicators

### Attainment at Key Stage 1<sup>1</sup>

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1  
For latest reporting year:

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
98(97)	39(34)	46(40)	85(74)

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or Above	Boys	37(25)	37(26)	38(30)
	Girls	44(31)	45(35)	45(36)
	Total	81(56)	82(61)	83(66)
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	95(76)	97(82)	98(89)
	National	80(80)	80(81)	84(84)

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or Above	Boys	37(28)	38(30)	39(32)
	Girls	44(35)	45(38)	45(38)
	Total	81(63)	83(68)	84(70)
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	95(85)	98(91)	99(95)
	National	80(80)	79(77)	86(85)

<sup>1</sup>

Percentages in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

## Attainment at Key Stage 2<sup>2</sup>

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2  
For latest reporting year:

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
98(97)	44(28)	26(37)	70(65)

National Curriculum Test Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or Above	Boys	42(22)	40(24)	40(22)
	Girls	22(32)	16(35)	19(32)
	Total	66(54)	56(59)	59(54)
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	90(83)	80(91)	84(83)
	National	65(63)	59(62)	69(69)

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or Above	Boys	42(23)	42(25)	44(27)
	Girls	19(30)	17(27)	22(32)
	Total	61(53)	59(52)	66(59)
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	87(81)	83(80)	91(91)
	National	65(63)	65(64)	71(69)

### Attendance

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year

		%
Authorised Absence	School	4.9
	National comparative data	5.7
Unauthorised Absence	School	0
	National comparative data	0.5

### Exclusions

Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age) during the previous year:

	Number
Fixed period	0
Permanent	0

### Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is :

	%
Very good or better	39
Satisfactory or better	96
Less than satisfactory	4

## **PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**

### **EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL**

#### **Attainment and progress**

- 1 In English attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is well above the national average. This is reflected in the results of the national tests in both 1998 and 1999. Standards are also well above average when compared with schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is above average. A higher percentage of pupils attained the higher Level 5 in 1999 than in 1998. The standard of attainment since the previous inspection has been maintained at a very high level at Key Stage 1 and has improved significantly at Key Stage 2.
- 2 In mathematics, standards of attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 are very high. By the end of Key Stage 2, attainment is above average. In 1998 the results obtained by pupils in the national tests at the end of Key Stage 1 were very high when compared with the national average and when compared with schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. The 1999 results give a similar picture. At the end of Key Stage 2, attainment in tests was above the national average and average when compared with similar schools. Since the previous inspection, standards have risen considerably at this key stage. The 1999 results show a considerable improvement in the proportion of pupils reaching higher than average levels.
- 3 Attainment in science at the end of both key stages is above average. Standards have risen since the previous inspection. At the end of 1998, pupils' results in the national tests at the end of Key Stage 2 were average when compared with schools nationally but below average when compared with school with similar pupils. In 1999 there is an improvement in results and 87 percent of pupils attained the national average and 27 percent of pupils achieved a higher level. The school has already met its target for 2000 of 26 percent of pupils achieving Level 5.
- 4 Although there are differences in attainment between pupils at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2, these are accounted for by differences in the make-up of the cohorts. For example, the 1999 cohort did not achieve highly when they were at the end of Key Stage 1, where 8.4 percent of pupils attained Level 1 or 2c. A further 7.2 percent of pupils moved into the year group with lower prior attainment. The school makes detailed analysis of its intake, results of national tests and other assessments. This analysis is used to track differences in attainment between cohorts in relation to prior attainment and special educational needs and to set realistic targets. For example, there is a current initiative at Key Stage 2 to deal with the larger than average number of pupils who have difficulties with spelling. These pupils are given extra support in small groups. The school assesses pupils in English in the Autumn term to measure achievement against internal school targets. In the following terms booster classes are provided for those pupils in need of extra help to reach the nationally expected Level 4. The results of this initiative are well documented and demonstrate improvement.
- 5 Pupils make good progress in literacy and numeracy by the time they leave the school. They use their skills well in other subjects. For example, pupils use research skills well in history, using encyclopaedic software, books, photographs and the internet to research specific topics. Writing skills are used well in geography, for example, where pupils produce well-illustrated reports on the River Tees and the Nile. The use of numeracy skills is well illustrated in geography when pupils measure rainfall, extract information from bar and line graphs and in design and technology, both in the design process and in food technology.

- 6 Standards in information and communications technology are in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1. By the end of Key Stage 2 standards are in line with national expectations in communications, handling information and modelling elements of the curriculum but below national expectations in the control element. However, planning indicates that by the end of this academic year there is the intention that this element will have been taught. In both key stages, work in religious education meets the requirements of the Local Education Authority Agreed Syllabus. Attainment is above average and progress is good. During the inspection, pupils in Year 6 demonstrated considerable maturity in the study of and comparison of the two Gospel narratives of the Christmas story by Matthew and Luke. They used artistic knowledge and analytical skills when comparing and contrasting different pictures according to which version they liked best.
- 7 Progress in all other subjects is at least satisfactory. It is very good in art at both key stages. Progress in art is particularly enhanced by the high profile given to art across the school and the skilful way in which it is linked with other subjects. The use and support of visiting “artists in residence” has a significant impact on this. Much of the work in art is of very high quality and in Year 6 and in the art club it is outstanding. Progress is good in geography and history at both key stages. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils undertake extensive individual research and produce well-illustrated and written reports. The European project has added an extra dimension to work in geography and the millennium project provided many opportunities for research and understanding of the history of the local environment. In physical education, pupils make good progress in Key Stage 1, particularly in dance and gymnastics. Achievement in dance is high towards the end of Key Stage 1, where pupils are exceptionally skilled in using facial expression and movement to interpret words and music.
- 8 The progress of children under five is good in all the six areas of learning including language and literacy and mathematics. An analysis of entry assessments confirms the inspection judgements that attainment on entry is in line with that expected nationally but writing skills are less well developed than other areas of language. By the age of five most children achieve the learning outcomes expected and many exceed them before their fifth birthday. The provision made for children under five is excellent and contributes significantly towards their development.
- 9 Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress towards the targets outlined in their individual education plans. There is clear evidence of pupils making sufficient progress for them to move down the stages of the register of special educational needs and in some cases being removed from the register altogether.
- 10 Taken across all subjects and both key stages, progress is good for all pupils. It is supported by clear and detailed subject documentation and skilful use of time that uses work in one subject to develop another. Teachers are rapidly developing new skills in the teaching of the National Numeracy Strategy and in using the new computer suite and where teachers are most confident progress is good. The difficulties caused by the absence of the music co-ordinator have caused the school to change the way in which music is taught. Class teachers are improving their skills in teaching this subject themselves and progress in lessons is best where teachers have the most confidence.
- 11 The school is not afraid to change the organisation and teaching methods to accommodate change and to improve standards. This is illustrated in the improvement in challenge and attainment for higher attaining pupils since the previous inspection and the changes made to the science curriculum and its teaching. These changes have been effective in raising attainment. The headteacher, the senior management team and subject leaders monitor the quality of planning, progress and achievement and identify areas for improvement. The clear focus on, and commitment to, raising standards supports further improvement well. The emphasis that the school places on generating a climate where teachers continually evaluate their own practice is now further supported by participation in an extensive pilot school improvement scheme for the Local Education Authority. The excellent ethos of the school and the very positive enrichment through links with parents and the wider community make a very significant contribution to attainment and progress.

15 **Attitudes, behaviour and personal development**

12 The school has a clear system of values that underpins its aims and policies and is very evident in its life and work. Pupils' behaviour and attitudes are very good and contribute very effectively to a well ordered community. They display care and pride in the school and are courteous. Very good relationships are evident throughout the school at all times. In the classes for children under five pupils make good progress in personal and social development and meet the Desirable Learning Outcomes in this aspect before the age of five, showing an enthusiasm for learning. They enjoy sharing activities with other children and adults alike, concentrating well and taking pride in their achievements.

13 The atmosphere in all classes, including those for children under five, is very purposeful and supports a positive attitude to learning. Pupils throughout the school are attentive and respond well in lessons. They are enthusiastic about their tasks and work well both independently and collaboratively. They display understanding and respect for the opinions of others. The quality of pupils' attitudes contributes significantly to the standards achieved.

14 Pupils' behaviour is very good. They move around the school in an orderly way and in the playground show respect for one another and for adults. During the inspection there were no incidents of bullying or harassment and there have been no exclusions in the past year.

15 The personal development of pupils is an excellent feature of the school. The quality of relationships is very good. Pupils take responsibility and show initiative from an early age, with older pupils caring for younger ones and undertaking a wide range of tasks around the school. Pupils develop good values that contribute to citizenship. They gain an understanding of themselves as part of a community and the implications of this in relation to attitudes and actions. Pupils demonstrate confidence when responding to questions about working and playing together. They think of others less fortunate than themselves through the support of charities. Younger pupils quickly produced ideas as to how they might help others in connection with the work on Christingle and related this, without prompting, to what they had recently seen on "Blue Peter". The school continues to maintain the high standards of attitudes, behaviour and personal development described in the previous inspection report.

19 **Attendance**

16 Attendance is good and is above the national average. There is no recorded unauthorised absence. Punctuality throughout the day is good. The school complies with statutory requirements to publish attendance data.

20

**QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED**

20 **Teaching**

17 The quality of teaching across the whole school is good. In 22 percent of lessons teaching is satisfactory, in 34 percent it is good, in 29 percent it is very good and excellent in 10 percent. In four percent of lessons teaching is unsatisfactory. Teaching in the classes for pupils under five is very good. All lessons were at least good, half were very good and almost a third excellent. At Key Stage 1 the overall quality of teaching is very good. In 19 percent of lessons it is satisfactory, in 37 percent it is good, in 28 percent very good and in 16 percent excellent. At Key Stage 2 the overall quality of teaching is good. Twenty seven percent of lessons are satisfactory, 35 percent good, 26 percent very good and 5 percent excellent. Five lessons were unsatisfactory. These unsatisfactory lessons mainly relate to early insecurities in adapting to the new numeracy strategy or a match of suitable materials to the tasks.

- 18 In the classes for children under five, teachers have an excellent understanding of the needs of young children and their expectations are high. The nursery and reception staff provide a wide range of very challenging and focused experiences, which promote pupil's learning in all areas. There are also many rich and varied opportunities for pupils to explore and create for themselves. Day-to-day assessment and monitoring of pupils is very good and ensures that all pupils make good progress and cover a wide variety of tasks and activities.
- 19 The very good and excellent teaching at both key stages is characterised by strong subject knowledge leading to secure judgements about what each group of pupils should do in the lesson to make good progress. These teachers have very high expectations of all pupils and target questioning and tasks according to pupils' differing levels of prior attainment. Very good explanations and direct instruction are linked to particularly good use of questioning to encourage hypothesis and evaluation. This is significant in raising levels of attainment. Lesson planning is detailed and there are very clear learning objectives for each group of pupils with differing prior attainment. The aims and objectives for each lesson are made clear to pupils. In the plenary session at the end of the lesson, pupils are encouraged to reflect on how far they have achieved these objectives and what they need to do next. Challenge is clearly built into lessons, with particularly good use of open-ended questions and tasks. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection when work was insufficiently planned to meet pupils' individual needs and there was a lack of challenge for higher attaining pupils.
- 20 In most classes marking enables pupils to improve their work and this is enhanced by targets being set for them at regular intervals. Meeting targets is celebrated in different ways within the classrooms and encourages pupils to make further effort. Homework is set regularly. This consists of regular work for English and mathematics, with the addition of a selection of tasks from other subjects. The amount of homework is appropriate for the age of pupils. Well established classroom routines and good behaviour management strategies feature in the majority of lessons. Relationships between staff and pupils are very good.
- 21 In weaker but satisfactory lessons, the pace of work is slower than in the best lessons. Occasionally lesson objectives are too general and work is not as well matched to differing prior attainment. Teachers' subject knowledge in music is more limited than in other subjects. The lack of a music specialist is ensuring that teachers are improving their skills quickly as they now have to take their own music lessons. They are well supported in this by a commercial scheme. The use of the new teaching suite for information and communications technology is developing quickly and teachers are adapting their teaching and rapidly gaining new skills to accommodate this.
- 22 Class teachers are very aware of their responsibilities towards pupils with special educational needs. The individual lesson plans effectively break the overall lesson objectives in to specific objectives for pupils of different abilities. For pupils with special educational needs, these are appropriately linked to their individual education plans. Very good use is made of classroom support to help these pupils. Each adult is provided with a sheet detailing the pupils' names and their role in the lesson. They are asked to provide some written comment for each pupil and although these comments are not consistently evaluative, they provide useful information for the teachers to assess pupils' progress in that session. Class teachers prepare the individual education plans with the assistance of the special educational needs co-ordinator and then break down the targets into short-term targets for planning class activities. This approach to individual target setting very effectively promotes pupils' progress. These targets are reviewed on a very short-term basis, fortnightly and frequently weekly, by the majority of teachers to monitor the progress made by each pupil. Where pupils are withdrawn for individual or group work, they benefit from good, well-managed teaching. The teacher has very good management skills, a good subject knowledge and explains the tasks clearly. The activities closely match the learning needs of pupils. This has a direct impact upon the very good progress that these pupils are making towards their targets. The relationships between pupils and the teacher are very good and this creates a positive ethos within the groups.
- 23 The school began to work in line with the National Numeracy Strategy at the beginning of the term of the inspection and are making good progress with this development, although there are still occasional



insecurities. The use of the format for the Literacy Hour is very good and planning for this has been effective in improving attainment and progress.

- 24 Daily assessments are built into weekly and daily planning and lessons are adjusted throughout the week as necessary to meet pupils' needs. Teachers plan together in year groups thus maximising the use of particular expertise and time.
- 25 A significant feature of the school is the very high quality of the display. This is often interactive and provides extra challenge for pupils. The exciting and eye catching display has a very positive impact on progress and on the ethos of the school. Another great strength of the school is the very skilful way that teachers plan to use learning from one subject to support another, thus adding significantly to pupils' skills and understanding and the use of learning in a variety of contexts. This is particularly demonstrated in the way art has been planned to permeate the whole curriculum, using the limited amount of time available to the maximum and allowing the school to meet its priority of keeping "the arts" in a position of importance.
- 26 All the issues raised in the previous report have been met and teaching has improved. The quality of teaching has a significant impact on attainment and progress.

### **The curriculum and assessment**

- 27 The school's curriculum is broad, balanced, rich and diverse and meets all the requirements of the National Curriculum and the Local Education Authority Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education. The curriculum reflects the aims of the school in providing full access for all pupils and provides an interesting and exciting learning environment that stimulates and motivates pupils. The school has adopted the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. An appropriate amount of time is spent upon each subject with an emphasis being placed upon the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. In the previous report it stated that in some classes science was under-developed. This has been addressed in two ways. Time allocation for science has been increased. A new scheme of work, placing emphasis on experimental and investigative science is in place. This has been supported by involvement in the Nuffield Science "Space" project. Often foundation subjects are taught for short, blocked, intensive periods within a topic cycle framework. Because skilful use is made of linking subjects together, time is used well and pupils use skills in a range of different settings and purposes. This is particularly effective in developing the use of literacy and numeracy and adds meaning and depth to pupils' work. The integrity of subject specific skills in each subject is carefully managed.
- 28 There is good provision for health education. The guidance ensures that that sex education and an awareness of the misuse of drugs are effectively taught within science and personal and social education. Other opportunities arise during religious education, assemblies and physical education.
- 29 Since the previous inspection, careful consideration has been given to short-term planning. This has helped staff to identify learning objectives more clearly and to plan work more carefully for pupils with differing prior attainment and has contributed to raising standards. Planning takes place collaboratively across year groups and is monitored by the subject co-ordinator.
- 30 The curriculum for pupils under five is excellent. There is a wide range of very challenging and focused experiences which promote learning. All six areas of learning recommended for the age group are very well developed. Pupils are well prepared for transition to the National Curriculum. Planning for continuity between the nursery and the reception class is excellent. Assessment procedures are excellent and day-to-day assessment is used very well to inform planning.
- 31 The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. This represents an improvement since the last inspection. Curriculum planning successfully meets the needs of pupils with special educational needs. There is a very good policy for special educational needs and this is reflected by the provision. The individual education plans for pupils are good. There are individual education plans for pupils on Stage 1 of the register of special educational needs with more general, but still measurable targets. For pupils on Stage 2 and above of the register of special educational needs the targets that relate to learning difficulties are generally specific and measurable, based upon evidence obtained from diagnostic tests or the work of the

pupils in groups or classes. They provide good guidance for class teachers to use in planning work. New individual education plans are written on a termly basis after a full review meeting. In addition to long-term intervention plans the school has introduced short-term provision to help pupils who have been identified as having spelling difficulties in Years 5 and 6. This is beginning to have a positive impact upon these pupils' skills.

- 32 A satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities is provided for pupils, including sport. Approximately 120 pupils are members of the various clubs. The most recent addition has been the internet club. This has proved to be very popular. These activities make a very good contribution to developing pupils' personal and social skills and contribute significantly to learning particularly in art and information and communications technology.
- 33 The school's clearly stated homework policy is well implemented across both key stages and contributes significantly to the pupils' progress. Pupils in Year 6 receive additional support via booster classes. These classes are designed to help pupils who are close to achieving Level 4 in the national tests. They operate during the Spring and Summer terms.
- 34 Assessment of pupils' progress is very good across both key stages. The documentation, which establishes a strong link between assessment and planning, is very good and procedures are clearly detailed. The school regards assessment as a changing and developmental process. Pupils in Key Stage 1 have an inter-active reading record that involves parents, teacher and pupil. Written work is assessed and moderated regularly. National test results are examined in detail and are analysed carefully to find any areas for improvement and to set targets. At Key Stage 2 a range of other tests is also used in addition to ongoing assessment by the teacher. The procedures for pupils' self-assessment were favourably commented upon in the previous inspection report. These have been maintained and developed. Target-setting for individual pupils in Key Stage 2 is well established and involves a small number of individual, attainable targets negotiated between teacher and pupil. These are reviewed and amended or replaced according to the level of achievement. The school is in the process of developing a pupil tracking system that assimilates formal and informal assessments and samples of moderated work. This gives a comprehensive picture of pupil achievement and progress where it is in operation. For example, in English it identifies pupils who need extra help with spelling. Assessment is well used to inform future planning.
- 35 Annual reports to parents are informative and give a good picture of pupils' strengths and weaknesses. All required procedures for assessing and recording pupils' attainments are met.
- 36 Procedures for the diagnostic assessment of special educational needs and the recording of pupils' progress towards the targets in their individual education plans and general literacy skills are well developed. However, there is no structured approach to assessing behavioural difficulties through testing or observation. This has an impact upon the capacity of the special needs co-ordinator and class teachers to set precise and measurable targets linked to management strategies.

#### 40 **Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

- 37 Throughout the school provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. The school is very successful in meeting its aim to provide a caring and nurturing environment.
- 38 Very good provision is made for spiritual development. Well-planned daily acts of worship make a good contribution to this aspect of pupils' development in offering opportunities for quiet reflection. The school provides a stimulating, safe and happy environment where all pupils are valued. This is evident in the quality of displays and the emphasis placed on rewarding all types of achievement. Frequent opportunities are taken to ensure that pupils listen to each other's responses in lessons. They are taught to evaluate their own performance and to take constructive criticism from each other. Pupils learn to respect each other, and think carefully about each other's good qualities. They learn to consider the feelings of others. For example, nursery children discuss the feelings of the rainbow fish when he gave his shiny scales away, and

how they feel when they are with someone special. Older pupils consider the feelings of people without friends. Opportunities for reflection and thought are provided in most subjects. Pupils are taught to appreciate the world around them and often write their own prayers. In religious education lessons, and through visits from parents of children in the school, they are taught about different beliefs and customs, and understand that these play an important part in peoples' lives. In art pupils are taught to think deeply about what artists wanted to communicate. They are given the opportunity to express their own feelings through composition and the use of colour.

- 39 The provision made for the pupils' moral development is excellent. The school code of conduct has been evaluated by the pupils and modified for their own classrooms. Pupils at all stages are taught the difference between right and wrong. Classroom and playground routines are clearly established. Young children are very clear as to what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour and are taught the importance of sharing. Teachers have high expectations of behaviour in and around the school and set very good role models. Such is the quality of relationships between teachers and pupils that most teachers rarely need to exert discipline. A high degree of trust is placed in pupils, and there is open access to a vast range of materials and equipment. Pupils are expected to be polite and to help each other. They learn to think about their own environment and such is the quality of this that pupils regularly win local awards.
- 40 The provision for social development is excellent. Pupils in the classes for children under five gain confidence rapidly. They tidy up, respond quickly to the teacher and treat equipment carefully. From an early age pupils learn to work in groups, in pairs and independently. They are given many opportunities for collaborative work and to make decisions for themselves. They are taught to collect and replace resources with the minimum of fuss in lessons and tidy up their classrooms quickly. Older pupils are given regular responsibilities around the school, such as ringing the bell, looking after the library or helping in the nursery. Pupils with special educational needs are well integrated and take a full and active part in the life of the school. Pupils in Year 6 enjoy residential experiences where self-confidence and teamwork are developed through adventurous activities. This makes a good contribution to their social development. Extra-curricular competitive sports develop teamwork. Pupils are well prepared for situations that they may face outside school through visits from police, and experiences with the other emergency services. Pupils learn to contribute to their community through activities such as singing for senior citizens or in the local supermarket. Charities such as the "Blue Peter" appeals are supported regularly, pupils are well informed and given the opportunity to use their own initiative to raise money. A good range of books is provided in the library to give pupils the opportunity to explore issues such as being adopted or having step parents.
- 41 Cultural development is extremely well promoted and there are many excellent initiatives. Opportunities are provided for all pupils to visit places of interest in the area to develop an understanding of their own culture, and how it developed, for example in the study of the local river mouth. Young children learn about their own environment, and are given experiences such as a train ride to widen their knowledge. The whole school millennium project, in which all pupils took part, has provided a very good insight into the development of their own urban community and an opportunity to work together to provide an excellent lasting display. A very broad range of experiences from different centuries and cultures are provided in art lessons. The range of artists studied is excellent. The European project, linking the school to those in Finland, Italy and Austria, makes a considerable contribution to all pupils' appreciation of differences between children's lives in these places. The catering staff make their contribution by regular provision of school lunches linked to a theme, demonstrated by a theme of America during the inspection. Poetry and literature make a significant contribution to cultural development. Pupils enjoy music from different cultures such as the Caribbean and visitors to the school extend their awareness of different types of music.
- 42 Parents support the values promoted by the school, which start when children enter the nursery. The previous inspection report stated that great importance was attached to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. These high standards have been improved even further and this aspect makes a considerable contribution to attainment and progress.

46 **Support, guidance and pupils' welfare**

43 Provision for support, guidance and pupils' welfare is very good. Effective procedures for promoting the welfare and safety of pupils reflect the aims of the school. They ensure a happy and supportive learning environment where pupils are encouraged to achieve their full potential and feel valued. Positive strategies are used to build confidence and self-esteem, praising effort and achievement in every aspect of school life. Parents recognise that the school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on their children's achievements and say that their children enjoy coming to school. The inspection findings agree with this .

44 Staff have very good relationships with pupils and parents. Any problems are identified at an early stage, enabling pupils to be given effective support. Pupils' personal and academic performance is monitored regularly and recorded. This contributes well to learning. An excellent entry programme, including home visits, discussions with parents and initial assessment enables children to make a confident start in the nursery and similarly, careful liaison takes place as pupils enter full-time school. Appropriate links ensure a well-managed transfer of pupils into secondary school. Relevant support is obtained from external sources for pupils with specific difficulties. The impact of support upon pupils with special educational needs in the classroom is good. Support staff have good relationships with the pupils and use this to encourage and guide pupils to maintain their attention and focus upon the lesson.

45 Health education is integrated into the whole school curriculum with questions about sex education being answered sensitively as they arise. Pupils in Year 6 undertake a health education topic which includes more formal sex education. Drugs awareness is an integral part of the school's health and personal development programme. The school maintains links with the appropriate agencies to provide regular health and safety support. Health and safety checks are undertaken regularly and appropriate action taken. Fire regulations are displayed around the school and the school holds regular fire practice. The day-to-day arrangements for sick and injured pupils are well established and effective. The school has trained first aid support and good procedures are in place for recording accidents and injury.

46 Statutory requirements for child protection are met in full and all staff are fully aware of their responsibilities and the procedures to be followed. There are very good systems in place for monitoring and promoting good attendance. The marking of registers meets requirements. The school promotes very good standards of behaviour and has effective procedures to deal with any unacceptable behaviour or bullying.

50 **Partnership with parents and the community**

47 The school's partnership with parents and community is very good and is a strength of the school. Parents are welcome in school at all times and encouraged to play an active part in its life. Many parents contribute to the ethos of the school by direct involvement. A significant number of parents assist in the classroom and have received training to strengthen their positive contribution. Many parents took part in the ambitious and effective art project for the millennium. The school provides parents with very good information through reports, consultation evenings, the school prospectus, and regular newsletters. Most parents feel well informed but a minority of parents feel that they would like more. However, the school provides an open invitation to parents to discuss any concerns throughout the year. The staff deal quickly and sensitively with any issues that arise.

48 The Parents' Association is very active in raising funds by a regular programme of well-supported social events. Parents view the home-school links, particularly in relation to reading and other tasks to do at home, as making a positive contribution to the raising of standards. The "Better Reading Partnership" is a very good example of this. The weekly book club, run by parents, helps pupils and parents alike to extend their interest in reading. A few parents feel that the school does not involve their children in more than daily lessons. The number and range of extra-curricular activities are about average and the school undertakes successful and ambitious projects such as the millennium art project and the European project.

- 49 Partnership with parents of pupils with special educational needs is very good and they are thoroughly involved at all stages. They are invited to the termly meetings, but where they are unable or unwilling to attend they are asked to contribute in writing. In certain cases parents have a direct role in the strategies detailed in the individual education plans.
- 50 The well-organised programme of visits on entry to the nursery establishes a very effective initial partnership.
- 51 Good relationships exist with the local secondary schools and a liaison group meets regularly. Visits to the school and return visits by teachers, pupils and parents facilitate a smooth transfer. Co-ordinators for special educational needs from all the schools pay particular attention to these pupils. Other links with local schools exist such as the area art support group.
- 52 Excellent links exist with both business and the wider community. The ambitious European project makes a significant contribution to pupils' learning and personal, social and cultural development. The millennium art project, is a major initiative to bring together staff, pupils, parents, relatives and members of the community to produce an outstanding and striking display of the history surrounding the school. The artist-in-residence was funded by the Parents' Association.
- 53 The school uses the local community well by inviting a wide range of visitors into the school. Visits to many places of interest also enrich the curriculum. The school actively co-operates with other educational establishments and makes very good use of students on placements. These receive good support and gain valuable experience.
- 54 The majority of parents at the parents' meeting and in the questionnaire expressed support for all aspects of the school and the inspection findings agree strongly with these positive views.

58

## **THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL**

### **58 Leadership and management**

- 55 The leadership and management of the school are very effective. The headteacher, assisted by an able deputy headteacher, provide very clear direction to the school. They promote a rich curriculum and high standards of attainment, within an excellent learning environment. The governing body is supportive and has many strengths that complement those of the head and deputy headteacher, forming an effective and powerful partnership. Several governors have served for many years and have a wealth of experience and understanding that enables them to provide valuable advice and support. Some bring very useful professional skills such as financial auditing or local council experience to add strength to management and decision making. Governors play a major role in all stages of staff appointments from establishing requirements, through to shortlisting and interview. This is helpful in developing understanding of the school. The curriculum co-ordinators provide very effective management, support and development of subjects. The team leader structure has been recently rationalised to link more closely to planning groups and to form the senior management team which is effective in evaluating and co-ordinating teaching and learning.
- 56 The special educational needs co-ordinator gives very good leadership. The co-ordinator's role has been developed as a monitoring and management role. She manages the liaison with external agencies such as Educational Psychology, Learning Support Service and Hearing Impaired Service as well as organising the annual review meetings and other administrative tasks. The school benefits from the active and informed involvement of the governor for special educational needs. The co-ordinator maintains a register of pupils with special educational needs and provision meets the guidance of the Code of Practice. Statutory requirements are met with respect to those pupils with statements of special educational needs. The policy provides very good guidance for class teachers on the identification and assessment procedures for pupils causing concern. The statement in the Annual Report to Parents complies with statutory requirements.

- 57 Since the previous inspection all the key issues for action have been addressed and there has been very good improvement in the quality of education overall. The standard of teaching has improved considerably and pupil attainment has risen steadily, with a particular increase in challenge for the more able pupils. This has been achieved by the headteacher undertaking extensive monitoring of teaching. The results have been analysed, common features identified and useful guidelines for classroom practice produced. The emphasis has been on generating a climate where teachers continually evaluate their own practice successfully. The school is now involved with an extensive school improvement scheme that it is piloting for the Local Education Authority. Curriculum co-ordinators have reviewed most schemes of work to meet the findings of the previous inspection and to adjust work in response to national initiatives.
- 58 School development planning continues to be a strength of the school and has evolved further since the previous inspection. The timetabled cycle of planning and evaluation is firmly established and all staff are involved in the formative stages. Priorities are relevant to the school and these are closely linked to budget setting. A strength of the development plan is the belief that this is a working document to be constantly reviewed and modified in the light of new pressures and opportunities. The management is flexible in exploiting these to the full, to ensure continued improvement.
- 59 The ethos of the school is excellent and stems from the clear aims and philosophy of the senior management team. These are communicated clearly to staff and pupils from the moment they enter school and parents endorsed them at the parents' meeting. The ethos is carefully nurtured in lessons and assemblies and there is a high level of consistency in the positive way that pupils respond and in the provision made for learning and personal development.
- 60 The governing body and the school meet all statutory requirements.
- 64 **Staffing, accommodation and learning resources**
- 61 There is a sufficient number of appropriately qualified teachers with a good range of experience and talents, who are committed and hard working. A change over of approximately one third of the staff has taken place since the previous inspection. This change has included the appointment of three newly qualified teachers. There are co-ordinators for all subjects, except music where a new appointment is awaited. There are also co-ordinators for special educational needs and for the European Project. Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of special educational needs. Classroom assistants who work closely with the teachers provide effective support in the nursery and in reception but there is less support in the rest of the school and the school successfully relies on voluntary help from parents. This support contributes significantly to helping pupils achieve their targets. The teamwork of staff in the nursery and reception classes has a very positive impact on the progress made by the youngest children. Staff development is appropriately linked to appraisal and to the needs of the school. Newly qualified teachers receive excellent support. The school is very well supported by its administrative staff and caretaker.
- 62 The well-cared for accommodation is good and provides for effective teaching of all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. Since the previous inspection, an extension has improved the accommodation but the school still has five classes situated in mobile classrooms, which provide a lower standard of accommodation. The open-plan classrooms are small but the shared areas for creative work are used well. The hall is too small to accommodate the whole school at once but the separate dining area and drama studio relieve the problems of one area being required for a number of activities. The computer suite, which has been recently installed, provides improved accommodation for the teaching of information and communications technology. The library area and music room are attractive and well organised. The large playground has games marked on it. Seating is available around the playground but none of this has shade. The enclosed quadrangles within the school are attractive and provide light and interest. The pond and fountain outside the nursery provide stimulation and the nursery children watch the fountain splashing 'like rain'. Displays throughout the classrooms and corridors radiate quality and give value to pupils' work. The Millennium Art Project in the hall is outstanding.

63 Learning resources are very good for the teaching of all subjects and are easily accessible but equipment for the use of motors and control is a shortcoming in design and technology. They make a significant contribution to the standards achieved. All resources, including a number of hand-made articles, are of high quality and very well cared for. Pupils respond to the good quality of paper in their books and try hard with the presentation of their work. The resources for art are excellent and contribute significantly to the high standards of work achieved. Visitors to the school and outside visits to synagogues, mosques and museums are used well to enrich the curriculum.

67 **The efficiency of the school**

64 The quality of financial planning is very good and underpinned by a clear philosophy and effective systems. Resources allocated to the school are carefully managed in order to give maximum benefit to the pupils in the school at the present time. This means that the amount of money in reserve is the very minimum required to meet contingencies. Whilst this is low, the governors have carefully analysed areas of potential difficulty and arrived at a figure where they consider risks to be acceptable. This strategy has been successful in supporting the school through an unexpected fall in pupil numbers but is too low to be sustained over a number of years. Budget setting is undertaken by the headteacher and strongly influenced by the development plan. This is produced after a comprehensive audit of the school in which all staff are involved. The school makes good use of opportunities for boosting resources and experiences. For example, the school acts as co-ordinator for the very effective European project, linking schools in four countries. Additional funding for special educational needs is used to release the co-ordinator to carry out her duties and to help maintain low class sizes across the school. This is thought by the governors to be the most effective way of ensuring these pupils get the support they need in all lessons. The inspection findings are that this system is supporting very good provision for these pupils.

65 All staff are deployed well and there is a strong sense of common purpose. The curriculum is well co-ordinated although the distribution of responsibilities weighs more heavily on some staff than others, with implications for the time available for monitoring and support. The high quality learning resources are used well in lessons and there are effective systems for accessing and maintaining them. The accommodation is used effectively. The provision of extra temporary classrooms since the previous inspection has permitted the specialist use of rooms such as the studio to the benefit of pupils and the curriculum. Creative marking of the playgrounds with games, compass and clock has increased the learning potential of these areas. The inner courtyards provide sheltered and relatively secure spaces that are being used well, for example, as places for testing rain gauges in geography. An outstanding feature of the school interior is the exceptionally high standard of display supporting all subjects. This contributes significantly to the quality of learning and creates a stimulating and exciting environment. This is typified by the wonderful tapestry in the hall, supported by an artist-in-residence, and involving pupils, parents and staff. This represents an imaginative and cost efficient use of resources to extend learning.

66 Pupils enter the school from a socio-economic background that is above average and have average levels of attainment. The quality of education provided is very good. Pupils make good progress throughout, leaving with above average standards of attainment. They have very good attitudes to learning. The costs per pupil are low compared with national averages and therefore the school is considered to give very good value for money.



## **PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS**

### **70 AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE**

67 The provision made for children under five is excellent. Since the previous inspection outdoor play is fully planned into the nursery curriculum. The nursery and reception areas stimulate children's interest and provide a secure and safe environment. At the time of the inspection 78 pupils attend the nursery either morning or afternoon and 27 pupils attend full-time in reception. Pupils begin nursery as soon as a place is available after their third birthday. Entry procedures include a home visit and further visits to the nursery with a parent. Assessment on entry includes discussions with parents on the initial home visit followed by baseline assessment when children begin nursery. The staggered start is very effective in ensuring that children settle happily and baseline assessment is carried out accurately. An analysis of entry assessment results confirms that attainment for this group of children is in line with that expected nationally in all areas of learning but that writing skills are less well developed than other areas of language and literacy. By the age of five almost all children achieve the learning outcomes expected and many of the children exceed them by their fifth birthday. The nursery teacher, together with one full-time and two part-time nursery nurses, are an outstanding team. The reception teacher and her part-time assistant are an equally effective team. Pupils are offered a broad range of experiences of the highest quality, giving an excellent start to their time in school.

68 Pupils make good progress in all areas of learning. Planning to meet the needs of all pupils, including those with special education needs, is excellent and the curriculum provides experiences for pupils that are based firmly on the nationally identified Desirable Learning Outcomes. Progression is effectively built into planning by gradually introducing the older children in nursery and then in reception to more directed activities. For example reception and older nursery children have planned sessions in the computer suite and in addition, the reception pupils spend time in the library, choosing and returning books. The quality of teaching is very good and some of it is excellent. Teachers have an excellent understanding of the needs of young children and their expectations are high. The nursery and reception staff provide a wide range of very challenging and focused experiences, which promote pupil's learning well in all areas. Staff engage pupils effectively in both planned and spontaneous conversations, helping them to listen and respond appropriately as they work. They involve pupils well in activities such as sharing books, singing songs, and playing mathematical games. There are also many rich and varied opportunities for pupils to explore and create for themselves. Transition from the nursery into the reception class is carefully managed. Pupils visit their new classroom and teacher and accompany staff round the school to deliver messages. Parents are invited to meetings to explain areas of learning and stay to lunch with their child.

69 Pupils make good progress in personal and social development and meet the Desirable Learning Outcomes before the age of five. They show an enthusiasm to learn. They enjoy sharing their activities with other children and adults alike. They concentrate well and take pride in their achievements. Many pupils have high levels of confidence; they co-operate with one another well, take turns and have a good sense of right and wrong. They collaborate well in groups, for example sharing dinosaurs in the sand or co-operating in building a track for the train. They take it in turns to put on hats and aprons and confidently give out the milk. They are becoming independent and concentrate long enough to complete an activity, showing suitable consideration towards each other. The behaviour of pupils is very good. Confidence, independence and consideration for others is a direct result of the excellent role models provided by the staff. All relationships are of the highest quality and teaching is very good. Staff make very good use of praise to encourage pupils to try hard, to raise their self-esteem and promote their confidence in learning. Excellent opportunities are provided for children to play together through a range of activities. The quality of the resources available is very good and pupils quickly learn to take care of equipment. The good standards maintained in personal and social development take place in a calm, ordered atmosphere of mutual respect. Pupils develop very positive attitudes and good working routines from the time they start nursery.

- 70 Good progress is made in the skills of language and literacy and by the age of five, almost all children attain standards which match the Desirable Learning Outcomes for five-year-olds. Many exceed these standards. Pupils work confidently and make good progress in speaking and listening, reading and in writing. In the nursery they listen to stories and songs and begin to contribute to class discussions or familiar events. Older pupils are keen to communicate and articulate their thoughts clearly. In the reception class they listen attentively to stories such as ‘Farmer Duck’ and talk about the events confidently, re-telling the story accurately, whilst making good use of vocabulary. Following the story pupils participate well in question and answer sessions. They express opinions about the story, sympathising with the ‘poor duck’ that has to undertake all the work on the farm. They enjoy books, understand their purpose and handle them with care. Most children know the sounds that some letters represent for example the letter ‘f’, and can name words beginning with that letter. About a quarter of pupils in the reception class already identify the blends ‘fr, and ‘fl’ in “frog”, “flag” and “flower”. When children start in nursery they learn to recognise their name by finding their name to self-register. They quickly learn to recognise the letters in their name and later match and write these confidently. After mark making in the nursery they begin to form letters accurately and make good attempts at early writing. Good opportunities are provided to develop and extend writing skills through guided and independent writing experiences, linked to a range of different activities. For example, pupils in the reception class make their own books, drawing and writing words beginning with particular sounds. In the nursery children develop language skills well in role-play situations, acting out characters found in a café and using writing skills to prepare a menu. In the doctor’s surgery they take on various roles, answering the telephone, and writing appointments. Reception pupils develop library skills through regular visits to the school library where they have the opportunity to select books from the shelves, carefully marking the place with their name card so that they can return it correctly. They are supported in using an index to locate information in non-fiction books. The quality of teaching is very good. Sessions are well planned and teachers and assistants make good use of a wide range of teaching strategies.
- 71 Pupils make good progress in developing mathematical understanding. In the nursery they sort and match objects into large and small, recognise simple repeating colour patterns and begin to count using one-to-one correspondence. In the reception class they order numerals on a “washing line” and identify missing numbers. They know that five is the missing number between four and six and that eight is the number between seven and nine. About a quarter of pupils recognise numbers to twenty. These pupils order number cards to twenty and then match up picture cards showing the correct number of objects. Younger pupils recognise and name some of the common shapes while a few older ones identify a square as having four sides the same and know that a rectangle has two long sides. The development of mathematical learning is well promoted in the nursery through practical activities such as counting and matching when laying a table in the café and by preparing snacks in the cooking area. The building up of an Advent Calendar provides opportunities to use the language of shape while selecting pictures to match the dates on the calendar. Even the youngest pupils know that 25 is the day that Father Christmas comes! Pupils use the computer effectively both in the nursery and in the reception class to support learning in mathematics and to consolidate their understanding of numbers and number values. Through structured work with water and sand in both classes, pupils develop a good understanding of quantity, and successfully compare objects by size. They are beginning to develop a satisfactory sense of time and recognise significant times of the day such as tidy-up time followed by story time and the end of nursery. Older pupils recognise playtime, lunchtime and assembly time. In mathematical learning, pupils attain above average levels of understanding by the age of five. The quality of teaching is very good.
- 72 Pupils make good progress in knowledge and understanding of the world and the quality of teaching is very good. Both nursery and reception classes learn about the five senses during the Autumn so that there is equality of opportunity for pupils entering the reception class in January. These older children know that they have five senses that they can use both together and separately. They know that eyes are used for seeing and the tongue is used for tasting. Some pupils identify taste buds as bumps that are used to taste with. They understand the importance of looking after their teeth and not eating too many sweet things. They use their fingers and sense of touch to guess objects put into their hands behind their backs. In the nursery, construction materials are used effectively to build models and older pupils then use coloured pens to make drawings, matching the colours of bricks used. Pupils select their own materials to build models, using scissors and glue to make joints. Young pupils are introduced to early computer skills and use the

mouse effectively to make a face. Older pupils use the computer suite and learn how to log on and off and then load a program. They print their work and exit from a program. Pupils learn about “past and present” and the environment. Nursery pupils enjoyed the experience of making Christmas cakes during the inspection and demonstrated good awareness of hygiene. By the age of five children have a good knowledge and understanding of the world.

- 73 Physical skills develop well and pupils have good physical skills by the age of five. They are confident in their movements in and around the nursery play area and when using the large wheeled toys and balancing beams. Many opportunities are provided in the nursery for pupils to cut and fold paper, to build with construction kits, to explore materials, including sand and water and to manipulate puzzles. By the time pupils reach the reception class they have good control of pencils and use them successfully for writing, drawing and colouring. They control a paintbrush to paint accurate rays for the sun. They enjoy outside play activities and demonstrate good skills in hopping and jumping. By the time they are five the majority of pupils balance successfully along a beam, changing direction part of the way along. Most can throw and catch a large ball. The quality of teaching is very good. Teachers effectively build on the natural desire to explore and develop physical skills by providing challenging and imaginative but safe activities, which encourage pupils to respond with increasing skill. Good intervention by adults provides opportunities for pupils to learn to move more imaginatively and with increasing co-ordination.
- 74 By the age of five most children make good progress in their creative development and attain levels of understanding and skill that are above those expected for their age. Expression of ideas and feelings is developed well through art, music and role-play. Young children in the nursery explore paint freely, discovering the effects of mixing different colours. Older pupils use good skills to create paintings, choosing suitable colours for sky and grass and the sun. Paintings and drawings are beginning to show good detail. They enjoy mixing paint and most know that they have to mix red and yellow to make orange. Pupils have access to a range of musical instruments in the music corner and use these to create their own sounds. The quality of teaching is very good. Teachers provide a wide range of opportunities in art, craft, music, story making and imaginative play to develop skills in expressing ideas and feelings in creative ways.

78

## **ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE**

### **78 English**

- 75 Attainment in English at Key Stage 1 is well above the national average. This is reflected in the results of the national tests in both 1998 and 1999. Standards are also well above average when compared with schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. The standard of attainment since the previous inspection has been maintained at a very high level in Key Stage 1 and significantly improved at Key Stage 2. In 1998 standards in English at the end of Key Stage 2 were well above average in comparison with all schools and average when compared with similar schools. In the previous inspection report, concern was expressed in relation to the lack of challenge for higher attaining pupils, particularly at Key Stage 2. A higher percentage of pupils attained Level 5 in 1999 than in 1998. There is a steady improvement in the number of pupils gaining the higher level. The inspection findings agree with these results.
- 76 Attainment in speaking and listening at Key Stage 1 is well above national expectations. Pupils listen attentively when the teacher is reading or telling stories and to other adults and pupils. They listen carefully to instructions and respond positively to opportunities to present their work to others. In a Year 1 class a group of children were given the task of practising a play version of “The Three Little Pigs”, using pig puppets and a location board. After a short time to practise, they performed their play to the teacher. Attainment at Key Stage 2 is well above the national average. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils apply and extend speaking and listening skills in a wider range of opportunities, both formal and informal. In a Year 5 class a group of pupils were given a number of poems to sort by author. They discussed the poems with each other and justified their personal choices with appropriate supporting arguments - “I think it’s Rosen because.....”. The group collaborated well and reached a collectively agreed solution. When a Year 6 pupil had developed the next event in his story involving a Roald Dahl character, the teacher invited the pupil to

read it to the class. The piece was well written and the reading was delivered with such a great sense of drama and humour that the class burst into spontaneous applause. Lower attaining pupils are encouraged in both key stages to participate in responding to questions and joining in class discussion. Sensitive questioning and encouragement by teachers ensures that they play a full part in speaking and listening activities.

77 Attainment in reading is well above average at the end of Key Stage 1 and above average at the end of Key Stage 2. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils read fluently, with few errors and with expression. They understand the main features of plot, talk about characters and predict what they think will happen next. They use phonic, picture and textual clues well. By the end of the key stage most pupils know the alphabet and can “look up” information. Many use an index and contents page and dictionaries and word banks confidently. The use of “big books” in the Literacy Hour has enhanced pupils’ enjoyment of reading. All participate well when reading a text with the teacher. Reading development is supported well through an inter-active home-school reading record that involves teacher, pupil and parent. Most pupils have books at home and many are members of the public library. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils read well, with fluency and accuracy. Many read with good expression. Pupils talk confidently about plot and character and many interpret inferences successfully. Most enjoy reading a wide range of literature, including poetry and are members of the library. They discuss and comment on favourite authors such as Roald Dahl and Dick King-Smith. They comment maturely on characterisation. One Year 6 pupil commented that she much preferred the characterisation in Rowling’s books when compared to those of Dahl as she found Dahl characters “quite unbelievable people”. Most pupils use a dictionary and thesaurus confidently. A number of pupils in Year 6 participate in the “Better Reading Partnership” and pupils’ confidence, behaviour and reading skills are seen to improve quickly. Pupils have developed sound library skills and locate specific information within the school library using the subject index and colour coding system and Dewey coding well. The school has been chosen to participate in the Stockton “Junior and Young Librarian” project in January. This involves Stockton Borough Library staff in training pupil in skills for librarianship. A number of pupils are able to access books and information from computerised systems.

82 Standards in writing are well above average at Key Stage 1 and above average at Key Stage 2. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils have developed a cursive script, handwriting is neat and letters are well formed. By the end of the key stage most pupils can write in sentences of handwriting and sustain longer narratives with good spelling and punctuation. Most pupils use full stops and capital letters appropriately. Higher attainers use speech marks correctly in their work. Spelling is very good and pupils are encouraged to use word building skills to attempt more difficult words unaided. Pupils make good attempts at such words, for example “ogenays” for organise, and “consiret” for considerate. They order events well in writing stories or descriptions of events. By the end of Key Stage 2 most pupils express themselves confidently, imaginatively and with good use of vocabulary. They make very good use of a dictionary and thesaurus. They show grammatical correctness in most of their writing and spelling is good. They write for a variety of purposes and this includes letters, diaries, book reviews, character studies, reports and poetry. Low attaining pupils write short sentences and punctuate with accuracy. Pupils respond enthusiastically to opportunities to extend their vocabulary. They take notes and draft and redraft their work. Higher attaining pupils determine the nature of the changes that they make between drafts and appreciate the value of the process:- “I think drafting and redrafting is an excellent idea. It helps your work a lot” and, “The second draft was better but I didn’t like the last line.”

78 Standards of literacy are very good at both key stages. Pupils use their literacy skills well in other subjects. For example in a project folder on the Nile pupils made extensive use of note-taking skills and these notes were appended to the file. Many pupils are involved in the European Project and write to pen pals in a number of European countries. They take a pride in their work and handwriting and presentation are good, particularly in the second half of Key Stage 2. Lower attaining pupils are usually well motivated and produce work of a satisfactory standard, both in terms of content and presentation.

- 84 Progress is very good for pupils with special educational needs. This is a result of the support that pupils with special educational needs receive from class teachers, support teachers, specialist teachers, auxiliaries and parent helpers. In the Literacy Hour, the progress that pupils make is very closely linked to the quality of teaching. In Key Stage 1 progress for all pupils, including those with special educational needs, is very good. Speaking and listening skills are afforded many opportunities throughout the key stage. Pupils are challenged by skilled questioning, given opportunities to express opinion, listen to teachers and other pupils within a wide variety of contexts. In a Year 2 class pupils were asked to predict what would happen next in the Alfie story. In a Year 1 class pupils were asked to compose the next sentence in the story of “The Three Little Pigs”. The teacher added the sentence to the story evolving on the story board. Pupils were invited to spell words, suggest alternative words and add punctuation as the writing progressed. Reading skills develop rapidly. Pupils meet many reading opportunities each day. Groups often have to interpret and follow written instructions, share and read “big books” as well as reading books from commercial schemes. Pupils rapidly acquire the skills in word-building which enable fluency and confidence in reading. The home-parent partnership contributes greatly to the progress that pupils make. Pupils make rapid progress in writing in Key Stage 1.
- 79 When taken across the whole key stage progress is good at Key Stage 2 for all groups of pupils. Progress is satisfactory in the lower end of the key stage and good in the two higher year groups where challenging texts and tasks motivate interest and pupils respond enthusiastically. During the key stage pupils develop a more fluent cursive style of handwriting, create more complex sentences, enlarge their vocabulary and improve their spelling and presentation. They are afforded the opportunity to develop more formal skills in addressing an audience and listen with more sustained concentration. They learn discussion skills, how to present an argument and come to collaborative decisions. By the end of the key stage pupils are articulate and communicative, willing to share ideas and to learn from others. They know how to question, interrogate and use information. Pupils greatly enjoy expressive writing. Following a visit to a performance of “Romeo and Juliet” Year 6 pupils were asked to retell the story in a modern setting. The stories were cleverly and imaginatively written, often with a good sense of humour. Much thought and care is evident in the quality of the work that pupils produce, demonstrated well when pupils in Year 3 produced calligrams. One pupil worked on the retelling of “Rapunzel” and had formulated the story inside a carefully drawn tower. Pupils in Year 5 were using a Michael Rosen idea and interpreting it in a context of their own. They captured the style appropriately. Pupils produced work on the theme at home and returned to school with computer print-outs of the work that they had done.
- 85
- 80 Pupils’ behaviour in lessons is very good in Key Stage 1. They are polite and respectful. Pupils generally have a very positive attitude to learning. They work hard to complete the tasks set for them. They communicate confidently when answering questions, offering an opinion or presenting their work to the class. They are very enthusiastic about reading with the “big book”, and co-operate with each other willingly and sensibly. They maintain concentration well, taking great pride in their work. Pupils enjoy very good relationships with their teacher, other adults and their peers. In Key Stage 2 behaviour is good when taken across the key stage and very good in the latter half of the key stage. Here pupils listen with sustained interest, tackle tasks with enthusiasm and responsibility and communicate their findings articulately to groups or class. They work well collaboratively and respond spontaneously when admiring the work of other pupils. A Year 6 pupil, upon completion of a dramatic and humorous reading of his work, was greeted to generous applause.
- 81 Teaching in Key Stage 1 is very good. All lessons observed were at least very good and one was excellent. Teaching in Key Stage 2 is good. Almost a third of lessons were good, and a third very good. One lesson was excellent and one unsatisfactory. The rest were satisfactory. The weakness in the unsatisfactory lesson related to insufficient challenge in the tasks and inappropriate classroom management skills. At both key stages all levels of planning are good and year group teachers plan together. In most lessons tasks are varied, interesting and appropriately matched to the levels of pupils’ prior attainment. Questioning is usually open-ended and challenging. Teachers encourage pupils to give evidence and evaluation to support opinions and answers. This is well illustrated in a lesson where pupils were comparing poems. When pupils gave answers others were asked, “Do you agree with that?” The pace of lessons is good. Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the subject and of the requirements of the Literacy Hour. A very high

standard of work and behaviour is expected and obtained. Marking is encouraging and diagnostic. This promotes a positive attitude to learning and improvement. Homework is used well to improve progress. At Key Stage 1 this mainly consists of reading and spelling. At Key Stage 2 pupils regularly research information as well. Classrooms contain a rich variety of display featuring good quality written work and encouraging pupils to read. Books are often well-integrated into display. Short-term planning and lack of challenge for higher attainers were features of the previous inspection report. There is now a marked improvement in this and in most classes this is now a strength of lessons.

- 82 Assessment procedures and their implementation are very good across both key stages. The school links assessment and planning very effectively. Self-assessment and pupils' involvement with their own target setting is a significant feature throughout Key Stage 2. The school analyses well the results of national tests and assessments and other tests. It uses these and the results of teacher assessments to set targets for improvement and to influence teaching strategies.
- 83 The effectiveness of the school's strategy for literacy is very good. Teachers have responded positively to the introduction of the Literacy Hour and their skills have a positive impact on attainment and progress. Preparation and implementation have been carefully considered and the documentation used well. Training has been thorough and the acquisition of good quality resources carefully considered, to gain maximum interest and progress. This is particularly evident in the choice of "big books" and group reading sets, many of which support work in other subjects. A significant feature of the teaching of literacy is the careful and skilful planning for its integration with all subjects.
- 84 Co-ordination of the subject is very good. The subject leader is knowledgeable and well qualified. Hard work has enabled the school to prepare very well for the implementation of the Literacy Hour and the development plan includes further training on writing. Teachers' planning is monitored carefully to provide support and guidance. The co-ordinator also attends planning meetings. The attractive and well-stocked library supports pupils' development of library and research skills well. The new computer suite is having an impact on writing skills and pupils use word processing packages and other programs well to develop literacy skills. The interest pupils gain in poetry, novels and plays and the good use of research skills contribute well to pupils' cultural development.

90 **Mathematics**

- 85 In 1998 the results pupils attained in the national curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 1 were very high when compared with the national average, and with those of schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. A very high proportion of pupils attained standards that were above the national expectation. The 1999 results give a similar picture of attainment. Standards have been maintained over the last four years and improved since the previous inspection when standards were judged to be above average. At the end of Key Stage 2 attainment in tests in 1998 was above the national average. The proportion of pupils attaining higher levels was close to the national average. Compared with schools with pupils from similar backgrounds results were close to the average. Since the previous inspection standards have improved considerably at this key stage. The 1999 results show a considerable improvement in the proportion of pupils reaching higher than average levels. At both key stages, teacher assessment mirrors test results. There are no significant differences between the performance of boys and girls. Inspection evidence shows that by the end of Key Stage 1 standards are very high. By the end of Key Stage 2 attainment is above average. There are differences in the overall levels of prior attainment between pupils at the end of each key stage.
- 86 By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils have a very secure foundation in number skills. Mental arithmetic skills are very good. Pupils with higher attainment can find numbers that are five less than 1,000 or five more than 850. Those with the lowest attainment order numbers in twos up to 100 with confidence. Almost all pupils already know and use some multiplication tables. Those with low attainment have an early understanding of place value, while those with average attainment are secure in their understanding of tens and units. Pupils investigate number patterns and use the knowledge to find answers to problems well. They record their findings carefully although they often have difficulty writing figures neatly and the right way round. Measuring skills are good. All pupils have a very wide mathematical vocabulary and know many facts about two and three-dimensional shapes. Those with low attainment describe shapes such as cubes and cuboids with confidence, counting edges and vertices. All pupils collect data, and present their findings in simple block graphs, which they interpret well.

- 87 By the end of Key Stage 2 mental arithmetic skills are satisfactory although the national numeracy strategies currently used are improving this. Those with higher attainment know their multiplication tables but take too long to do simple calculations mentally. Those with average attainment have strategies to work out tables but are slow and not always accurate. Those with lower attainment know and use number facts from some of the simpler tables. Pupils have a very secure foundation in other numeracy skills. Knowledge and understanding in data handling is good, and improving. Pupils' knowledge of shape and space is satisfactory. Skills are used appropriately in other subjects.
- 88 Progress for pupils in Key Stage 1, with all levels of attainment, including those pupils with special educational needs, is very good in all aspects of the subject, including mental arithmetic. It is greatly influenced by the consistent high quality teaching in this key stage. A very high profile is given to all areas of mathematics, including numeracy, and this is reflected in the quality of mathematical displays. It encourages pupils to try hard and supports the rapid progress made. Progress is also enhanced by the consistent reinforcement of number facts and mathematical vocabulary whenever there is an opportunity and the use of mathematics in other subjects. For example, in art, in a colour mixing activity, pupils completed the reflected half of an autumn leaf. In Key Stage 2 progress is good over the key stage for all pupils, including those with special educational needs, although it is often good or very good in individual lessons. Progress is very good in using and applying mathematics, and satisfactory in number, shape and space and data handling. The scrutiny of pupil's work completed over time shows that on a few occasions pupils do not always complete sufficient work in lessons. Information and communications technology is just beginning to have an effect on standards in data handling since the opening of the new suite. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection. A sufficient emphasis is placed on mental skills. Progress in this aspect across Key Stage 2 is satisfactory. Currently progress is sometimes restricted by an adherence to the age related objectives in the National Numeracy Strategy, when pupils have already exceeded these. A good start has been made to implement the strategy but the materials have not been sufficiently adapted as yet to follow up from the high standards of attainment at the end of Key Stage 1.
- 89 Pupils generally have very good attitudes to the subject. They are very keen to answer questions in whole class sessions and they do not ridicule each other if wrong answers are given. They concentrate well in most lessons and continue working throughout, with little supervision. In Key Stage 2, written work is sometimes not well presented and work is incomplete. Pupils do not always respond sufficiently to comments made by teachers in their books.
- 90 The quality of teaching is very good in Key Stage 1. Thirty-four percent of teaching is good, 50 percent is very good and 17 percent excellent. Teachers know their pupils well and know how to develop mathematical skills, knowledge, and understanding. Questions and activities are carefully targeted to pupils' needs. Vocabulary is carefully extended. Teachers have very high expectations of pupils' involvement in every part of the lesson and of their attainment. They are thoroughly prepared for lessons. Often good quality home-made resources are specifically designed to meet a particular learning target and this has a positive effect on progress. Lessons are interesting and lively. Classroom routines are well established and pupils do not waste time. In the excellent lesson the mental skills activity was short, sharp, and very effective. The introduction to the main task was clear, and carefully structured, and measuring skills were carefully developed. In Key Stage 2 the overall quality of teaching is good. It is good in 33 percent of lessons, very good in 25 percent, excellent in 8 percent and satisfactory in 17 percent. Two lessons were unsatisfactory. In the best lessons teachers have high expectations of behaviour, and in the pupils' ability to be self-disciplined. Questioning is used well to make pupils think. Aims are made clear to pupils and the tasks provided enable them to meet those targets. There is very good opportunity for challenge and independence, as for example in a Year 5 lesson when pupils with higher attainment were partitioning numbers to find the maximum product. In this lesson the work completed by those with lower attainment was given value through its use to challenge the rest of the class in the plenary. Most teachers have good subject knowledge and use the daily plans agreed between classes in the same year group as an outline to extend their own planning and preparation. On some occasions resources used for demonstration, such as number squares, are too small. The effectiveness of the National Numeracy Strategy is good although the school has only been



working within this for a few weeks. A few teachers are not yet fully confident using the National Numeracy Strategy lesson structure and do not always get a sufficient balance between the different elements. The amount of direct teaching has improved considerably since the previous inspection and is having a positive effect on standards of attainment. Marking is generally constructive and helpful throughout the school but comments in Key Stage 2 are not always followed up.

- 91 Subject leadership is satisfactory. A very good development plan has been followed through and targets met. Monitoring of standards through end-of-year assessments is very good. Monitoring of standards in individual classes and of progress throughout the year is insufficiently developed. The school portfolio offers little support to teachers and does not provide a clear picture of attainment in each year group. Planning is monitored to give an overview of work covered but there is little monitoring of teaching. In-service education opportunities for teachers, particularly that relating to the National Numeracy Strategy, make a good contribution to teachers' subject knowledge, strategies for teaching and improving standards. Practical resources are good and used well across the school to support progress.

97

### Science

- 92 Attainment at the end of both key stages is above that expected nationally. Standards have risen since the last inspection. This is reflected in the results of the National Curriculum assessments. At the end of 1998 pupils' results in the national tests at the end of Key Stage 2 were above average when compared with schools nationally. They were below average when compared with schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. Although these comparisons are not yet available for 1999, there is an improvement in test results with 87 percent of pupils attaining the national average and 27 percent of pupils achieving a higher level. The school has already met its target for 2000 of 26 percent of pupils achieving Level 5. By the end of Key Stage 1 most pupils have a good knowledge of the simple properties of light and sound. They know that sounds can be made in different ways and that tightening or loosening the string can change sounds from a stringed instrument. They test rubber bands of different thickness to find out if these produce different sounds. By shining a torch in a dark cupboard they discover that light travels in straight lines. Through experiments with mirrors and torches they reflect light on to the ceiling. They find out that shiny objects require light to sparkle and that they are not visible unless a source of light is directed on them. They are beginning to understand the importance of fair testing by changing one factor while keeping the others the same. They begin to think in a scientific manner and begin to draw conclusions from their results. By the end of Key Stage 2 most pupils have a good understanding of the investigative nature of science. With guidance, they carry out their own experiments and record their results, sometimes using their knowledge of data handling to produce graphs and tables. Higher attaining pupils interpret results and draw conclusions, while lower attaining pupils record results and offer simpler explanations. Pupils compare the characteristics of light and sound, knowing that shadows are formed because light travels in straight lines. They know that as sounds can be overheard outside a room that sound can pass through solid materials. Through experiments with tuning forks, they discover the nature of sound waves. Pupils explain how sound travels through the air setting up vibrations within the ear which are then transferred to the brain. An understanding of the human body is linked to this work and higher attaining pupils produce detailed diagrams of the eye. Attainment in materials and their properties is demonstrated when pupils test the properties of materials by strength, texture and colour. They know about the structure of materials and the arrangement of atoms in solids, liquids and gasses. They understand the viscosity of liquids and saturated solutions. Pupils attainment in science has improved since the previous inspection due to the introduction of a scheme of work that is practically based and a style of teaching that develops pupils' scientific thinking.
- 93 Pupils at all levels of attainment, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in all aspects of science at both key stages. Progress is particularly good in the investigative side of science. Good progress is achieved through all pupils having similar experiences but more demanding explanations being required of the higher attaining pupils. Pupils build on their knowledge and understanding as they move through the school. For example, Pupils in Year 2 examine light through prisms and bubbles. They extract colour from sweets and examine the use of colour in camouflage. By Year 6 they create graphs to show the effect of distance of light source on the size of shadows. They examine how kaleidoscopes work.

In Year 3 they learn about forces and the effect on structures. This continues in Year 4 with an investigation of hard and soft and the effect of heat on materials. By Year 5 pupils extend this understanding into that of irreversible change. Literacy skills are used well in recording with higher attaining pupils using greater detail in descriptions and conclusions. Numeracy skills are demonstrated in the use of graphs to show results. The use of information and communications technology is limited mainly to the production of graphs and tables to represent results.

94 Pupils' attitudes to science are very good at both key stages. They enjoy practical work and show confidence in putting forward ideas and predictions. They listen to each other and value each other's opinions. Pupils co-operate and collaborate well in practical work and take care of equipment. Behaviour is very good and pupils use equipment and materials sensibly. The ethos for learning science is excellent.

95 Overall, the quality of teaching is good in both key stages. At Key Stage 1, two thirds of teaching is good and one third is satisfactory. At Key Stage 2, half the teaching is very good and one third is good, with the rest being satisfactory. Teachers' subject knowledge is good. They understand the importance of practical work in science and adopt a consistent format to investigation through out the school. From the beginning of Key Stage 1 they encourage pupils to devise experiments by deciding, "What do I want to find out?", "What am I going to change?", "What I am going to leave the same?", "What I am going to measure?" and "What is my prediction?". This consistency contributes significantly to the development of pupils' scientific thinking. Interactive displays throughout the school are very effective in developing pupils' understanding. For example in a Key Stage 1 class a display supporting the learning of sound included a challenge, "Use card string and elastic bands to make something that will make a sound". In the best lessons pupils are continually challenged by focused questions to establish their understanding and at the end of practical work, feedback to the rest of the class ensures that the required learning has taken place. In a Key Stage 2 lesson an effective plenary session enabled pupils to evaluate their learning about the nature of sound vibrations by reporting back to the rest of the class. The use of correct scientific vocabulary focuses pupils' learning and enables them to write up experiments with accuracy. In a Key Stage 1 lesson pupils were effectively drawn together at stages throughout the lesson to check and share their experiences of looking at objects in a dark box, with and without the use of a torch. The marking of work is inconsistent. The best marking evaluates pupils learning and challenges further thought. Targets written on books help focus the pupils' efforts, mainly in the content and presentation of their written reports.

96 Co-ordination of the subject is very effective. The subject leader is well qualified with an advanced specialist qualification. Other members of staff have recent extra training. The introduction of a new scheme of work and staff training has been effective in raising standards and offering challenge to the more able pupils. All required elements of the curriculum are well covered. The assessment procedures contained within the scheme enable teachers to assess pupils' progress successfully, particularly in investigative science. Samples of pupils' work are assigned to levels and placed in a portfolio of assessed work. Planning is monitored to ensure consistency and to offer support. The quantity and quality of resources are good and are very effective in supporting learning.

## 102 **OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES**

### 102 **Information and communications technology**

97 Standards of attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 are in line with national expectations in the three strands of the programmes of study. This reflects the position at the time of the last inspection. By the end of Key Stage 2 standards of attainment are in line with national expectations in the communications, handling information and modelling elements of the curriculum, but at the time of the inspection below national expectations in the control element. However, planning indicates that by the end of the academic year there is the intention that this element will have been taught.

- 98 By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils enter text into the computer using a word processing package. They know the main function keys on the keyboard and use the keyboard and the mouse to control a program, to type in text and to open programs that they want to use. Lower attaining pupils need help with elements of these skills. Pupils use information and communications technology to enhance and practise their work. They use a simple 'paint' program to create a picture. Higher attaining pupils print out their work and save with some support on to the computer hard disk. Pupils create simple graphs after entering information such as a class survey of eye colour or hair colour into a database.
- 99 By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils word process documents, amend and correct text for basic grammatical, punctuation and spelling errors. They save and retrieve files from the hard disk. Pupils combine text and pictures within a single word-processed document, incorporating pictures and images from the clip art gallery to create advertising leaflets or posters. Using data linked to a science topic, they create a spreadsheet and present the information in an appropriate format, selecting either a line or bar graph. Higher attaining pupils use independently encyclopaedic software and the internet to find and print out information on specific features linked to their topic. They understand the importance of information and communication technology in the wider world and how e-mail and the internet can be used to inform their work and to speed up communications.
- 100 Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in both key stages. In Year 1 pupils develop their control of the mouse to that they can use simple geographical and language modelling programs. They begin to use appropriate technical vocabulary, such as 'mouse' and 'keyboard'. In Year 2 pupils continue to make satisfactory progress. They develop an increasing accuracy in word processing skills and change the shape and size of the text font. They know the function of some of the buttons on the tool bar in the word processing program and select information from software. Throughout Key Stage 2, pupils continue to make satisfactory progress in word processing skills so that they become able to use these skills in different program packages and for different purposes. They change the colour and shape of text in addition to changing the size and style to write a letter or to reproduce extended writing from English lessons. They use the skills of computer drawing to create geometric shapes and to use the colour options, saving their work in an appropriate format to print it out. Higher attaining pupils do these tasks with minimal or no help and use a wider and more complex number of program tools. By using CD-ROM and the internet, pupils develop research skills in several subjects.
- 101 Pupils' response to information and communications technology is good. They have a good attitude to work, respond well to challenges and persevere with tasks, even if they are difficult. The relationships with class teachers and supporting adults are good. Pupils work responsibly in pairs or small groups, discussing the possibilities and sharing their ideas together. Behaviour in the computer suite is very good and pupils treat the equipment with care and respect. They are confident when working with the computers and willingly explain what it is they are doing and enjoy demonstrating their skills to each other and adults. The majority of pupils get very excited when they print out their work and see the results of their efforts.
- 102 All the lessons observed during the inspection took place in the recently established information and communications technology suite. The quality of teaching in both key stages is satisfactory. During the inspection two lessons were seen in Key Stage 1, both of which were satisfactory. In Key Stage 2 seven lessons were observed, 14 percent of these were very good, 14 percent were good and the remaining 72 percent were satisfactory. Teachers' subject knowledge is at least satisfactory, although teachers' confidence is variable. However, the team approach to lesson planning ensures that in all lessons, the teacher's planning is good and identifies clear objectives, linked to appropriate activities for the age and abilities of the pupils. These activities draw well upon other subject areas to provide the focus for the development of information and communications technology. For example, work on Christmas from religious education lessons was used to teach the pupils how to combine text and images. The teaching methods used are satisfactory, with all lessons seen having a specific teaching element where the teacher explains or demonstrates the skills the pupils will be using. However, in some lessons the activities do not give sufficient opportunity for pupils, particularly lower attaining pupils, to develop these skills, because too much time of the lesson is needed for the pupils to type in the text they will use. In the very good lesson, the teacher had created a text file on the hard disk of the computer for pupils to open and then to work on. This

ensures that the pupils are involved in the activity and have good opportunities to develop the focus skill and to make good progress towards the lesson objectives. The management of the learning environment and the pupils is good. Where support staff or parent helpers are present, teachers make good use of their skills during lessons to support individuals or specific groups. During and after the session, notes are made regarding the pupil's work. These provide good guidance to the class teacher as to the pupil's attitude to the session, but less detail about the progress they make in gaining skills and understanding. The computers in each classroom are used satisfactorily to support the work in the computer suite. Teachers maintain a record of the access each pupil has had to different strands of the scheme of work and the programs they have used, but these are not an integral part of the classroom resources that the pupils use without direction.

103 Due to very good leadership from the co-ordinator the subject has developed well since the previous inspection. The school has used national initiatives to fund the establishment of the computer suite and this is beginning to have a significant impact on the progress that pupils make, particularly in the early years of Key Stage 2. In response to this the co-ordinator has rewritten the scheme of work incorporating elements of the new national guidance with the existing school scheme to create one that is well matched to the school's resources and curriculum requirements. This will be introduced in the Spring Term and is to be used alongside an assessment record sheet for teachers to record pupils' progress and acquisition of skills and knowledge. A strength of the curriculum is how information and communications technology is taught using topics from other subjects such as art, English and religious education and how it is used to reinforce literacy and numeracy. The curriculum is enhanced by the involvement of outside visits. For example, pupils in Year 4 visit the local newspaper and use their facilities to create a newspaper front page using a desktop publishing package. The subject development plan is a very clear document that sets development targets to enhance the hardware and software resources and staff expertise. The co-ordinator monitors the subject through the checking of planning, the pupils' work and observing lessons. A portfolio of annotated work that has been assigned to levels is currently being collated. The accommodation for teaching the subject is good and is used well. Each class has a timetabled session each week and an after-school internet club has a waiting list of pupils who want to join. These pupils will get an opportunity in the Spring Term. The suite is also used by the European club to prepare letters and documents to send to link schools in Austria and Italy. The range of resources is good and the school is continually adding to these resources. For example, sensors for use in science investigations have been purchased. The quality of resources has a significant impact on progress. Currently, the number of computers in the computer suite is insufficient for a whole class of pupils to work in pairs, but the school has recognised this in the development plan.

#### 109 **Religious education**

104 In both key stages work in religious education meets the requirements of the Local Education Authority Agreed Syllabus. Attainment is above average and progress is good. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils know many stories and traditions about the Christian faith. During their time in this key stage they also learn about the Muslim faith and the traditions of Islam. They know about the Hindu celebration of Divali, studied as part of a topic on light. During the inspection pupils demonstrated their knowledge of Advent as preparing for Christmas. They made Christingle candles and know the meaning of the different symbols. They thought about the visit of the magi to the stable in Bethlehem and discussed the awe and wonder of that event. They demonstrated maturity in thinking about receiving and giving presents. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils have added to the depth and range of knowledge and understanding of the Christian and Muslim faiths and added work on Judaism to their knowledge and understanding of world faiths. During the inspection pupils in Year 6 demonstrated significant maturity in the study and comparison of the two Gospel narratives of the Christmas story by Matthew and Luke. They sorted Christmas pictures into sets according to which version they best represented and described their reasons well. A significant number of pupils can discuss how each version might affect the mood, style and colours of a painting and all can attempt to design and make a card to fit one or other version of the story.

- 105 Across the school, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. Progress is very good when lessons are particularly interesting or demanding. This is illustrated for example, when the younger pupils examined Advent candles and listened to the story and sang when the candle was lit. The oldest pupils were challenged to use artistic knowledge and analytical skills to enhance the work on comparing two Gospel versions of the Christmas story. Curriculum planning is very good and ensures that each time a topic is visited, it is enriched in its scope, depth and challenge. This was well illustrated during the inspection when each year group was working on different aspects of Christmas with increasing complexity and understanding.
- 106 Pupils are interested their work and relate it well to their own lives and those of others. For example, discussion about Christingle gave rise to a number of suggestions as to how pupils could help those less fortunate than themselves and the idea that they could support a recent “Blue Peter” appeal to help premature babies. In lessons pupils behave well and demonstrate good use of speaking and listening skills in both class and group discussions. They were able to demonstrate mathematical understanding of time in relation to the Advent calendar. Writing skills were used well in writing poems about “The Good Samaritan”. The subject makes a significant contribution to pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, particularly in raising awareness of cultural diversity and in providing opportunities for reflection on many issues relating to pupils’ own lives.
- 107 Teaching is good at both key stages. In Key Stage 1 two thirds of the lessons seen were excellent and one third good. In Key Stage 2 one fifth of lessons was excellent, one fifth very good, two fifths good and one fifth satisfactory. Strengths of the teaching at both key stages are the good subject knowledge of teachers and the interesting and challenging tasks that extend pupils in their knowledge and understanding when possible. Very good links are made with other subjects. These links are particularly strong with art and with English in Key Stage 2. In Key Stage 1 atmosphere and dramatic story telling were key features in capturing pupils’ interest and imagination. The very good use of visual aids and artefacts in both key stages increases pupils’ attainment. The weaker element of teaching relate to pupils working in discussion groups that were are large for purposeful activity to take place.
- 108 The subject is very well co-ordinated and the subject leader is knowledgeable, holds a specialist qualification, and is enthusiastic. The recently written policy and scheme of work to match the new Local Education Authority Agreed Syllabus are particularly helpful in their support for teachers and ensure good continuity and progression of skills, knowledge and understanding as pupils progress through the school. Monitoring and evaluation of teaching is good with lesson planning and samples of work being monitored and evaluated and constructive feedback given. Development planning and strategies to improve standards are well in place with a significant amount of funding allocated to the subject and a programme of development taking place. One other teacher has also recently achieved a specialist qualification. Assessment is presently informal but a more formal system, based on the skills and attitudes component of the new syllabus, is underway. Books and resources are plentiful and of good quality. They are easily accessible and catalogued. Topic packs of ideas also support teachers. The school is exploring the use of the computer to strengthen the subject further and has added CD-ROM to the range of resources available. The resources in the school make a good contribution to progress. The school continues to maintain and improve the high standards of the time of the previous inspection.
- 114 **Art**
- 109 All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make very good progress in art at both key stages. Progress is particularly enhanced by the high profile given to art in the school and the skilful way in which it is linked with other subjects. The use and support of visiting “artists in residence” to develop such whole school projects as the recent “millennium project” on the history of the area is also significant. This recent project has resulted in an enormous textile mural of excellent quality. The standard of pupils’ work is almost always above that normally found and often well above. The attainment of pupils in Year 6 and in the art club is outstanding.

- 110 By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils have explored a wide range of media and techniques. They draw, paint and use collage material and fabrics in connection with many topics. During the inspection the youngest pupils used paint and collage to work in the style of Lowry, producing work with shades of brown and grey that is well above that normally found. This work was well-linked with a history topic of “old and new”. Pupils in Year 2 made good use of colour and expression in their attempts to reproduce reflections from pictures provided by the teacher.
- 111 By the end of Key Stage 2 the quality of pupils’ work is well above that normally found and much of this is excellent. Over the key stage, pupils use every possible type of media and attempt many different forms of work. During the inspection pupils in Year 6 competently discussed a variety of pictures and used this discussion to help formulate their own work. They used a variety of tools to give different effects when using acrylic paint and gained a mature feel of movement and texture in their work. They sketch and evaluate before starting work. They answer questions to help with shape and form such as “Is the picture built on simple shapes?”, “Are the shapes balanced or deliberately off-key?”, “How does this affect the mood?”. Pupils in Year 4 demonstrate a mature approach to discussing famous works of art relating to the Nativity. They hypothesise about the difference that the Reformation might have made to paintings when compared with the Renaissance. They use oil pastels and charcoal to reproduce some of these ideas and discuss what the different artists might have used. The figures of cockerels moulded from wire and paper, after looking at the work of the Japanese artist Ito Jakuto and the cats, after looking at the work of Franz Marc, were of very high quality indeed. River and seascapes demonstrate a very well developed understanding of perspective, shade and colour.
- 112 The enormous fascinating and outstanding mural in the hall involved the work of every pupil in the school and over fifty helpers. The parent-teacher association also helped financially. The project involved much use of literacy and numeracy skills in researching the history of the area and in measuring paper and materials to the size of the panels. A great deal of local history was uncovered. Techniques used in the project included making print blocks, crazy patchwork, speed weaving, dyeing and batik. This project contributed considerably to staff development, community involvement and pupils’ personal and cultural development.
- 113 Pupils work well in art. They work singly, in pairs and in groups. They share materials and willingly offer help to each other, demonstrated by the care and concern shown in an art lesson to a pupil with an injured wrist. They treat materials and media with respect and are aware of health and safety issues such as spilt paint. They evaluate both their own work and that of others with maturity and appreciate that art is a personal view of the world. At the end of a lesson in Year 6, pupils reflected on their work by using the question, “Is the painting a secret world or an open book?”. Art permeates every aspect of the school and contributes very significantly to pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- 114 The quality of teaching in art is very good in both key stages. This judgement is based both on the lessons seen and on the quality of the work in the recent millennium project, the work in the art club, the high quality of the planning and the skilful way in which art is integrated into every subject to maximise the use of the time available. Half the lessons seen at Key Stage 1 were very good and the rest good. At Key Stage 2 one fifth of lessons was excellent, one fifth very good, and two fifths good. One lesson was unsatisfactory. In the one unsatisfactory lesson, media and materials were not well matched to the task and teaching was unclear, resulting in unsatisfactory progress. Most teachers have a very good subject knowledge and very high expectations of pupils and are skilful in supporting and extending pupils. This significantly promotes attainment and progress. Pupils are given direct teaching to gain and improve skills and techniques and are introduced progressively to a very wide range of media and materials. The high quality of these materials and media has a very positive impact on achievement. Careful use of very good questioning skills by teachers enables pupils to think for themselves and to evaluate and contrast. This is also supportive of a wide vocabulary development in relation to the subject. Pupils’ work is always valued and the quality of display around the school significantly enhances the learning environment and adds to pupils’ self-esteem. Planning at all levels is detailed and provides for pupils to learn something new and also to experiment and explore. A wide range of work of famous artists from many times and cultures is skilfully woven into the curriculum and the many planned links with other subjects maximise the use of the time available to increase

progress and support high standards. Computer generated art is also featured in pupils' range of work .

115 The subject is very well co-ordinated. Most staff demonstrate much enjoyment and enthusiasm to pupils. The policy and scheme of work are very detailed and support progression in all aspects of art well. The school works closely with other schools, both primary and secondary, in the area and together they have produced a joint skills development document. Planning is monitored carefully and examples of work are kept to ensure progression of skills and to confirm planning into practice. Photographs are kept of all displays. Assessment is mainly informal although samples of work are kept to enable teachers to comment successfully on pupils' reports. Resources are readily available and well documented. There is a particularly good range of posters, postcards and pictures for pupils to experience and evaluate famous and more unusual art. There is a good selection of books in the library. The school has a very popular art club. Art continues to be a very significant strength of the school and enhances progress and understanding in many subjects.

## 121 **Design and Technology**

116 Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in the acquisition of the skills and knowledge of the design and technology process as they move through the school.

117 By the age of seven the pupils develop their ability to use simple tools to cut and shape materials such as wood, fabric, paper and card to make both static models of, for example, different types of houses, and moving models such as a kite or wind vane. The youngest pupils in Key Stage 1 draw simple pictorial designs and add fabric, wool and colour to create items such as a stick puppet. Pupils develop their ability to draw designs so that by the age of seven the majority can draw pictorial plans to fulfil a specific design brief. Higher attaining pupils add instructions and lists of materials needed to construct the models in some detail. Pupils evaluate their completed models and make changes to them to improve the performance. For example, one pupil was making a wind vane and, after making an initial prototype, was able to suggest what problems there were and rebuilt it to try and improve its effectiveness. Pupils develop an understanding of the safe use of tools and the importance of hygiene when working with food in food technology lessons.

118 As they move through Key Stage 2 pupils develop their ability to cut, shape and join materials using a wider range of tools and methods. Higher attaining pupils understand the importance of being very accurate and precise in the cutting of materials and, in addition, demonstrate great care in the use of paint and decoration to enhance the quality of their finished work. Pupils develop the ability to draw increasingly accurate diagrams with appropriate construction notes and labels as they move through the key stage. Where the design briefs are linked to other subjects, such as the Tudors or local history in Year 6, there are good opportunities for pupils to draw upon their knowledge from these subjects to inform their designs and to develop their skills in design and making. The oldest pupils in the school are able to take an imaginary scenario and apply their knowledge of bridge forms and construction techniques to design a bridge to specific criteria and tolerances.

119 Pupils throughout the school respond well to design and technology lessons, demonstrating a good attitude and in some lessons, great enthusiasm and excitement. They behave very well and are focussed upon the tasks they are given. They listen attentively to teachers and other adults and respond well to questions and challenging tasks. When discussing their work, pupils are enthusiastic and interested. They are keen to explain how they designed and made their models. They talk about the processes involved and older or higher attaining pupils can explain the rationale behind specific design features of their models and have a pride in their work as shown by the detail and care taken to finish and decorate it. When they are given the opportunity to work in groups they do so very well, sharing equipment and ideas.

120 The quality of teaching is good at both key stages. During the inspection six lessons were observed of which 17 percent were very good, 50 percent good and the remaining 33 per cent satisfactory. Teachers' subject knowledge is good in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory in Key Stage 2. However, the joint planning of lessons within year group teams ensures that planning is consistent across the classes and limits the impact of any variations in subject knowledge. A consistent strength of the teaching is the management and control of the pupils that maintains their attention on the task and reinforces the clear expectations of behaviour and



performance. Teaching methods are satisfactory, with open-ended tasks used effectively to encourage pupils to apply their knowledge of design and technology and to link this with other subjects such as history or science. In the very good lesson, the task set by the teacher demonstrated very high expectations of pupils' ability to understand the design brief and to apply their knowledge of bridge structures and construction techniques learned in previous lessons. A range of very appropriate supporting resources was provided that gave added guidance and, although the lesson was of a short duration, this added to the urgency of session. This encouraged pupils to be very focussed and to concentrate upon the task in hand. Teachers maintain assessment records of pupil's attainment against the requirements of the scheme of work. The subject makes a satisfactory contribution to the development of pupils' literacy and a good contribution to numeracy skills through the design processes and food technology lessons. Currently, the use of information and communications technology as a design tool or as an integral part of pupils' designs is under developed.

121 The co-ordinator provides good leadership to the subject. There is a subject policy and a comprehensive scheme of work that give good guidance to teachers in planning the curriculum. The curriculum is broadly based and gives good opportunities for the pupils to develop their own ideas. It makes a good contribution to the pupils' personal development through group work activities. Design projects are effectively linked to other subjects such as Homes in Key Stage 1 or the Tudors in Year 3, or are extended projects involving several aspects of technology. For example, in Year 5 pupils investigate biscuit making and then design packaging for their biscuits. The co-ordinator monitors the quality of teacher's planning and observes lessons to check the quality of the classroom work. In addition, she maintains the resources effectively and is available to provide advice for colleagues. The accommodation is good for younger pupils to do practical tasks, with the communal areas between classrooms used for these activities, but is more restricted for pupils in Key Stage 2, particularly in the two mobile classrooms. A good range of resources is available for teachers to plan for the curriculum although there are shortcomings in the equipment available for the older pupils to use motors and control technology within their designs. This reflects the findings from the previous inspection report, although satisfactory progress has been made to develop food technology, particularly in Key Stage 1. Currently, due to the lack of appropriate programs, the opportunities for pupils to use information and communications technology within the subject are limited.

## 127 **Geography**

122 Only one geography lesson was observed at Key Stage 1. Evidence was taken from workbooks, from planning and from discussion with pupils and staff. Progress in geography is good across both key stages, including that of pupils with special educational needs. Pupils acquire a wide geographical knowledge and understanding of concepts that they are able to apply well in new situations. Towards the end of Key Stage 1 pupils have a well developed geographical vocabulary using words such as "tornado", "hurricane" and "breeze" with thorough understanding. They observe well and record weather using symbols. They describe the effect of wind on people and objects and design and build rain gauges and use these to measure rainfall. They have an above average understanding of the links between wind and waves and know compass directions. Information and communications technology is used to help create a simple town map. At Key Stage 2, as well as continuing work on the local area, visiting farms and a petrol station, pupils have a good knowledge of world geography. They are able both to locate features on a world map and to give an indication of how climate and vegetation inter-relate. They have an advanced understanding of the cause of seasons. Pupils in Year 5 study climates of the world and all pupils use numeracy skills to extract information from bar and line graphs. Atlas skills are secure, although not always used in practice. Higher attaining pupils make sophisticated suggestions about the cause of selected climates using prior knowledge and information from atlases. By the end of the key stage, pupils undertake extended individual research. Pupils with all levels of prior attainment produce well-illustrated reports, using maps, diagrams and photographs to describe, for example, the river Nile or Tees. The European project has enabled many pupils to engage in geography of the most practical nature. It gives them a comprehensive understanding of four countries, their culture and physical build and adds purpose to accounts of their own area that are sent abroad.

123 Pupils show high levels of interest and commitment to the subject and become absorbed in practical activities. Many pupils show sufficient interest to pursue work at home particularly when they are able to

use computers.

- 124 Insufficient lessons were seen to make a judgement on the quality of teaching at Key Stage 1. In the only lesson observed at Key Stage 1 the quality was very good. Teaching at Key Stage 2 is good. The quality of teaching was good in half the lessons observed at Key Stage 2 and very good in the rest. The good teaching is characterised by effective planning, good resources, and stimulating presentations. For example, a lesson on weather in a Year 2 class started with poems and the pupils had to guess the topic of the lesson. A Year 3 class used excellent local aerial photographs to undertake an interesting task of making a map. Most teachers have a strong subject knowledge and enthusiasm that gives depth and interest to lessons. A strength of the teaching is the way in which skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communications technology have been woven into lessons to the advantage of all subjects. For example, work on climatic graphs in Year 5 placed strong emphasis on accuracy of interpretation. Marking is conscientious, but in some classes there is insufficient concentration on geographical objectives, where inaccurate work is masked by neat presentation and receives praise. Assessment is informal but suited to the present requirements.
- 125 The subject is well planned and co-ordinated by a knowledgeable subject leader who has taught all classes in both key stages and is familiar with the scheme in practice. There is a helpful collection of skill boxes and information files on countries and visits in the local area and these support teaching and learning well. Each year has at least one field excursion and there are more frequent visits to the local area, which help to bring the subject alive and make a good contribution to cultural development. The subject maintains the standards described in the previous report.
- 131 **History**
- 126 By the time pupils are eleven, their achievement in history is above that normally found. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress during both key stages. They make good gains in their historical knowledge and understanding and develop a more accurate use of historical vocabulary. These standards are similar to those reported in the previous inspection.
- 127 In Key Stage 1, pupils learn about changes in their local area and community over time and explain how peoples' everyday lives have changed in terms of their homes and clothes. They learn about famous people from the past and begin to develop some idea of the language of history and time by using such expressions as "before" and "after", "then" and "now". By dressing up in Victorian costume and listening to adults describing their childhood, they begin to understand the changes that have taken place in the recent past.
- 128 In Key Stage 2, pupils learn about a particular period in history in more detail. For example, pupils in Year 4 develop an understanding of life in Tudor times, the type of houses people lived in and the lifestyle of ordinary people. They learn about significant events of the period such as the Spanish Armada and the key figures of the period. They compare the differences between the lifestyles of rich and poor people. As the pupils move through the key stage, their ability to use sources of information to research topics develops well. Pupils in Year 4 use given sources to draw basic conclusions about events in the Tudor period such as the reasons for the defeat of the Spanish Armada. Pupils in Year 6 use a well developed sense of chronology and local history to extract specific information from a large data bank and construct a timeline based upon the changes that have taken place on or around the River Tees. They evaluate the value of these different sources of information and are aware of what constitutes primary and secondary sources. Pupils develop their research skills well with the oldest pupils using encyclopaedic software, books, photographs and the internet to research specific topics. These research activities make a good contribution to the development of pupils' literacy and information and communications technology skills. The curriculum and the experiences in school and the outside visits to a range of historical sites make a significant contribution to pupils' cultural development.

- 129 The response of the pupils to history lessons is good and sometimes very good. Pupils are interested and enthusiastic about history. They respond particularly well to opportunities for investigating the past. They have a pride in their work and the capacity to undertake in depth studies successfully. Older pupils work well in groups, sharing resources and ideas.
- 130 During the inspection, due to the topic structure, a limited amount of teaching was observed. None was seen in Key Stage 1 although a literacy lesson had a significant amount of history content where the pupils were dressed up in Victorian costume and this formed the basis of the development of pupils' ability to use descriptive vocabulary. In Key Stage 2 two lessons were seen. In one lesson the quality of teaching was satisfactory and in the other lesson it was very good. Where the teaching is very good, the teacher uses good subject knowledge to provide opportunities for pupils to work independently in groups, using a good range of sources. The teachers use the plenary session at the end of the lesson for the pupils to report what they have discovered. Objectives within the planning are precise so that activities are consistently appropriate. In both lessons the resources provided were good, but the guidance provided for lower attaining pupils in the satisfactory lesson was insufficient for them to complete the task successfully. In addition, group sizes were too large so that a number of pupils were unable to be fully involved in the activity.
- 131 The co-ordinator provides good leadership to the subject and monitors the quality of teaching through checking teacher's planning and observing lessons. There is a clear subject policy and scheme of work for history that is effectively linked to the teaching of geography within an overall humanities scheme. Resources for history are good and contribute effectively to learning. The school uses the local area well as a resource, with a range of visits made to historical sites and museums.
- 137 **Music**
- 132 Overall progress in music is satisfactory across the school. It is good in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory in Key Stage 2. In Key Stage 1 pupils with all levels of attainment, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in their appraisal of different types of music. They learn to sing a wide range of songs from different cultures. Some recent songs have supported their understanding of religious festivals and provide a good link to religious education. Pupils sing in rhythm and with a good control of pitch for their age. They are beginning to recognise when a sequence of notes increase or decrease in pitch. They understand the importance of posture and know that their lungs must not be "squashed up" to sing well. Almost all pupils learn to hold a continuous pulse throughout a tune by clapping or playing percussion instruments. Pupils understand that notation has meaning and read letters under a stave to play a few notes on tuned percussion. Progress is significantly enhanced by shared planning and the use of commercial materials to support those teachers with limited expertise. In Key Stage 2 the progress of pupils with all levels of prior attainment is satisfactory overall. It is limited by the lack of subject expertise of some teachers. Pupils develop a wide repertoire of songs and sing rounds in two parts with enthusiasm, but they make slower progress in their understanding and use of dynamics or voice control. Pupils recognise and name instruments by sound, express preferences and give reasons for their choices. They listen to, and appraise, different types of music, such as opera. Composition was not being taught during the week of inspection, although pupils are beginning to understand formal notation. The progress of a small proportion of pupils is enhanced by specialist lessons in strings and brass.
- 133 Pupils have very good attitudes to music and respond well to enthusiastic teaching. Behaviour is very good. Younger pupils resist the temptation to fiddle with instruments and are desperately anxious to have a turn in playing them. They perform in front of their class confidently. These activities make a significant contribution to pupils' social development. Pupils try hard to follow instructions, even when they are confusing. They listen to their teacher, to the teaching tapes and to each other. Few opportunities are provided for pupils to demonstrate their skills in assemblies, but pupils do provide concerts for parents, and sing and play for senior citizens.
- 134 The quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 is consistently good. In Key Stage 2, the quality of teaching is satisfactory. Two fifths of lessons seen were good, two fifths were satisfactory and one lesson was unsatisfactory. Teachers are enthusiastic, have good relationships with pupils and expect high standards of

behaviour. They try hard to follow the commercial materials and are improving their skills. Resources are well organised. In the best lessons teachers prepare the subject content well and learn the material on the teaching tapes so that their presentation is accurate. They use voice or instruments well to ensure that pupils develop their sense of pitch and place a great emphasis on listening skills and the development of vocabulary.

The shortcoming in a few lessons is the lack of subject expertise. Assessment is informal, and in the best lessons teachers appraise pupils' performance, or check written notation, and give pupils the skills to improve.

135 The school endeavoured to maintain suitable provision during an extended period when the subject specialist was often absent. However since the previous inspection the quality of provision and progress in the subject in Key Stage 2 has declined due to this absence. There are currently no extra-curricular clubs or music groups. The recent loss of the subject specialist teacher has influenced teachers' personal development. They are now extending their own skills in the subject. The steady development of pupils' knowledge, skills, and understanding in the areas of music covered is now achieved through the use of a commercial scheme and associated support materials and monitoring of planning by the headteacher. However there is no current monitoring of standards and teaching. The school portfolio is out of date and is not an effective support for teachers. There is a good quantity of good quality tuned musical instruments and percussion. There is a designated music room where these are easily accessible. These factors contribute to the progress pupils make. Good use is made of visitors such as a group demonstrating Tudor music to widen pupils' experiences. These experiences make a good contribution to the pupils' cultural development.

#### 141 **Physical education**

136 The full range of physical education activities was not observed during the inspection but it is clear from the planning and from talking to pupils and teachers that all elements are taught and well balanced. This is an improvement from the situation reported in the previous inspection.

137 Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, make good progress at Key Stage 1, particularly in dance and gymnastics. They make satisfactory progress at Key Stage 2. Achievement in dance is high towards the end of Key Stage 1 where pupils respond well to interpreting scenarios and are exceptionally skilled at using facial expression and movement to interpret words and music. They evaluate each other's performance and give clear reasons for their judgements. In gymnastics, pupils deploy apparatus safely and efficiently. They have good spatial awareness and move swiftly in a confined area without collision. They move in a variety of ways both on and off apparatus and plan and execute short sequences. At Key Stage 2 pupils use large apparatus confidently and devise increasingly sophisticated ways of movement. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils work in larger groups in gymnastics and devise longer sequences of movement, with the added complication of synchronisation with their peers. Pupils of all prior attainment have access to the full curriculum, but the highest attainers are distinguished by greater confidence, creativity and co-ordination. This is particularly evident in exercises requiring balance. In swimming, very few pupils fail to reach the required standard of swimming 25 metres and the majority swim much further and with a wider range of polished strokes than normally found.

138 Pupils enjoy the subject and take a pride in responding quickly to instructions and to working safely. Behaviour is excellent and best illustrated in the exemplary way a Year 6 group worked in the difficult environment of the swimming baths. All pupils have a keen desire to improve their own performance and work consistently to achieve this. Pupils have a strong sense of fair play and often burst into spontaneous applause when a pupil demonstrates a sequence or skill that they appreciate.

- 139 At Key Stage 1 the overall quality of teaching was good in all lessons except one lesson which was excellent. At Key Stage 2, teaching is good with 33 percent of lessons being satisfactory, 56 percent good and 11 percent very good. The majority of teachers are knowledgeable and enthusiastic and this is demonstrated by the high proportion who dress appropriately for lessons and participate in demonstrating techniques. In the best lessons teachers analyse pupil performance carefully and make relevant coaching suggestions. They set tasks that challenge pupils. They monitor the work of the whole class well and use time to the full. A strength in the majority of lessons is the emphasis on pupils' evaluation of work. This is particularly effective when teachers formalise this, for example, whilst groups are waiting to use apparatus. All teachers have benefited from "Top Sport" training
- 140 The subject is well planned and co-ordinated by an enthusiastic and knowledgeable co-ordinator who monitors the subject well in the brief time allocated. Problems of progression have been identified and largely rectified. Formal end-of-term assessment has been introduced recently to help teachers monitor progress and this also helps in report writing. A satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities is provided, involving two members of staff and catering for a relatively small number of pupils. Professional coaching is provided for tennis. The school has been successful in local cricket and football competitions. The subject is well resourced to develop skills in all pupils and includes some equipment to enable pupils with special educational needs to develop ball handling skills

## **PART C: INSPECTION DATA**

### **146 SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

#### **146 Summary of inspection evidence**

141 A team of seven inspectors spent the equivalent of twenty eight days in school. Two hundred and two observations of lessons, registrations, assemblies and other activities were made. All the available work of a sample of pupils from each class, covering all levels of prior attainment, was scrutinised. These pupils were also heard reading and they talked about their use of books. Informal discussions were held with pupils about their work and what they know. Planned interviews were held with teaching and non-teaching staff, the headteacher, deputy headteacher, chair and vice chair of governors, chair of the finance committee, a representative of a local secondary school, parents and others. Prior to the inspection a meeting was held with parents and the results of the questionnaire analysed. The school documentation was also scrutinised.





## DATA AND INDICATORS

### Pupil data

	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with statements of SEN	Number of pupils on school's register of SEN	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
YR – Y6	505	3	52	34
Nursery Unit/School	38	0	1	0

### Teachers and classes

#### Qualified teachers (YR – Y6)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent)	21.30
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23:71

#### Education support staff (YR – Y6)

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked each week	88

#### Qualified teachers (Nursery school, classes or unit)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	39:1

#### Education support staff (Nursery school, classes or unit)

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked each week	60

Average class size:	26.6
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## Financial data

Financial year: 

1998/99
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	£
Total Income	765,832
Total Expenditure	767,960
Expenditure per pupil	1,237
Balance brought forward from previous year	4,896
Balance carried forward to next year	2,768

**PARENTAL SURVEY**

Number of questionnaires sent out:

505
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Number of questionnaires returned:

115
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**Responses (percentage of answers in each category):**

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school	26	63	5	6	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	24	68	3	5	0
The school handles complaints from parents well	10	45	34	9	0
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	17	62	10	10	1
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	14	51	12	18	3
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	17	74	5	3	1
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	16	47	18	17	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	23	62	8	5	2
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	22	53	19	5	1
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	19	48	23	8	1
My child(ren) like(s) school	39	52	6	2	1

**Summary of responses**

NB Percentages of responses are rounded to nearest integer, sum may not = 100%  
 Percentages given are in relation to total number of returns INCLUDING nil replies.