

# **INSPECTION REPORT**

**Cockton Hill Junior School**

Bishop Auckland

LEA area: Durham

Unique Reference Number: 114110

Headteacher: Mr F. Thirling

---

Reporting inspector: Mrs M. R. Shepherd  
11328

Dates of inspection: 1 – 4 November 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 707248

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

© Crown Copyright 1999

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

Under the Education (Schools) Act 1992 and the Education Act 1993, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior
Type of control:	County
Age range of pupils:	7 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	McIntyre Terrace Bishop Auckland County Durham DL14 6HW
Telephone number:	01388 602058
Fax number:	01388 602058
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr J. Sulton
Date of previous inspection:	22 – 26 April 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
M Shepherd, Rgl	Mathematics History Geography Physical education	Attainment and progress Teaching Leadership and management
A Dobson, Lay Inspector		Attitudes, behaviour and personal development Attendance Support, guidance and pupils' welfare Partnership with parents and the community
A Wilson	English Art Music Religious education Special education needs	Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
A Fraser	Science Design and technology Information technology Equal opportunities	Curriculum and assessment Staffing, accommodation and learning resources Efficiency

The inspection contractor was:

TWA Inspections Ltd.  
5, Lakeside  
Werrington  
Peterborough  
Cambs PE4 6QZ  
01733 570753

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

The Registrar  
The Office for Standards in Education  
Alexandra House  
33 Kingsway  
London WC2B 6SE

## REPORT CONTENTS

**Paragraph**

## **MAIN FINDINGS**

What the school does well  
Where the school has weaknesses  
How the school has improved since the last inspection  
Standards in subjects  
Quality of teaching  
Other aspects of the school  
The parents' views of the school

## **KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Characteristics of the school 1-4  
Key indicators

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

### **Educational standards achieved by pupils at the school**

Attainment and progress 5-13  
Attitudes, behaviour and personal development 14-18  
Attendance 19-20

### **Quality of education provided**

Teaching 21-29  
The curriculum and assessment 30-38  
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development 39-44  
Support, guidance and pupils' welfare 45-49  
Partnership with parents and the community 50-54

### **The management and efficiency of the school**

Leadership and management 55-60  
Staffing, accommodation and learning resources 61-66  
The efficiency of the school 67-71

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

### **English, mathematics and science**

Information technology and religious education 72-106

Other subjects or courses 107-132

## **PART C: INSPECTION DATA**

Summary of inspection evidence 133

Data and indicators

## **Main findings**

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

- Attainment by the end of Key Stage 2 in mathematics is well above the national average. In science attainment is above the national average by the end of Key Stage 2. Attainment at Level 5 is above the national average in English by the end of Key Stage 2.
- Attainment in history, geography and art is above national expectations by the end of Key Stage 2.
- Progress of pupils with special educational needs is good and the provision is very good.
- Pupils' attitudes, behaviour, relationships and personal development are very good.
- The quality of teaching is good.
- Leadership and management are very good. The ethos of the school is very good and aims and values are implemented very effectively. School development planning is very good. Teachers and support staff are used very effectively.
- Procedures for monitoring and promoting behaviour are excellent. Links with the community are very good.
- The curriculum and planning are very good. The literacy strategy is implemented very effectively. Extra-curricular activities are very good. Assessment is good and is used very effectively to organise the setting of pupils and to set individual targets.
- Provision for spiritual, moral and social development is very good.
- The quality of the accommodation is very good.

### **Where the school has weaknesses**

- I. Attainment in information technology is below national expectations at the end of Key Stage 2.
- II. The statutory requirement to ensure that all pupils are included in daily collective worship is not met.
- III. The provision of multi-cultural development is unsatisfactory.
- IV. Governors do not monitor teaching.

**The strengths of the school greatly outweigh the weaknesses. The governors' action plan will set out how the weaknesses identified during the inspection are to be tackled. The plan will be sent out to all parents or guardians of pupils at the school.**

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

Attainment in mathematics by the end of the key stage has greatly improved. Attainment in English, science, geography, history and art has improved. The quality of relationships between pupils is better.

The quality of teaching has improved, with no unsatisfactory teaching in lessons and a much higher proportion of very good teaching. The time spent in teaching mathematics is now used very effectively. Weekly planning is better. Schemes of work now have a significant impact on the quality of learning, and the new methods for grouping pupils by ability in writing, comprehension, mathematics and science are better. Assessment is now consistent and is used much more effectively to target pupils' individual needs.

Provision for spiritual, moral and social development is better. Procedures for monitoring and promoting discipline and good behaviour are significantly better and are now excellent. Procedures for monitoring progress are better. Parental involvement in their children's learning has improved. Links with the community have built on the previous good standards.

The quality of the leadership has improved, with the new headteacher and deputy headteacher being very effective leaders. The school ethos has improved, particularly the commitment to high standards. The implementation of the school's aims and values is better. Co-ordinators monitor the curriculum more effectively. Staff development has improved. Resources are better both in quantity and quality. The use of teachers, support staff and resources have greatly improved. The efficiency of financial control is better.

The capacity for improvement is very good.

### • **Standards in subjects**

This table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds in 1999, based on the National Curriculum tests:

Performance in	Compared with all schools	Compared with similar schools	•	Key
			<i>well above average</i>	A
			<i>above average</i>	B
			<i>average</i>	C
			<i>below average</i>	D
			<i>well below average</i>	E
English	C	A		
Mathematics	A	A		
Science	B	A		

By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment in English at Level 4 and above is in line with national averages. It is above national averages at Level 5. In mathematics, attainment at both levels is well above the national average. In science, attainment is above the national average at both levels. Compared with that in similar schools, attainment is well above average at all levels except in English at Level 4 and above. This standard is above average.

By the end of Key Stage 2 attainment in information technology is below national expectations. Pupils' attainment in religious education is in line with the locally Agreed Syllabus, and their attainment in art, history and geography is above national expectations. Attainment in design and technology, music and physical education is in line with national expectations. Attainment in swimming is above national expectations.

### • **Quality of teaching**

•	Teaching in	7 – 11 years
	English	Very good
	Mathematics	Good
	Science	Good
	Information technology	Unsatisfactory
	Religious education	Satisfactory
	Other subjects	Good

Nearly three quarters of teaching is good or better. One quarter of the teaching is very good, with some excellent features within a small minority of lessons. There is no unsatisfactory teaching in lessons. Teachers have high expectations of pupils, particularly in English, mathematics, and science. All teachers manage pupils very effectively and use the school's behaviour management systems very effectively. Teachers use resources very well to create interesting lessons. They use time very effectively, with many lessons having a very fast pace. They all work very successfully with support staff and other adults. They all use the setting arrangements very effectively. All teachers set homework conscientiously and mark it carefully.

*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	Behaviour is very good as procedures for monitoring and promoting discipline are excellent.
Attendance	Attendance is satisfactory.
Ethos*	The ethos is very good. There is a clear commitment to high standards.
Leadership and management	The headteacher and deputy headteacher are very effective leaders and work very well together. Co-ordinators all play important roles. The school's aims and values are implemented very well. The school development planning is very good.
Curriculum	The school provides a rich curriculum with very good planning. Setting of pupils is organised very effectively. Assessment is good and is used well to inform planning.
Pupils with special educational needs	Progress is good as the provision is very good. Teachers plan their work thoroughly.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	Provision for spiritual, moral and social development is very good. Provision for cultural development is satisfactory.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	The quality of the accommodation is very good. Teaching and support staff are used very efficiently. Resources are of a good quality and are used very well.
Value for money	Value for money is very good.

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



## **The parents' views of the school**

108 parents returned their questionnaire, which is 43 per cent of the questionnaires sent out. Four parents attended the parents' meeting.

### **What most parents like about the school**

- V. Parents find the school easy to approach with problems or questions.
- VI. The school enables their children to achieve good standards of work.
- VII. Their children like school.
- VIII. The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on their children.
- IX. The school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school.
- X. The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons.
- XI. The school achieves high standards of behaviour.
- XII. The school keeps parents well informed about their children's progress.

### **What some parents are not happy about**

- XIII. The management of the behaviour
- XIV. An insufficient number of open
- XV. The quality of the homework.
- XVI. Children need more time on  
ar.
- XVII. Inconsistency between teachers in

The inspectors agree with all of the positive views of the school. They agree with the parents that pupils need more time on computers. However, the standard of the equipment is now much improved as the school has spent their National Grid for Learning funding to update the provision. They disagree with the concerns about the management of behaviour and bullying and judge this provision to be excellent. There are a sufficient number of open nights. The quality of homework is good and is contributing well to raising standards. The information sent out to parents is consistent.

## Key issues for action

In order to develop the school's provision further the governors, headteacher and staff should:-

raise attainment in information technology by:-

- XVIII. applying the scheme of work fully to ensure consistent progress in the development of skills;
- XIX. using information technology regularly in literacy and numeracy lessons to increase the amount of time each pupil spends using computers;
- XX. applying information technology skills more consistently across the curriculum to develop understanding of the function of computers as a tool for learning and communicating;
- XXI. increasing the amount of time each pupil spends on computers to increase the rate of progress;
- XXII. improving the assessment and using it more effectively in order to track individual progress more efficiently.

Paragraphs 11, 24, 26, 27, 28, 34, 37, 68, 83, 88, 98, 99, 100, 102

*The school has already identified this key issue in their school development plan.*

In addition the school should address the following weaknesses in their action plan by:

- XXIII. ensuring that all pupils receive their entitlement to daily corporate worship; Paragraphs 59,102
- XXIV. improving the provision of multi-cultural development; Paragraph 43
- XXV. implementing the governors' development plan to monitor the teaching. Paragraph 57

## **Introduction**

### **Characteristics of the school**

1. Cockton Hill Junior School is situated in the town of Bishop Auckland. It lies in the middle of a well established housing estate with a mixture of rented and private accommodation. There are 251 pupils on roll. This is about average for a school of this type. Twenty four per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is higher than the national average. There are two pupils with English as an additional language and from minority ethnic groups. There are 15 more girls than boys on the school roll. There are 32 more girls than boys in the Year 6 age group but the opposite balance in Year 3, with 13 more boys than girls. There are 76 pupils on the special needs register. Seventeen pupils are between Stages 3 and 5, of whom eight have full statements. The great majority of pupils transfer to the school from the adjacent infants' school.
2. The school has two main aims; to be a continually improving school; and to work closely within the community. The school aims to develop its pupils in the following areas:-
  - to provide for the needs of all children in mental, aesthetic, moral, religious, and social development;
  - to develop linguistic skills for communication, and mathematical skills for the wider world;
  - to develop scientific skills to carry out investigations and learn about the world;
  - to develop physical skills of control, mobility and co-ordination;
  - to develop aesthetic skills in art, music and physical education;
  - to strive for high standards in work, behaviour and school life;
  - to develop respect, concern and a responsible attitude to the environment and other people;
  - to work together co-operatively for the good of the group;
  - to understand moral concepts;
  - to take a pride in their own and others' achievements.
1. The school has a number of priorities. These are:-
  - to use the National Grid for Learning funding to upgrade hardware, train staff and improve standards in information technology;
  - to introduce a new reading scheme;
  - to consolidate the numeracy strategy;
  - to revise long-term planning;
  - to update the staff handbook;
  - to set more individual targets for pupils and for staff;
  - to introduce new testing in mathematics and English;
  - to draw up a home-school agreement;
  - to upgrade internal decoration.
1. The key issues from the previous inspection report were to:
  - ensure consistency of pace, challenging pupils and giving them opportunities for their own learning across all lessons;
  - improve provision for teaching information technology;
  - revise the behaviour policy to ensure an agreed set of strategies to manage pupils' conduct;
  - complete the work on assessment and recording to provide a manageable and

coherent system.

## Key indicators

### Attainment at Key Stage 2<sup>1</sup>

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

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	35	30	65

National Curriculum Test		English	Mathematics	Science
<b>Results</b>				
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	23	29	29
	Girls	23	26	27
	Total	46	55	56
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	71(64)	85(60)	86(69)
	National	70(65)	69(59)	78(69)
Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	24	26	27
	Girls	22	22	20
	Total	46	48	47
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	71(54)	74(60)	72(70)
	National	68(65)	69(65)	75(72)

<sup>1</sup> Percentages in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

• **Attendance**

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year:			%
	Authorised	School	4.5
	Absence	National comparative data	5.6
	Unauthorised	School	0.9
	Absence	National comparative data	0.5

• **Exclusions**

Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age) during the previous year:		Number
	Fixed period	3
	Permanent	0

• **Quality of teaching**

Percentage of teaching observed which is:		%
	Very good or better	25
	Satisfactory or better	100
	Less than satisfactory	0

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

### **Educational standards achieved by pupils at the school**

#### **Attainment and progress**

1. The 1999 national tests show attainment in English in line with the national average at Level 4 and above. The proportion of pupils attaining Level 5 is above the national average. In mathematics the national tests show attainment to be well above the national average at both levels. In science, attainment is above the national average at both levels. Compared with that in similar schools, attainment at Level 4 and above is above average in English and well above average in mathematics and science. At Level 5 the comparison with similar schools shows attainment as well above average in all three subjects.
2. Attainment in the 1999 national tests shows a significant improvement in mathematics since the previous year at both levels. This is due to the very effective setting arrangements and the use of an extra teacher in the spring term in Year 6. This reduced class sizes and targeted individual needs more closely. Attainment in science also improved at both levels since the previous year as the school analysed the national tests very carefully and improved the coverage of the curriculum throughout the year. Attainment in English has shown an upward trend since 1996. Standards across English, mathematics and science have all improved since the last inspection. Attainment of boys and girls is the same in mathematics over the past three years. In English and science girls' attainment is better than that of the boys. The school is addressing these differences. For example, in English the topic of World War 2 has produced some very good poetry from the boys, as they are interested in this subject. The school has set itself appropriate targets for raising standards.
3. The inspection confirms the results of the national tests. By the end of Key Stage 2 attainment is above national expectations in listening, and in speaking it is in line. Pupils listen intently and with understanding to each other and to teachers. Most pupils speak confidently about their work, but a small minority restrict themselves to brief phrases. High attaining pupils speak articulately. In reading a higher than average proportion of pupils reach Level 5. All pupils are enthusiastic readers as they have good quality daily opportunities to develop their skills. High attainers use reference books very skilfully. In writing there are also a higher proportion of pupils attaining Level 5 than the national average. All pupils write appropriately across a range of purposes. A significant minority produce writing well above national expectations. For example, the use of imagery and emotive language was outstanding in a pupil's poem about war. Handwriting is of a consistently good standard and most pupils use grammar and spelling correctly.
4. In mathematics by the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have a very good understanding of number and algebra. Most pupils explain their mathematical thinking well and compare different methods confidently. High attaining pupils apply mathematical formulae with confidence. Pupils have a good understanding of properties of two-dimensional shapes. They all handle data within a range of different forms.
5. In science by the end of the key stage most pupils use scientific language correctly and understand the different strands of the science curriculum. High attaining pupils have a

very good standard of scientific knowledge and practical skills. Attainment in the processes of investigation is in line with national expectations.

6. Attainment on entry to the school is above national averages. Progress over time in English has ensured that the high attainers have sustained their progress. These pupils entering the school with Level 2Bs and Cs in reading and mathematics in 1995 have made good progress as the majority achieved a Level 4 in last year's tests. Progress over time in mathematics and science is good as pupils have broadened their curriculum but maintained their high standards. Progress in lessons is generally good, with some very good progress across all three subjects. For example, in mathematics in Year 6, pupils completed a large number of additions of decimals correctly and neatly presented within a very short time. In English, all pupils in Year 6 produced an outstanding drama performance including high quality poems, after only three weeks' work. Standards of literacy and numeracy are good throughout the school.
7. Attainment in information technology is below national expectations. By the end of Key Stage 2 most pupils know how to load and restore programmes they have saved. However, most pupils do not have sufficient skills to overcome difficulties that they encounter. Progress over time is unsatisfactory as pupils have not had sufficient experience to develop skills to the expected level. Progress in lessons is at least satisfactory and sometimes very good. Attainment in religious education is in line with the Locally Agreed Syllabus. Nearly all pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of key features of Christianity, Sikhism, Hinduism and Buddhism.
8. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment in art, history and geography is above expectations for their age. Attainment in music, physical education and design and technology is in line with national expectations. Standards in making are better than those in designing. Progress is good in gymnastics as pupils benefit from experiences gained in good quality extra-curricular clubs which raise standards in lessons. Standards in swimming are above national expectations.
9. Progress of pupils with special educational needs is good, as pupils' work is carefully structured to give them well targeted support. The careful setting of pupils for comprehension, writing, mathematics and science ensures that these pupils benefit from smaller classes. The withdrawal sessions ensure that their progress remains good in lessons as work is carefully co-ordinated with the class teacher. Progress of pupils with English as a second language is good, as teachers ensure that they have a clear understanding of the tasks.
13. **Attitudes, behaviour and personal development**
10. Pupils' attitudes to school life are very positive. They like going to school and it shows. They settle down quickly and are positively eager to start learning. They listen very attentively and obey instructions immediately. Most pupils are highly motivated. For example, in Year 5 in mathematics the pupils were very anxious to complete their magic number squares within the short timescale set by the teacher. Pupils show a real excitement about learning new facts and techniques across a wide range of subjects. Throughout the school there is very clear enthusiasm for participating in lessons. For example, when questions are asked, hands shoot up. The vast majority of pupils work very hard at school. When given a task they stick at it for the full allocated time. Most take a pride in their work and are keen to show it off.

11. Behaviour in the school is very good. The concerns expressed by a small number of parents were not confirmed by the inspection. Pupils live up to the high standards expected of them. For example, in Year 5, pupils listened very intently to a pupil reading the class book, as they were very clear about the sensitivity required. They know the rules well and think they are fair. The gaining of certificates and house points is taken extremely seriously. Classrooms are calm and very conducive to learning. Movement within the classroom and around the school is orderly. For example, all pupils move between their classrooms for the setting arrangements with the minimum of disruption. No shouting was heard during the inspection. In assembly pupils are quiet and show an appropriate respect during prayers. Dining is a civilised social occasion, noise levels are low and good table manners are much in evidence. Breaks are fun and friendly periods. Bullying is not considered a problem by the pupils. However, if an incident occurs they have confidence in the staff to sort out any problems. In the last year there were three temporary exclusions, reflecting the continuing decline in the number of exclusions over recent years.
12. Relationships are very good. For example, in a Year 6 assembly all pupils showed a high level of maturity in expressing a range of emotions with each other. Their relationships were so secure. The school is a very friendly place where pupils and staff all get on well with each other. The pupils are extremely courteous and polite and are a real credit to the school. In lessons, when working in pairs or larger groups, pupils collaborate very well, treating each other's views with respect. They show a keenness to share ideas and help each other. Boys and girls mix well together in the classroom and the yard.
13. Pupils make very good use of the opportunities for personal development. They respond very well to the school's emphasis on developing skills for independent learning. They know how to use a library and take homework very seriously. Extra responsibilities are accepted with enthusiasm; for instance, undertaking reception duties in the school office at lunchtime. Initiative is encouraged; for example, pupils followed up stories with a view to including them in a school newspaper. The Year 6 assembly on the futility of war showed pupils' strong awareness of social and moral issues, both through the passion shown by the performers and through the deep involvement shown by the rest of the school. School clubs are well attended. Pupils show respect for property and their environment. For example, they show a real interest in the displays in the main corridor and handle all the interesting artefacts with respect. Books and equipment are handled with care, classrooms are kept tidy and there is virtually no litter around the school.
14. The pupils' sheer enthusiasm for school life combined with their very good behaviour is making a major contribution to their successful learning.
18. **Attendance**
19. Attendance at the school is satisfactory. The rate of 94.0 per cent is broadly in line with the national average for similar schools. The incidence of unauthorised absence is slightly worse than the national average, due mainly to two pupils with very poor attendance records.
15. A significant proportion of absences in the autumn and summer terms is due to parents



taking the children on holiday. This is inevitably having a detrimental effect on the learning of the individuals concerned. The good attendance record of the majority of pupils is having a positive effect on their attainment. Punctuality is very good and registration takes place promptly and efficiently. Lessons start on time.

20.

## 20. **Quality of education provided**

### **Teaching**

16. Teaching is good, with nearly three quarters of the teaching in this category or above. One quarter of teaching is very good and within a small proportion of these lessons there are some excellent features. There is no unsatisfactory teaching in lessons. This is an improvement since the time of the previous inspection, when there was no teaching in the very good category, and a proportion of unsatisfactory teaching was seen. The very good monitoring of teaching by the headteacher has been an important contribution to this improvement.
17. Teachers all have high expectations in English, mathematics and science across all attainment levels. This has a significant impact on the standards reached by the end of the key stage. Within the setting arrangements teachers maintain these high expectations. The highest attaining pupils are expected to fulfil their potential. For example, in English, pupils produced poems of a very high calibre. Teachers have equally high expectations of the pupils in the lower sets. These pupils are expected to work at a very fast pace and to complete tasks to a good standard. For example, in mathematics in Year 5, pupils were expected to complete a magic square within a short time span. All teachers expect pupils to present their work with care. This results in a high level of presentation across all subjects. There are consistently high expectations in history, geography and art which again have a significant impact on standards. All pupils are expected to contribute to the whole-class discussion at their own level in these subjects. There are high expectations in Year 5 in gymnastics, where the co-ordinator insists that pupils "behave like gymnasts" throughout their performances. The deputy headteacher has high expectations of the level of confidence throughout the mathematics lessons. She regularly emphasises this aspect within lessons.
18. All teachers manage pupils very well. They all use the school behaviour system very effectively and pupils do not like their names being recorded on the tracking system. Teachers time their interventions well in lessons and often prevent a negative incident by using the system as a warning. Teachers use the "golden ticket" certificates well and encourage pupils to give of their best through the careful use of these rewards. Teachers all manage the changes between the sets smoothly and settle pupils quickly into the beginning of the lesson.
19. All teachers use resources very well to reinforce the impact of their teaching. They combine resources very effectively for maximum impact. For example, in mathematics in Year 4 the teacher used individual number squares, the class number square, a number line and number paddles when developing pupils' understanding of number patterns. Whiteboards are used well to record pupils' answers and key aspects of the lesson. However, opportunities are missed for pupils to record their own thinking as the boards are too high for the majority of pupils. Artefacts are used very effectively in history both in lessons and in the very good quality displays in the main corridor. Pupils' curiosity is stimulated by this provision. However, in religious education and multi-cultural education there is insufficient use of artefacts as there is only a restricted range available in the school. Computers are used well during information technology lessons and in the computer club. However, they are not used sufficiently within other subjects, which does not allow sufficient time for each pupil to develop the expected level of skill. A Year 5 teacher uses a ladybird timer very effectively to increase pupils' work rate by

setting tight deadlines. Teachers all use additional adults very effectively. For example, parents hear pupils read every week and have a very clear understanding of how to support the pupils' skills. Teachers work very effectively with the special needs support assistants. For example, in Year 4 the assistant supported the pupils during the whole-class discussion to ensure that they could understand the teaching points. Teachers use visits out of school very effectively to apply pupils' understanding to real contexts. For example, in geography pupils applied their knowledge of erosion to contrast the formation of the waterfalls at High and Low Force. Visitors into school are used equally well. For example, the drama teacher from a feeder comprehensive school worked extremely well with the Year 6 teachers to produce an outstanding drama based on their history topic. A feature of all the very good lessons is the fast pace. Teachers expect to cover a great deal of ground. For example, in geography in Year 6, pupils discussed the identified physical features on a globe, analysed aerial photographs, reported back and discussed characteristics of mountains, all in half an hour.

20. Teachers' subject knowledge is very good in English, and good in mathematics, science, art, history and geography. It is unsatisfactory in music and satisfactory in all other subjects. Teachers have a very good understanding of the literacy strategy and implement it very effectively. The school has trialled the numeracy hour for a year and all teachers understand the format well.
21. Planning is thorough across the curriculum. The literacy and numeracy planning is rigorous and detailed. It includes sections for identifying pupils' individual needs, which teachers use to set targets. There is some inconsistency between the two as the literacy planning contains details of homework, but the numeracy planning does not identify the homework that is provided. There is no planning for information technology within either literacy or numeracy lessons. Planning for all other subjects is good. There is a very effective school format that ensures the planning of teaching strategies. It also includes evaluations for each lesson that teachers use very effectively to inform future planning. The weekly planning is carefully tailored to meet the termly and yearly planning. Teachers plan very effectively across different subjects. For example, in Year 3, pupils study Egypt in both history and geography and use this content as a stimulus for English teaching. Planning for information technology across the curriculum is unsatisfactory. Planning for special educational needs is well focused with clear instructions for classroom assistants or additional adults. For example, in Year 4 in mathematics the classroom assistant supported two pupils very effectively during the whole-class discussion by using an extra resource of a number line to reinforce the learning.
22. Teachers organise their lessons well. They handle the different setting systems across writing, comprehension, mathematics and science very effectively and ensure that pupils all understand the different combinations. An excellent feature of a small minority of mathematics and science lessons is the very precise use of questioning to support learning of new topics, combined with the use of pupils' own experiences. Teachers balance whole-class discussion well with practical tasks. Teachers combine different teaching strategies effectively. For example, in Year 3 in history the teachers used role play, whole-class discussion, research and a written task within one lesson. A very good feature of the teaching in Year 6 is the requirement for pupils to select their own equipment for science investigations. However, there is too little emphasis on playing instruments in music lessons. The organisation of computers in information technology is unsatisfactory. Teachers are unable to intervene to support pupils consistently as the

distance between the computers is too great. Pupils are not organised effectively to receive sufficient time on computers to develop their keyboard skills. For example, in some lessons there are more than four pupils to each computer.

23. Teachers use day-to-day assessment well. In English and mathematics there are very effective formats in pupils' books for weekly targets. These are used very well throughout the school and provide a clear focus for raising standards. Pupils are also included in identifying their own targets and they provide detailed justification for their choices. This is a very good contribution to their personal development. Marking across all subjects is thorough. There is insufficient assessment in information technology and design and technology, which sometimes leads to pupils working below their potential. Day-to-day assessment of pupils with special educational needs is very thorough and identifies the next steps in learning. These details are recorded but not included in the individual education plans.
24. Teachers all use homework well. There are clear timetables for each class, and parents understand the requirements. It is all well marked and directly relevant to the work in lessons. Homework is valued and pupils' presentation matches the good quality of work in schools. It makes an important contribution to raising standards.
29. **The curriculum and assessment**
25. The school provides a rich curriculum that fulfils all statutory requirements for the National Curriculum and religious education. However, it does not meet requirements for providing collective worship for all pupils on a daily basis as a few pupils do not receive this entitlement. Particular strengths lie in the quality of experiences given to pupils through history, geography, art, literature and drama. Pupils have good opportunities to develop skills of practical science. They engage in first hand enquiry through taping conversations with adults and using books well for research. The school does not give pupils sufficient time for information and communication technology and this is a key issue.
26. Changes in the balance of time in the curriculum take full account of recent national initiatives for improving literacy and numeracy. Provision for implementing the national literacy strategy is very good. Additional time given to the teaching of reading is having a significant effect on the standards pupils reach. The school has improved its provision for mathematics since the last inspection and is implementing the numeracy strategy well.
27. The school achieves a curriculum relevant to pupils' needs. Meaningful links are made between subjects, such as art, history, geography and design technology. Stories are used as very effective stimuli to develop pupils' imagination in science. Such combinations increase pupils' understanding of each subject. The school is effective in promoting pupils' physical, emotional and intellectual development. Very good provision is made for pupils' health, personal and social education. There are appropriate policy statements for sex and drugs education.
28. The school makes good provision to ensure that pupils have equal access to the curriculum. A particular strength is the involvement of all Year 6 pupils in drama performances. Competitive games such football and netball are available to both sexes. However, only girls perform in the school choir and recorder group. Considerable care

is taken to value each individual and to celebrate their achievements. For example, during assembly a number of Year 6 pupils read poems they had written. The small number of pupils with English as their second language are fully integrated into the life of the school

29. Curriculum planning is very good. A strength is the extent to which schemes of work have been reviewed in the light of recent national changes whilst retaining the quality of earlier programmes. They match the needs of the school very well. A good yearly plan is adapted by co-ordinators through staff discussion. Termly planning is very good, with a consistent format in use for most subjects. Learning objectives are clear. Weekly planning has improved since the last inspection because teachers now use a consistent format to translate learning objectives into appropriate activities. Effective evaluations ensure that plans are changed in response to pupils' needs. The school has adopted a new information technology scheme of work which has not yet had a significant impact on the development of skills through the school.
30. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Pupils identified with special educational needs are carefully monitored as they enter the school. Subjects are carefully planned to ensure that these pupils' needs are fully met. This is particularly good in literacy as the organisation for setting in comprehension and writing ensures smaller class sizes. The withdrawal of pupils during the literacy strategy is planned carefully to ensure that pupils receive parallel work to their own class. Individual education plans are reviewed regularly and include good quality comments and targets from the pupils. The careful weekly targeting of pupils' work is not recorded in the individual education plans. Reviews for statemented pupils are carried out regularly. The requirements of the Code of Practice are fully met by the school<sup>2</sup>.
31. The range of extra-curricular activities is very good, particularly for sporting activities. Pupils are fully involved in many competitive sports such as cross country and football and netball leagues. Performing arts are well represented through drama and music. Education visits are well linked to curriculum objectives and make a valuable contribution to extending pupils' learning. The wearing of period costume makes history more exciting and relevant. Visitors to the school enrich the curriculum.
32. Assessment is good. The school has improved its programme of assessment since the last inspection, achieving consistency in the assessment of English, mathematics and science. In addition to the national tests and assessments, pupils take interim standardised tests to monitor progress during the key stage. Teachers record information carefully in pupils' files, maintaining a consistent internal record. The school has a clear focus on progress, setting effective targets for individuals in English, mathematics and science. Methods of recording are currently being further refined to improve the tracking of pupils' progress. Assessment in information technology is in its early stages and does not track individual progress sufficiently well.
33. The school makes effective use of assessment information. Setting arrangements are very good in writing, comprehension, mathematics and science. All of the sets are

---

<sup>2</sup> Code of Practice – this gives practical advice to schools and local education authorities about their responsibilities and tasks to ensure that pupils who have special educational needs receive the most appropriate help to further their learning and personal development. This is a statutory duty under the 1993 Education Act.

Stages of special educational needs range from Stage 1, when limited additional support is provided for pupils entirely from within the school, to Stage 5, which ensures that a pupil has a statement outlining his or her needs and shows what additional and specific support that pupil will receive. Stages 3, 4 and 5 involve external specialists as well as staff within the school.

different and based on careful assessment of individual pupils. These sets remain flexible and respond well to pupils whose rate of progress changes. Assessment is used well by teachers in planning the next steps for pupils' learning. Information is not used regularly to analyse the progress of year groups or pupils with the same rate of progress. Teachers use their good knowledge of National Curriculum assessment to communicate levels of attainment to pupils through marking.

**38. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

34. The school has built successfully on the good basis for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development noted in the last inspection. The provision overall is now very good.

35. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is very good. Regular opportunities are provided across the curriculum and in daily assemblies for pupils to reflect on their own experience and beliefs. Individuals are encouraged to consider the issues which shape their daily lives and the influences which affect them. The daily act of worship is of very good quality and provides quiet moments for reflection and prayer. In one assembly seen, for example, led entirely by the members of Year 6, pupils gave an exceptionally powerful dramatisation of the destructive effects of war. The intensity of their performance aroused compassion in everybody present and reflected a strong sense of the school as a community. In religious education, pupils gain insight into the nature of religious beliefs by studying major world faiths. Through listening to stories from holy books and translating them into modern settings, they learn to reflect on the plight of others and examine their own values closely. In science and mathematics lessons they learn to appreciate the wonders of the world around them.

36. Very good provision is made for pupils' moral development and there is strong commitment to a caring and compassionate ethos. Teachers provide very good role models and treat pupils with fairness and respect. In return they expect and achieve high standards of behaviour. The introduction of a code of behaviour has been very successful and is appreciated by pupils and adults. The community is very clear about the rules of the school, as they are displayed in every classroom and are well expressed. Pupils are given the opportunity to consider the effects of not complying with the rules during the course of regular house meetings. The initiatives introduced since the last inspection have had a very positive impact. The school is a calm and orderly community where raised voices and unsociable behaviour are conspicuously absent and pupils are very clear about their moral obligations to the school community.

37. Provision for social development is very good. Relationships between teachers and pupils and between pupils themselves are very good. A strong sense of team spirit is engendered by the way in which teachers work closely together and share resources to plan lessons. Their example is followed very closely by pupils in many lessons across the curriculum where they are given opportunities to collaborate. Further opportunities for social development are provided through the wide range of extra-curricular activities which teachers provide in their own time. These include football, cricket, netball, computer club, and recorder or choir practice. Pupils interact with their counterparts in other schools through competitive sport, drama and musical concerts. These activities are well attended and make a very good contribution to their social development. The school ensures that pupils are enabled to take responsibilities in a considerable number of aspects of school life. In assemblies and lessons, and at break times, they carry out

a wide range of duties sensibly and unobtrusively. For example, a Year 6 pupil carried out a formal introduction between two visiting adults with a high level of maturity. Arrangements are in place for older pupils to teach desktop games to their younger counterparts during wet playtimes. Pupils throughout the school have been encouraged to show compassion for those less fortunate than themselves by raising funds for charitable concerns such as Children in Need and victims of the Balkan conflict.

38. The school makes satisfactory provision overall for pupils' cultural development. Appreciation of pupils' own cultural heritage is fostered well through visits to museums, art galleries and places of interest, in connection with their studies in many subjects. Good use is made of visiting theatre groups to promote their appreciation of British dramatic tradition. In music lessons they are given opportunities to listen to music and sing songs originating from western and non-European countries. The curriculum for art, drama and poetry makes a significant contribution to pupils' cultural development. Attractive displays of pupils' work around the school, particularly of their art and poetry, reflect good standards of provision. Non-Western cultures are not well represented in pupils' work or in displays, and provision in this aspect of cultural development is unsatisfactory. Religious education and music lessons provide some insight into non-European culture. However, there is insufficient emphasis on promoting the rich cultural diversity of modern non-Western societies. Pupils are not made aware of the names, and talents of individuals from these societies, or of their contribution to the arts and science in the modern world.
39. There has been very good improvement in the provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development since the last inspection.
44. **Support, guidance and pupils' welfare**
40. The school's provision for pupils' support, welfare and guidance is good. The school is a very friendly community where relationships are very good. The headteacher has a high profile within the school and knows the pupils well. Teachers provide good role models. They are extremely good listeners and treat the pupils' views with obvious consideration and respect. Pupils are well supervised at all times. This supportive and calm environment, where pupils are clearly valued as individuals, is very conducive to their learning.
41. The monitoring of the pupils' progress and personal development is good. There are good systems in place for keeping track of their academic progress, with clear targets being set for mathematics and English. For example, teachers and pupils are involved in setting weekly targets in these subjects. The procedures for monitoring their personal development are less formal but still good. Teachers know the pupils well and are familiar with their strengths and weaknesses. This is apparent in the perceptive comments in the pupils' annual reports.
42. The procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are excellent. The effectiveness of these procedures results in very good behaviour being completely normal in the school. The procedures are highly successful for several inter-related reasons. The rules are simple, well publicised and common throughout the school. Good behaviour is positively recognised. Rewards are valued by the pupils. Sanctions have real bite without a climate of fear. It is a matter of a pupil's personal pride not to have their name written on the tracking sheet in the behaviour system. The procedures

are applied absolutely consistently across the school and regularly monitored by the headteacher and deputy headteacher. These procedures are an outstanding strength of the school and show a marked improvement since the last inspection. The school does not tolerate bullying or racist behaviour, neither of which are a problem.

43. The school has sound procedures for monitoring attendance. Registers are well kept and there is a good relationship with the educational welfare service. There is some inconsistency between classes in the rigour with which unexplained absences are followed up. Holidays account for a significant number of absences at certain times of the year and yet the school has no clear policy for informing parents of the educational implications of taking holidays in term time. Punctuality is very effectively encouraged. On average less than one per cent of pupils arrive late.
44. Health and safety issues are taken seriously. The responsible person has received adequate training and a governor has recently been given responsibilities in this field. The school premises and equipment are regularly inspected, fire drills take place each term, there is satisfactory first aid cover and all accidents are correctly recorded. The school has a very good system of informing parents of all accidents, however minor. The school displays good practice on the subject of child protection. The named person has been trained and all staff have recently had a refresher session on the school's procedures.



49. **Partnership with parents and the community**

45. The school continues to maintain a good partnership with parents and this has a beneficial impact on the pupils' learning. Parents are supportive of the school, which has a good local reputation. They approve particularly of the values and attitudes set by the school, the good standards of work achieved by their children and the approachability of the staff. Their positive views are completely endorsed by the inspection findings.
46. The quality of information parents receive is good overall. The prospectus is comprehensive and easy to read. The section on school rules is particularly clear and very sensibly leaves parents in no doubt about the importance the school places on good behaviour. The governors' annual report is well written and contains a clear explanation of how the school management plan is focused on improving standards. Parents are encouraged to attend termly teacher consultation meetings and any non-attenders are rigorously followed up in an effort to arrange a subsequent meeting. The subjects of future topic work are included in newsletters, but parents are not usually given detailed information about forthcoming work, particularly in the core subjects. Parents are not formally told of the pupils' targets in English and mathematics. However, this information is available in the pupils' books.
47. The quality of the pupils' reports is satisfactory. However, some reports are very good. All are well written without the use of education jargon. Progress is always clearly stated and a pupil's strengths and weaknesses are usually included. The inclusion for each child of a rating for 'behaviour' and 'attitude to work' very positively reinforces the importance the school gives to these matters. The very good reports contain targets that are sufficiently specific and realistic for parents to be involved in their child's learning; for instance, 'write in pen' and 'learn 6 times table' both featured in a Year 4 report.
48. The extent to which the school manages to involve parents in school life and their child's learning is generally good. Homework is well planned and arranged on the assumption that it will be shared with parents. Parental involvement has a significant impact on the effectiveness of the homework. Parents are encouraged to help in the school and a core of committed helpers are regularly in the classroom. This help makes a significant impact on the children's learning, particularly in developing reading skills. The school benefits from an active Friends' Association that is very successful at arranging social functions and fund raising.
49. Links with the community are broad and are enriching the pupils' learning in a very positive way. There is a very good programme of visits, all with a strong educational purpose ranging from the local graveyard to regional museums. The successful impact of these visits is apparent in the extent to which they can be recalled by the pupils. Visitors give the pupils a wide breadth of experience, from the local clergy to South African gumboot dancers, the latter resulting in the whole school attempting to dance in wellington boots. Pupils' self-esteem is boosted by competing in local sporting leagues and the choir and music groups performing in local festivals. Very good links with a local comprehensive school have enabled all Year 6 pupils to be involved in drama and script writing. This provides valuable opportunities for personal development. Pupils are developing journalistic and other skills through very good links with the local newspaper, the Northern Echo, and through the production of a school newspaper together with

other schools, through the Pathways scheme. This will be circulated to over 12,000 homes, which gives pupils a very good purpose for writing.

54. **The management and efficiency of the school**

54. **Leadership and management**

50. The leadership of the school is very good. The headteacher sets a very clear educational direction. He is determined to raise standards in English, mathematics and science and has introduced a very effective range of strategies in order to achieve this. For example, he analysed the science national test results in detail and then improved the quality and range of the provision, which raised standards. He uses his depth of knowledge of the school and its community to very good effect by using different approaches to match individual or group needs. He works very effectively with the deputy headteacher to analyse the school's needs and to implement changes. They both have a very good standard of teaching which sets high standards as a model for others. The deputy headteacher works very effectively to raise standards. For example, she worked throughout the school, teaching mathematics, which has ensured a clear understanding of all the pupils' needs. Co-ordinators play a valued role throughout the school. They are seen as sources of expertise and are all involved in the yearly, termly and weekly planning of their subjects. They all have a clear view of the developments for their areas. The special educational needs co-ordinator is well organised and has a clear overview of these pupils' needs.
51. The governing body is well established. They have their own well organised development plan in order to improve their effectiveness. They were all involved in producing the plan with support from the local education authority. All governors have a link with a subject co-ordinator, but this organisation is in its early stages. Several governors take advantage of the available training in order to update their skills.
52. The monitoring of teaching is good. The headteacher monitors very effectively. He carries this out very regularly and sets very well defined targets that he follows through carefully to measure improvement. He analyses teachers' needs very precisely, as he is a very effective teacher himself. He sets these targets within a very positive context. There is a clear written format to record this monitoring, which includes good opportunities for teachers' own comments. However, the co-ordinators or governors are not involved in the monitoring. This is a missed opportunity for the school to use the headteacher's very good systems more comprehensively. All co-ordinators monitor planning, and the headteacher records his comments for improvements clearly. The governors have included the monitoring of teaching in their development plan.
53. School development planning is very good. All teachers are involved in its production, which ensures a good understanding of its content. The headteacher and deputy headteacher analyse the individual teacher's needs effectively and combine them with whole-school needs. There are clear categories identified and each new development is thoroughly presented, with tasks, personnel, costs and deadlines included. The previous plan is audited thoroughly and used effectively as a basis for the subsequent plan. The progress of the current plan is carefully recorded and shared with all teachers. The governors understand the content of the plan, but they are not involved in the early stages of its production. Their own development plan is based sensibly on the main school plan.
54. The school has clear aims which are implemented effectively. For example, there is a commitment to ensuring that the school is a part of the community. These links are very

good and enrich the quality of the curriculum. There is a clear sharing of values throughout the school which provides consistency across the provision. For example, in a Year 6 assembly, all adults and pupils responded extremely sensitively to the very high quality performance of the pupils. Policies are clearly expressed. The headteacher's belief in sharing decisions with his staff ensures a good level of consistency across the school. The school has a very good ethos. There is a positive climate for learning. For example, there is a high quality of display along the central corridor that pupils use to increase their understanding of the areas being studied for the term. Pupils have very positive attitudes to work, and relationships are very good across the whole-school community. There is clear commitment to high standards which has born fruit in the improvement in this year's national tests. Statutory requirements are not fully met as pupils do not all receive their daily entitlement to corporate worship.

55. The quality of leadership and management has improved since the last inspection. Expectations have been raised and the school ethos has improved.
60. **Staffing, accommodation and learning resources**
56. Staffing levels are sufficient to teach the National Curriculum. The teachers are suitably qualified, with a balance between those who have joined during the last seven years and long-serving teachers. Initial qualifications are generally matched well to co-ordinator responsibilities, particularly in core subjects, except that no one has initial qualifications in information and communication technology. The ratio of pupils to teachers is well above average compared with that in schools nationally. The turnover of teaching staff is low, but they are not complacent. Pupils benefit from the experience of teachers who know the community very well. The appointment of the headteacher and a new deputy headteacher in the last two years has been effective in taking the school forward. Teachers bring a range of interests and expertise to the school. They are conscientious and collaborate well as a team. The school benefits from additional part-time teachers to support pupils with special educational needs, an additional part-time teacher to support the setting arrangements and a support teacher from the secondary school who teaches drama.
57. The number of classroom assistants deployed by the local authority is sufficient to provide good support for pupils with special educational needs. They are all well briefed and receive good support for carrying out their roles. The staff are deployed effectively on the basis of decisions to improve pupils' opportunities and raise standards
58. Arrangements for staff development are good. The headteacher sets a high priority on effective staff development. Plans are in place to improve the competency of staff in information technology, a concern identified in the last inspection. Staff have clear job descriptions that are used regularly to review effectiveness. All teachers undertake a process of self-review to support new targets each term. Each teacher analyses the priorities for school development each year, identifying their needs for development and training. Appraisal is in place, with a review of practice firmly based on classroom observation. Co-ordinators are well informed about their subject responsibilities. Teaching and support staff attend courses appropriate to the needs of the school. The plan is well summarised in the whole-school development plan and is embedded in the school priorities. The school has not inducted a newly-qualified teacher for seven years, but the headteacher remains well informed in line with guidelines from the local authority. Administrative and site staff, along with midday supervisors, feel well

supported and discharge their responsibilities well.

59. The accommodation is generally very good, providing an attractive place for learning. Pupils' work is very well displayed in most classrooms, focusing successfully on what pupils have achieved. The school has successfully adapted surplus classrooms to become science and art rooms, giving pupils very good opportunities for practical and investigation work. Pupils also benefit from a separate music room. A visiting artist has painted an excellent mural at each end of the reading area between the classrooms for Years 3 and 4, conveying to pupils the enjoyment of reading and number. This area has been also been adapted, along with the area between the classrooms for Years 5 and 6 to accommodate computers as part of the National Grid for Learning programme. The resulting computer area is very long, making it difficult for adults to monitor the progress pupils make. The long link corridor between the library and hall has not been developed and is dark and drab. The school has plans to improve the quality of this corridor. The school is clean and well maintained by the caretaker and cleaners. The headteacher has implemented a long-term programme of improvements and maintenance, which has a good effect on the quality of education provided.
60. The external environment includes a good field and attractive grass and shrub areas, although these are behind the school, and pupils cannot benefit from them, except in good weather. Hard play areas are sufficient to enable pupils to engage in purposeful play at breaks and lunch times. Vandalism out of school hours has been dealt with effectively by the school and has been eliminated.
61. Learning resources are good overall. External funding has enabled the school to purchase computers of very good quality. The school has undertaken effective spending for the literacy and numeracy strategies, resulting in good resources. History resources are very good and artefacts are attractively displayed for pupils to enjoy. The gradual improvement of resources for other subjects is part of the annual budget. The school does not have a sufficient range of multicultural resources to provide a stimulus for teaching this aspect of the curriculum. There is a deficiency in artefacts for the teaching of religious education.
66. **The efficiency of the school**
62. The efficiency of the school is good. Financial planning is effective and is closely linked to school targets. The governing body receives the budget plan from the headteacher and is fully involved in monitoring the budget regularly. The planned underspend of 11 per cent has been used to maintain existing levels of staffing, reducing the figure carried forward to next year to within national guidelines for expenditure. Prudent management enables the school to develop a longer-term plan for external maintenance of the building. The school development plan states clearly what expenditure is involved. Co-ordinators are accountable for curriculum spending and the monitoring of resources, discharging their responsibilities well. The school is now well placed to review its performance over time. The good practice of setting annual targets for improving standards puts the school in a position to use the information for making effective strategic policy decisions.
63. The deployment of staff is effective, with very good use of additional funds to provide refined setting arrangements for pupils in English, mathematics and science. Support assistants are used very well to teach pupils with special educational needs.

Accommodation is generally used well, but the distance between computers makes it difficult to teach or monitor progress effectively. The majority of resources are used very efficiently to increase the quality of learning. For example, in numeracy lessons teachers include a wide range of resources both in mental mathematics and in the group tasks. Computers are used regularly in whole-class information technology lessons, but they are under-used in lessons in other subjects.

64. Financial control and administration are good. The finance committee reviews the budget each term and is well advised by the area finance officer of the local authority. The school secretary has good procedures for administering the budget, maintaining meticulous manual records in addition to the computerised system. An audit report has not been received since the last inspection.
65. Day-to-day administration proceeds with calm efficiency and purpose. There are good ordering arrangements and effective systems for routine expenditure. The school fund is administered appropriately. Administrative and teaching staff work well together, enabling the school to operate effectively.
66. Attainment on entry to the school is above average in English, mathematics and science. By the time pupils have left the school, attainment has been maintained at this level, with an increased breadth required of the curriculum in Key Stage 2. Attitudes, behaviour and personal development are all very good. Progress is good overall. Teaching is good and leadership is very good. The cost per pupil is very low. Taking all this into account, the school gives very good value for money.

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

### 71. **English, mathematics and science Information technology and religious education**

#### 71. **English**

67. In the 1999 tests for eleven year olds, pupils' attainment in English was above the national average overall. The percentage of pupils reaching Level 4 was in line with the national average. The percentage reaching Level 5 was above the national average. When compared with schools in a similar context, the percentage of pupils reaching Level 4 was above average and the percentage reaching Level 5 was well above average.
68. These results reflect an upward trend in performance over the last three years. The results for 1998 were lower than for the previous year, but the picture is one of steady improvement overall since 1996. This pattern was reflected in the performance of both boys and girls, although the performance of girls was slightly better for each year. The inspection confirms the 1999 results. By the end of the key stage, attainment is above the national average. Most pupils are on track to achieve Level 4 or the higher Level 5. This represents good improvement since the last inspection.
69. By the end of the key stage, pupils' attainment is above average in listening, and for speaking it is in line with the national average. By the end of the key stage, pupils in Year 6 listen intently and with understanding to teachers and each other. They demonstrate that they are listening closely by answering questions directed at them or by asking questions of their own based on what they have heard. Higher attaining pupils speak at length and articulately in response to questions and devise questions of their own to seek clarification. Most pupils speak confidently about their work, but a small minority restrict their answers to brief phrases which are sometimes unclear.
70. All subjects provide a context for the development of pupils' speaking and listening skills. During the introduction and review sessions included in most lessons, pupils are regularly encouraged to contribute to discussions and they make sound progress throughout the school. From Year 3 onwards they become used to explaining their work in front of the class or to members of a group. When spoken to by adults in lessons or in the course of the school day, they listen respectfully and their replies are confident and sociable.
71. Attainment in reading is above the national average. By the end of the key stage most pupils are enthusiastic and competent readers. They read a wide range of texts, including poetry and non-fiction, confidently and with expression, and regularly take books home to read. Their library skills are well developed and all pupils use the library classification system with ease. Higher attaining pupils scan the text in reference books quickly and accurately to extract information.
72. Pupils of all abilities throughout the school make good progress in reading. As pupils enter Year 3, most are already competent or good readers. However, the percentage of pupils achieving higher standards within Level 2 is comparatively small. The school's strategy to provide extra time and support for reading is very successful in ensuring that the progress of these pupils accelerates through the key stage. All pupils quickly

develop good habits. Reading sessions at the beginning of each day strengthen their love of books and improve their capacity for independent reading. All pupils become fully conversant with the layout of books and develop good reference skills.

73. Attainment in writing is above average. By the end of the key stage the majority of pupils apply their literacy skills competently in most subjects across the curriculum. In English lessons they write accurately for a range of different purposes and audiences. Most pupils write neatly and accurately. Spelling and punctuation are generally correct. They evaluate and redraft their work and produce well structured and imaginative pieces of writing. The poetry writing of a significant minority of pupils is well above average. In one pupil's poem about the destructive effects of war, for example, the use of powerful imagery and emotive language was outstanding
74. Pupils throughout the school make sound progress in writing, and higher attaining pupils make good progress. In most subjects across the curriculum, and in all classes, they are regularly expected to use their writing skills to answer questions and give explanations. Teachers' constructive marking ensures that pupils read their work carefully and strive to improve its quality. As they move through the school, they are increasingly asked to provide complete and extended answers to questions. This is particularly evident in the extra writing sessions which are planned and these have a significant impact on the progress of pupils of all abilities.
75. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress throughout the school. They benefit clearly from the very effective support which they receive. As well as being withdrawn in small groups for specific help, they are well supported in class lessons. The organisation of pupils in "sets" of similar ability for writing helps to promote good progress and provide challenge, particularly for higher attainers.
76. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour in lessons are nearly always very good and on occasions they are outstanding. They show clear appreciation and enjoyment of the well structured lessons which teachers plan for them. Pupils look forward eagerly to daily reading sessions and to the literacy hour. Consequently their attention is clearly focused on learning. There are very occasional lapses in concentration when pupils are not sufficiently challenged by teachers. However, in the vast majority of lessons inappropriate behaviour is neither contemplated nor observed. Pupils regularly show willingness to work quietly on their own or to share ideas and resources with others. They form very good relationships with each other and with teachers, and are mature in their approach to all aspects of their work. In the dramatisation of wartime carried out by all of the pupils in Year 6 during one assembly seen, their response was exemplary. The quality of relationships and the concentration, commitment and maturity demonstrated throughout a demanding performance did credit to them, their teachers and their school.
77. The quality of teaching is very good and no unsatisfactory teaching was seen. This represents very good improvement since the last inspection. Teachers generally have very high expectations of pupils' behaviour and performance. They know individuals' strengths and weaknesses very well and plan work which closely matches their needs. In these aspects of provision the quality of teaching is occasionally excellent. Teaching is occasionally less successful where the management of pupils is insecure or where the timing of the literacy hour is unbalanced and allows too little time for writing to be completed. All teachers have a very good knowledge and understanding of the Literacy



Strategy and these are supported by very good subject knowledge. They transmit enthusiasm through their teaching and obtain a similar response from pupils by making the work as varied and as interesting as possible. This was successful in a Year 5 lesson seen where pupils were asked to write each other's horoscopes to develop their use of the future tense. Relationships with pupils are very positive and often flavoured with good humour. For example, in Year 4 the teacher encouraged greater urgency in writing with the invitation, "Please, do start!", which was fully appreciated by the class. Homework is set regularly for all classes. Work is marked thoroughly and constructively and this has a positive impact on the quality of writing and presentation.

78. Pupils are given opportunities to use computers for word processing and editing their work, but access to information technology is too irregular. The school has invested extra funding and planned more time to provide extra support for reading and writing. The strategy has been very successful in ensuring that pupils of all abilities make good progress and this reflects good improvement since the last inspection.

### 83. **Mathematics**

79. The 1999 national tests show that attainment by the end of Key Stage 2 is well above the national average at Level 4 and above. At Level 5 attainment is also well above the national average. Compared with that in similar schools, attainment is well above average. This is a considerable improvement on the previous year's national tests, where attainment was close to the national average at both levels. This is due to the very effective setting arrangements and the very good use of extra funding prior to the national tests this year. The trend in previous years has been fairly steady. There has been little difference between girls' and boys' performance over the past three years.
80. The inspection confirms the national test results. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Pupils' attainment is well above the national average, as the setting arrangements ensure that the high attaining pupils fulfil their potential and pupils with special educational needs receive support which is very well targeted. By the end of the key stage pupils have a very good understanding of number and algebra as they receive regular opportunities to develop these skills. Nearly all pupils order negative numbers in context. Most pupils add and subtract decimals correctly to two places. Nearly all pupils handle place value confidently when multiplying and dividing. They all convert mixed fractions to vulgar fractions correctly. All pupils set out their work correctly in a number of different ways and understand the need for accuracy. All pupils collect data and record them in a range of different graphs and charts. They understand how to interpret different mathematical graphs. Most pupils explain the stages in their mental mathematics well and compare different methods to identify the quickest way to produce the answer. For example, pupils explained how they rounded pairs of numbers up to the nearest ten before adding them. High attaining pupils calculate percentages correctly. For example, they calculate five per cent of £9.40. They use formulae confidently when solving problems. For example, they understand how to use "speed equals distance divided by time" across a range of contexts. They calculate the angles of different types of triangles correctly.
81. Good progress is made throughout the school as all pupils are set carefully after thorough assessment. These sets are reviewed regularly to ensure that pupils are receiving the appropriate level of challenge. Additional support is given to each year group in different ways to reduce the number of pupils in each group. This ensures that

individual progress is tracked carefully. Progress is very good in number as pupils work very regularly to consolidate their skills. In Year 3, pupils develop understanding of odd and even numbers. For example, pupils add the two amounts on dominoes and put them into either odd or even categories. Pupils develop understanding of rounding up or down. They use rulers to measure with a reasonable degree of accuracy. They solve problems using their mathematical knowledge. In Year 4, pupils continue to build on previous skills. They develop understanding of different patterns in numbers very well as teachers use the number squares very effectively to identify sequences and alternatives. The progress of low attaining pupils and those with special educational needs is particularly good in Year 5 as the teacher has very high expectations. For example, pupils identified missing numbers in a magic square within a short time allocation. Progress in Year 6 accelerates in the spring term as an extra teacher is allocated to this year group. Pupils all produce a very good volume of work during this time. Progress is supported effectively in homework as all pupils expect to work on mathematics each week, with Year 6 pupils having two slots in which to complete mathematical tasks. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is very good throughout the school as the setting ensures that their needs are met effectively. Classroom assistants give focused support to ensure that this progress is very good in whole-class discussions.

82. Attitudes to mathematics are very good. All pupils approach their work with confidence as the teachers ensure that they have the right support. For example, in Year 3, pupils explained the difference between odd and even numbers as the teacher had provided a very clear framework on the class number square. All pupils play close attention in the mental mathematics session and are keen to offer their responses. All pupils work co-operatively with each other when they carry out the tasks. Personal development is good as pupils are expected to take responsibility for their own resources. Many pupils set their own targets each week and justify their choice confidently. Pupils are very keen to carry out tasks around the classroom without being told. Behaviour is very good, with pupils moving very sensibly between the classes for the different sets. They settle quickly to work both in the whole-class discussion and in the group tasks. They are all very polite to each other and to teachers.
83. Teaching is good, with some excellent features within lessons. Teachers all have high expectations of their sets. The teachers working with the high attaining groups ensure that there is a good pace to lessons and ensure that the highest attainers in each group are fully extended as they give them additional challenges in both group work and in individual tasks. Teachers with the lower attaining sets have equally high expectations and expect a good rate of progress in lessons. For example, in Year 5, pupils all had a clear understanding of tessellation as the teacher expected them all to define the term within the wholeclass session. Teachers foster confidence in mathematics as they encourage all pupils to contribute to whole-class discussions. The deputy headteacher is particularly successful in generating confidence in pupils as she consistently urges them to "become good mathematicians". The management of pupils is very good, with all teachers using the school behaviour system effectively. Whenever this system was mentioned, pupils took it very seriously. Resources are used very effectively, with a very good combination used in lessons. For example, in Year 4, teachers combined the use of number paddles, number lines and number squares, both individual ones and the large class square. Teachers all use the whiteboards well to record pupils' responses. However, opportunities are missed for pupils to record their own thinking in whole-class discussion as the boards are generally too high for them to reach properly. Teachers all

have good subject knowledge. This ensures good quality questioning both during whole-class sessions and with individuals. Teachers use this questioning very effectively to target individuals and to find different ways of explaining concepts to pupils. For example, in Year 6 the teacher identified several different ways to round numbers up or down. Teachers' planning is thorough and takes good account of the different parts of the lesson. However, opportunities are missed to record the homework that is given each week. Teachers all give homework consistently and ensure that pupils look forward to completing it by careful marking. Day-to-day assessment is thorough. The weekly target setting is very good as it focuses pupils' attention on the main learning objectives. Teachers all carry out the lesson at a good pace and at least half of the teachers set a very good pace. This ensures a high level of concentration by the pupils and a large amount of work covered in each lesson. Opportunities are missed to use information technology regularly within mathematics lessons. Teachers provide investigative work in mathematics to apply newly acquired skills, but they do not identify a sufficient number of ways of applying mathematics across other subjects. Teachers have a very good understanding of the work in parallel classes and sets as they plan their weekly lessons together and keep each other well informed of developments within lessons.

84. All teachers implement the numeracy strategy very effectively. The school ran a trial of the strategy in the last academic year and all teachers are now building on those early skills to ensure a smooth delivery of the new requirements.

89. **Science**

85. By the end of Key Stage 2 the 1999 national test results showed that performance in science was above average. The numbers of pupils reaching the expected Level 4 and the higher Level 5 were both above average. When compared with those in similar schools, results were well above average. Results over a period of four years show a good improvement, with a decline in 1998. The school analysed the national tests from the 1998 cohort very thoroughly and improved the curriculum coverage. This ensured a significant improvement in 1999. The 1998 comparisons indicate that girls perform well above the national average and that the boys' performance was above average. Results have improved from average to above average levels since the last inspection.
86. The inspection confirms the 1999 test results. Attainment is above national expectations at the end of Key Stage 2. Higher attaining pupils reach very good standards in knowledge and understanding, and good standards in practical skills. Their understanding of the process of planning an investigation, and considering and evaluating experimental evidence is in line with national expectations. Pupils reach good standards in using language to explain scientific ideas and reach appropriate standards in the use of number. They do not reach sufficient standards in the use of information technology to record and analyse information.
87. Pupils in Year 6 reach good standards in lessons. A factor that contributes to their success is the extent to which they are encouraged to speak extensively, using scientific vocabulary, to explain their experimental findings. They are successful in solving simple problems set by the class teacher. For example, they design a switch to work a circuit. Higher attaining pupils explain very clearly the changes that happen when they increase the number of bulbs. An examination of earlier work shows that they have a good understanding of health issues, including diet, digestion, the heart and exercise. A

scrutiny of work from last year shows that pupils in Year 6 have reached good standards in knowledge and understanding, but have less written work in science investigations. Standards in literacy are good and ensure good quality written reports of scientific work.

88. Progress is good. Pupils in Year 3 present good findings on experiments into the stretch of tights of different quality when weighed down. They make good progress in identifying distinctive features of rocks of different hardness and record their observations very well. Pupils in Year 4 make good progress in understanding the differences between solids and liquids because of a very effective discussion session with the teacher at the end of the practical session. A good display of pupils' measurements of different parts of the skeleton results in a presentation of bar charts, but pupils do not use the computer to analyse results. Pupils in Year 5 make very good progress in planning an investigation. They consider how to keep a test fair, using knowledge gained from earlier teaching. Higher attaining pupils successfully discuss the importance of changing only one variable whilst keeping others the same.
89. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress because tasks are well planned to support them. They work fully with the rest of the class, achieving good levels of attainment in scientific skills, knowledge and understanding. Teachers and support assistants give additional help of good quality.
90. Pupils have very good attitudes to learning and behave well in every lesson. They are attentive, listen to questions well, and are always willing to answer. They engage in lively discussion and are full of ideas. They are very enthusiastic, enjoying practical experiences to the full, excited by personal discovery. Relationships between pupils are very good. Older pupils are totally engrossed in their investigation, working very well in teams. Keen to explain their work to the rest of the class, they are confident speakers. They are developing an excellent sense of responsibility and gain considerable maturity by Year 6.
91. Teaching is good. This represents an improvement since the last inspection. Teachers now have consistently high expectations of what pupils can achieve. Lessons are challenging and the quality of discussion is excellent when pupils are required to include clear scientific terms to explain their thinking. In the very best lessons teachers encourage pupils to plan how they will solve practical problems. The oldest are required to make decisions about equipment to be used and procedures to be followed. An outstanding feature is the success with which teachers extend all pupils by employing a wide range of teaching and learning strategies. For example, a Year 3 teacher captures the imagination of pupils through reading a particularly good story that includes scientific explanations of the structure of the earth. A Year 5 teacher sets a timer for group discussion and pupils find this highly motivating. Teachers review lessons by asking higher attaining pupils to explain key learning points, extending the learning of the class as a whole. Similarly, they involve pupils with special needs fully in leading discussions.
92. Teachers know the National Curriculum well and place a strong emphasis on a practical approach. Planning is good, with improved consistency within year groups since the last inspection. Teachers monitor the progress pupils make as they work, encouraging them to persevere and take pride in their work. They assess pupils' progress regularly. The best lesson evaluations note difficulties which particular pupils may have had and teachers change their plans accordingly. Relationships are very good. Teachers foster

very positive attitudes. They develop a strong sense of responsibility, expecting pupils to take initiative. Teachers use other adults well and use learning resources very well. Homework is set on a regular basis, giving pupils a continuing sense of purpose.

### **Information and Communication Technology**

93. Attainment is below national expectations by the end of Key Stage 2. A small number of pupils have good background knowledge and reach appropriate standards in lessons. The school has recently acquired their National Grid for Learning funding. The increase in the quality and quantity of computers has improved the rate of progress, as pupils now receive regular opportunities to develop their skills. The school has also adopted a new scheme of work to provide a clearer framework for building on previously acquired skills.
94. Pupils in Year 6 are beginning to develop good routines and know how to restore programs they have saved. They talk readily about the procedures, using correct terminology, but the majority of pupils have difficulty in overcoming problems because they do not have sufficient background knowledge to apply to a new and challenging situation. Fewer than half are successful in transferring text from one program to another. However, those who do succeed know how to change the font and size of text. Most pupils understand how to load the appropriate program and print work independently, more confident pupils using the system of changing the printer for each computer. The majority of pupils do not understand the function of information technology as a tool for learning or communicating.
95. Progress is unsatisfactory over time. Pupils have not had enough regular use of computers to make suitable progress year on year. The rate of progress has considerably improved due to the regular use of the new computers. Pupils now make at least satisfactory and sometimes good progress in lessons. Pupils in Year 3 make good progress in using a data base, understanding the principle of the program and finding information quickly. Pupils in Year 5 good progress in using LOGO, making good connections between the control activity and work on angles in mathematics. Lower attaining pupils make very good progress in formulating instructions for a programmable robot as a result of very good teaching. Standards in literacy are satisfactory, although progress in word processing is not yet satisfactory.
96. Pupils have very positive attitudes and are well motivated to improve their skills. They are attentive to instructions and enjoy their work, appreciating new equipment. They work hard to finish tasks in the given time and are proud of their work when they succeed. The youngest are very keen to learn and listen to the teacher during a whole-class demonstration. Pupils are not yet sufficiently independent because they have not had regular use of resources.
97. Teaching is unsatisfactory overall. Teaching in whole-class lessons is satisfactory. However, organisation across the curriculum is inadequate. Teachers are very committed to making the recently acquired system work well. All have satisfactory subject knowledge. Those who are most confident lead whole-class teaching well. For example, the principle of using a database was explained well in Year 3, with clear use of good vocabulary. The power of the computer in storing information was explained well in Year 6. However, when teachers are tentative in manipulating a program, they communicate uncertainty to pupils, making it difficult for them to make sufficient

progress. Planning is satisfactory in information technology lessons, but the implementation of the new scheme of work is not yet making a sufficient impact on standards reached. Planning for information technology in other subjects is unsatisfactory. Opportunities are missed to provide regular time on computers within other areas of the curriculum, particularly literacy and numeracy lessons. Pupils are not provided with sufficient time on computers to develop the expected level of attainment. Teachers are not yet using a sufficient range of subject contexts for learning and applying new skills. Not all teachers take enough care to ensure that pupils are well seated to observe a demonstration and this has an impact on how much progress they make during practical time. The best lessons are well organised for pupils to gain good first-hand experience of handling the computer, but there are often too many pupils around each station for each to have sufficient practice in applying the skills taught. Staff work very hard to monitor the progress pupils are making during the lesson, but the distance between computers is too great to make the task easily manageable. There is currently no system for assessing skills, making it difficult to ensure that each pupil makes good progress each year. Teachers manage the behaviour of pupils very well, but are not always making the most efficient use of existing resources.

## **Religious education**

98. Attainment in religious education is in line with the standards expected in the Locally Agreed Syllabus. The organisation of the timetable permitted only a limited number of lessons to be observed during the inspection. However, a scrutiny of pupils' work, observation of assemblies and discussions with pupils and teachers indicate that pupils of all abilities make sound progress throughout the school. The school has maintained the standards reported in the last inspection.
99. By the time they are aged eleven, most pupils have firm knowledge of the laws, traditions and major festivals in relation to Christianity, Sikhism, Hinduism and Buddhism. They know the origins and founders of each religion and recognise the differences and similarities between them. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 visit Auckland Church and Durham Cathedral and gain a full understanding of the names and significance of various places and symbols which they find there. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 go on to examine the different rules which govern the lives of men and women in Islamic culture and to make comparisons between customs across a range of religions. In the course of assemblies and in some lessons the school provides regular opportunities for pupils to examine the fundamental issues which are common to all religions and cultures. Consequently, they write about or discuss their own knowledge and beliefs on issues ranging from relationships and responsibilities to more abstract concepts, including creation. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress as they are given specific support to carry out their tasks.
100. Pupils have very good attitudes and behave well in lessons. They enjoy hearing about the customs associated with different religions and demonstrate tolerance and appreciation of the beliefs of others. On a very small minority of occasions they lose interest when teachers do not involve them directly in question and answer sessions. In classroom discussions they have a responsible attitude to the issues which are raised and listen appreciatively to the views of others. They respond sensitively when given the opportunity to put themselves in the place of characters in religious stories. Pupils in a Year 4 lesson seen, for example, showed clear empathy with the plight of Blind Bartimaeus in the New Testament story.

101. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. All teachers follow the scheme of work closely and plan effectively to ensure continuity and progress. Teachers place appropriate emphasis on enabling pupils to examine and explain their feelings and beliefs orally or in writing. This is achieved by skilfully managed question and answer sessions at the beginning of lessons where teachers handle responses sensitively and encourage pupils to expand on their answers. To this extent, teaching makes a positive contribution to pupils' spiritual and moral development and to their progress in literacy. Teaching is occasionally less effective when there is too much emphasis on the acquisition of knowledge and too little time is devoted to self-examination. Teachers organise visits to Christian places of worship to expand pupils' knowledge and these have a positive impact on attainment. However, there are too few opportunities for them to gain first-hand experience of non-Christian religions, either through visits to places of interest or by inviting representatives of other religions into school. There are insufficient artefacts and visual aids to enhance the impact of teaching for all the programmes of study. An effective system for assessment is in place and an up-to-date portfolio of moderated samples of work is maintained.

## **Other subjects or courses**

### **Art**

102. Since the last inspection, the subject coordinator has successfully implemented a scheme of work for art. The standards achieved are above national expectations and this reflects good improvement since the last inspection. Only a limited amount of direct teaching was observed. However, a careful scrutiny of sketchbooks and finished work, and discussion with staff and pupils, indicate that pupils of all abilities make good progress throughout the school.
103. From the beginning of the key stage onwards, pupils explore the use of a range of different techniques and media for two- and three-dimensional work. Pupils in Year 3, for example, used their skill in blending colours to produce attractive landscapes with pastels and cut paper to support their work on ancient Egypt. Pupils in Year 3 make three-dimensional objects effectively, such as jewellery using clay or pasted paper, linked with their study of Egypt. In Year 4 they are given opportunities to further explore the use of colour to achieve the tone and texture they require for their pictures. Most pupils have good control of pencils, crayons, brushes and paint and regularly put this to good use. Some of the portraits of people from Tudor times by pupils in Year 5, for example, were of very good quality. They demonstrated very well developed techniques in the use of line and shade to obtain an accurate likeness. Pupils in Year 6 introduce subtlety and atmosphere into their work. They use water colours and ink skilfully. Pupils throughout the school are given opportunities to appreciate the work of famous artists and emulate the techniques which they use. The good progress which they make is reflected in the attractive displays of their work in a wide range of media including collage and paper sculpture. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is good as they are confident in the practical aspects of the subject. Standards of literacy are well supported in art, as the content of the work is closely linked to other subject areas. For example, in Year 6, pupils use their understanding derived from drawing figures from the Second World War to develop empathy in their poetry writing.

104. Pupils have very good attitudes to the subject. They take great pride in their finished work, and their sketchbooks reflect a determination to master new techniques. They are prepared to evaluate the quality of their work and strive to make improvements. In a Year 6 lesson seen, they explained the strengths and weaknesses in their own work. They listened appreciatively to others' evaluation of their work and applauded their success.
105. The quality of teaching is good and there has been good improvement since the last inspection. Teachers make very good use of the scheme of work to ensure good continuity and progress throughout the school. They enable pupils to accumulate skills using a wide range of media in accordance with National Curriculum guidelines. They have high expectations of performance, which are mirrored in the quality of work which is produced. Very effective use is made of sketchbooks to ensure that pupils systematically develop the techniques required for a particular purpose and this has a positive impact on standards. Teachers occasionally use information technology in lessons. For example, pupils in Year 6 used a digital camera to take photographs of each other to use in portrait work. However, too little planned use is made of computers to improve skills. Teaching places appropriate emphasis on the work of famous artists to foster appreciation and promote good standards. To this extent the subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual and cultural development. However, the work of celebrated non-European artists is not adequately represented. The school provides good opportunities for pupils to appreciate and view the work of local artists. There are very strong links with other subjects and the good progress which they make in art is clearly reflected in most subjects on the curriculum.

### **Design and technology**

106. Pupils reach similar standards to those expected nationally for their ages, although standards are higher in making artefacts than in understanding the design process.
107. Pupils make satisfactory progress during Key Stage 2. Pupils in Year 3 make attractive pyramids from construction kits and card as part of their history topic on Egyptian life and customs. They design and make a toy maze, cutting and jointing successfully. Pupils in Year 4 gain a good understanding of the need for Greek chariots to be strong, making a wooden frame with good quality joints. In comparing ancient and modern Greece, they have tasted olives whilst considering Greek foods. Pupils in Year 5 make satisfactory gains in understanding the function of cams in moving toys by examining finished products and making samples of simple cams. The work with visiting engineers who set challenges involving structures gives these pupils opportunities to develop problem solving skills. A scrutiny of work shows that pupils in Year 6 have made satisfactory progress in designing and making artefacts and in examining the strength of curved metallic structures in bridges and towers. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is good as they are given appropriate support. Pupils improve their skills of measuring and of using tools across the key stage. Standards in literacy are good and pupils write confidently about their work.
108. Pupils enjoy design technology. They generate good ideas, making plenty of suggestions for alternative ways of doing things, such as further strengthening structures. They gain a good sense of purpose, working very well in pairs, enjoying good relationships with adults and sustaining concentration because of good support. They are very motivated by the tasks. They take care in construction and show a pride



in their achievements. The oldest pupils recognise that efforts made to develop skills improve the quality of their work. They take full responsibility for working safely with tools and clearing away equipment.

109. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Teachers have sound subject knowledge, but the emphasis on the design process is not sufficiently strong. Teachers use discussion techniques effectively to help pupils think about the purpose for which structures are made. Teachers have appropriate expectations for pupils working independently. They organise collaborative work well in some classes. Teachers use artefacts to help pupils understand the task and purpose. For example, pupils in Year 4 were given a good sense of what they were aiming for by examining a model made by a previous group of pupils. Teachers plan effectively and this is beginning to ensure that pupils make better progress over time. Good links with history in Years 3 and 4 motivate pupils. Effective links with science in Year 6 encourage pupils to apply their knowledge of electricity, thereby improving their understanding of scientific principles. However, opportunities are missed to include information technology and numeracy within lessons. Teachers do not yet assess pupils' progress. Consequently, some more able pupils in Year 5 find the practical task too simple. Time and resources are used well to give pupils sufficient inspiration for their own work. Homework is used well to help pupils see the relevance of improving skills by bringing in good quality commercial toys from home.

## **Geography**

110. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is above expectations for eleven year olds as all pupils have a good understanding of geographical knowledge. This is an improvement from the previous inspection. All pupils understand the formation of waterfalls, having reinforced their understanding during a visit to High Force. Pupils use examples of the features they observed on this visit to define the term "erosion" correctly. They use vocabulary correctly when identifying physical features and they have a good understanding of physical geography. For example, they investigate the effects of latitude and longitude and locate key cities and capitals of the world. They understand the effects of pollution, including acid rain, spreading deserts, and shrinking rainforests.
111. Progress is consistently good throughout the school as teachers provide regular opportunities to develop skills and knowledge. In Year 3, pupils develop a good understanding of the differences in locations. For example, they identify several differences between Egypt and England and understand the contrasts in these climates. In Year 4, pupils develop a good understanding of varying locations and offer explanations for their judgements. For example, they identify locations within the vicinity, in the north east, in England and the rest of the world. In Year 5, pupils develop an understanding of deserts and explain key features and reasons for their physical features. Throughout the school, pupils relate their understanding of geography very effectively to history, as all teachers make effective links between the two subjects. Progress made by pupils with special educational needs is good, as they receive very good support from teachers. For example, in Year 4 these pupils were given extra support in reading the locations they were required to place in the different categories. Standards in numeracy and literacy are good.
112. Pupils have very good attitudes to geography. They enjoy discussing their work with each other and show confidence when presenting their work to the rest of the class. Personal development is very good, as they identify the geographical features of their

own location. Pupils are keen to take responsibility for organising resources. They treat the artefacts and equipment with respect. They negotiate well when collaborating in different tasks. For example, two pupils worked out a system to locate both their grannies in different categories in their location charts. Behaviour is very good. Pupils expect to listen carefully to teachers' instructions and to move quickly to their tasks.

113. Teaching is good. Teachers use resources very effectively to motivate pupils. For example, pupils were fascinated when a teacher brought in a range of her clothes in a suitcase to decide which would be suitable to pack for a visit to Egypt. Teachers plan interesting tasks that are based on pupils' own experiences. For example, in Year 4, pupils were provided with concentric circles to identify varying locations. Teachers develop numeracy well in this subject as they plan different tasks effectively. For example, in Year 3, pupils produce bar charts to compare the temperature differences between Egypt and England. Visits are used very effectively to reinforce learning. For example, in Year 6, pupils visited two different waterfalls to establish the differences and similarities between them. Teachers have good subject knowledge as they are well supported by the co-ordinator, who keeps them abreast of changing requirements. Expectations are high both in terms of the standards achieved and of the work rate in lessons. In Year 6 the pace of lessons is very fast. Pupils are expected to complete several different tasks within each lesson. Planning is thorough and carefully based on the well organised modules of work. However, opportunities are missed to include information technology and numeracy regularly in lessons. Teachers manage the pupils very well and all use the school sanctions and rewards systems very effectively.

## History

114. By the end of Key Stage 2 attainment in history is above expectations for eleven year olds. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. There is a carefully constructed yearly and termly programme of work which ensures the consistent development of skills and knowledge throughout the school. By the end of Year 6, pupils have a very good understanding of Britain since the 1930s. They have an excellent understanding of the Blitz and its affect on human lives. For example, all pupils performed in an outstanding drama portraying the emotions and outcomes of this aspect of the war. All pupils have good research skills and combine and select information from a range of sources. For example, they use books and articles to find out about evacuation, women's changing work patterns or the transport used in war. All pupils have a good understanding of changes across historical periods.
115. Progress is good throughout the school in each year group as teachers combine history and geography very effectively to maximise the use of time. In Year 3, pupils make good progress in learning about the Egyptians. They have a very good understanding of the rituals associated with the pharaohs, as their visit to the Gulbenkian Museum had a powerful effect on their learning. For example, pupils all gave graphic examples of how the brains were removed prior to burial. In Year 4, pupils develop a good understanding of Ancient Greeks. They identify different ways in which the past is represented. For example, they contrast ancient and modern designs of Greek pottery and link them with differences in values and purposes. In Year 5, pupils develop their knowledge of Tudor times. They develop skills of analysing artefacts to establish their role in the past. In Year 6, pupils use the experiences and knowledge of their previous learning effectively in contrasting different periods and societies. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is good, as they are well supported by adults other than

teachers and are given tasks that are well matched to their attainment. Standards of literacy are good throughout the school.

116. Attitudes to history are very good. Pupils are keen to investigate new areas of knowledge. They all expect to complete the tasks set in lessons. Personal development is excellent, as pupils develop skills of empathy across different historical situations. For example, the ethos engendered by the combined Year 6 classes during the drama based on the Blitz was outstanding. All pupils co-operate well with each other when researching historical sources. They are confident when reporting their findings to the whole class. Pupils are keen to take responsibility for organising resources. Pupils enjoy investigating the high quality displays in the main corridor. They treat the artefacts with respect. Behaviour is very good.
117. Teaching is very good overall and never less than good. Teachers' use of resources is very good. They all use a range of good quality artefacts to stimulate pupils' curiosity. For example, in Year 5, pupils used a range of reproductions of artefacts from the Mary Rose. They all produce good quality displays to support the pupils' learning. For example, in Year 4, teachers displayed examples of Greek pots to identify the activities of the period. Visits are used very effectively to engender an awareness of the main characteristics of periods in history. For example, pupils remembered in detail the fear and the smells of their visit to Eden Camp. Teachers miss opportunities to include the use of information technology and numeracy regularly in lessons. Teachers combine different strategies effectively to support learning. For example, in Year 3, pupils took part in a role play, analysed a data source, recorded a hierarchy of Egyptian society and then returned to the role play. Teachers all have good subject knowledge which leads to focused questioning. Expectations are high both in terms of the amount of work covered and the standards reached by all pupils. Planning is very good as teachers use previous experiences skilfully to extend pupils' learning. Teachers base their planning carefully on the termly planning which has been well matched by the co-ordinator to the new schemes of work. Teachers develop literacy very effectively through history, as they use the historical context as the stimulation for writing. For example, in Year 6, pupils composed high quality poems based on the Second World War. Behaviour management is very good. Teachers motivate pupils very effectively to ensure a high level of concentration. Lessons proceed at a brisk pace. Teachers give focused feedback to target future developments. For example, in Year 6 the teacher identified the way forward when pupils had completed their presentation to the whole class.

## **Music**

118. By the end of Key Stage 2, attainment in music is in line with national expectations. The school has maintained the sound standards reported in the last inspection. There were only limited opportunities during the inspection to observe the development of pupils' listening, appraising and performance skills in class. However, a scrutiny of the teachers' plans, discussions with pupils and observation of singing and playing in assemblies indicate that they make sound progress overall.
119. Pupils make a good beginning in Year 3. They master the fingering techniques to obtain clear notes on the recorder and play simple tunes and rhythm patterns with confidence. Pupils in Year 4 begin to recognise and use simple notation. They use their knowledge of rhythm to tap out and echo the beat of tunes played to them. Older pupils in Years 5 and 6 use graphic notation for composing their own pieces, either individually or in

groups, and perform as an ensemble using percussion instruments. They are given opportunities to listen with understanding to a range of music from different cultures and to appraise its mood and quality. By the time they are aged eleven, most pupils know and sing a good repertoire of songs and hymns with clarity. They control breathing well and follow directions carefully from a conductor. Some higher attaining pupils, particularly those in the school choir, are competent performers and lead the singing well in assemblies. The choir has enjoyed success in competitive festivals in recent years. A minority are less confident and this restricts the strength and quality of their singing. The good progress which pupils make in Year 3 in the use of pitched instruments is not continued as successfully in the years which follow. Those who attend recorder club continue to progress well, but there are too few opportunities for pupils to play instrumental melodies in class lessons. Standards in literacy are good and allow pupils to read the words fluently when they are singing. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is good, as they are given specific support from teachers.

120. Pupils' attitudes to performing and their behaviour in lessons and assemblies are very good. They follow instructions carefully and listen respectfully when others are performing. They appreciate guidance and tuition when it is given and respond enthusiastically to lively activities which test their sense of rhythm.
121. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. In recent years a member of staff who is a music specialist has carried out teaching in many classes. This arrangement has now changed and many teachers have only recently begun to deliver the curriculum to their own pupils. They plan conscientiously and devote appropriate time to the teaching of music. They provide a range of activities designed to improve pupils' musical skills, knowledge and understanding. However, many lack sufficient subject knowledge and confidence. They place too little emphasis on the playing of instruments. Some teachers have begun to incorporate the use of information technology in lessons, but this practice is not yet widespread. There is no system for assessing the quality of pupils' work or for enabling the coordinator to monitor teaching. There are plans in place to introduce a new scheme of work which will give greater support and guidance to less confident members of staff. Teachers use music effectively to develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They ensure that singing and playing are carried out regularly in whole-school assemblies, which fosters a sense of community and team spirit. They provide opportunities to develop self-discipline through music. For example, pupils are supported in singing in two parts and maintaining their own tune. Teachers provide good opportunities to listen to compositions and to learn songs from around the world, which effectively develops their appreciation of the aesthetic qualities in music.

## **Physical education**

122. Attainment by the end of Key Stage 2 is in line with national expectations. Progress throughout the school is satisfactory. There is good progress in gymnastics as the standards achieved in the two extra-curricular gymnastics clubs have a positive impact on standards in lessons. In Year 6, pupils develop appropriate skills in games. They develop dodging and marking techniques and the skills of handling different types of balls. For example, in rugby they learn to pass the ball accurately at speed within a small team context. They understand the rules of different games and use them correctly within team contexts. In Year 5 in gymnastics all pupils develop sequences of movements containing balanced shapes. They understand the difference between

symmetrical and asymmetrical shapes and combine them interestingly and effectively. A third of the pupils achieve standards above expectations for their age. They produce a wide range of balances with a high level of performance. For example, they ensure that each part of their body is fully extended in shoulder stands and bridge balances. These high attaining pupils achieve smoothly connected sequences. They plan a series of contrasting movements to ensure a variety within the sequence. In Year 4, pupils develop games skills and increase their accuracy and speed in throwing and catching different sized balls. They learn to work in small teams to achieve a goal. For example, they meet targets for improving the speed of their passes in groups of three. They develop their dodging and marking skills as they receive regular opportunities to practise them. In Year 3, pupils extend their skills of responding to music through movement. They produce sequences to create simple narratives using contrasting speeds and shapes in response to music. For example, they create a sequence of tightly curled shapes with probing jerking movements, and the school hall is transformed into a cluster of baby dinosaurs breaking out of their eggs. High attaining pupils create an impressive range of contrasting movements that represent the nervousness of emerging into the world for the first time. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress as they are given individual guidance when they are carrying out their tasks.

123. Pupils' attitudes to physical education are very good. The oldest pupils work very maturely within the competitive context of a team game. They have a determination to win, but do not ignore the importance of fair play and show no resentment when they lose. The youngest pupils show sensitivity when responding to music. All pupils work hard to improve their levels of skill across the different aspects of the subject. They listen carefully to instructions. Personal development is very good as pupils are required to work co-operatively across a range of different activities. Boys and girls work comfortably together. Behaviour is very good. Pupils move sensibly between their classrooms and the hall or the playground. They show very good levels of responsibility when they get changed or when they hold the doors open for each other.
124. Teaching is good, with a small proportion of very good teaching. Planning is detailed and follows the termly planning conscientiously. Teachers ensure equal coverage across parallel year groups as they plan together on a weekly basis. Teachers all manage behaviour very well and use the school behaviour system effectively. This leads to a good level of concentration across the lessons. Features of the very good teaching are a very fast pace with clearly sequenced tasks to ensure the smooth progression of skills. In the very good teaching there are high expectations, with pupils being regularly reminded that they need to look like gymnasts. This leads to pupils considering their performance from their first movement to their finished stance. All teachers give good quality feedback to individual pupils and identify targets for improving their work. Teachers use resources effectively. For example, in Year 3 both teachers used charts of dinosaurs and models effectively to stimulate the pupils' imagination. In rugby the use of detachable tags simulates the technique of tackling well. There is a very good range of extra-curricular activities available for all pupils. This has a positive impact on lessons as all pupils strive to match the additional skills supported during the clubs. The school makes good use of visitors to enrich the curriculum. For example, qualified coaches work in the school to teach short tennis and rugby. The school takes part in a good range of local competitions which extend both the skill level of pupils and their social development. The school provides a very good balance across the different aspects of the curriculum. However, as there is only one session each week for physical education, there are gaps of time between the

development of each area, which leads to a reduction in some skill levels. Teachers use assessment effectively to monitor progress across the different aspects of the subject.

125. The inspection of the school included a focused view of swimming, which is reported below. Attainment in swimming is above national expectations for the pupils' age by the end of Key Stage 2. The majority of pupils attain the minimum distance of 25 metres. Nearly one fifth of the pupils achieve bronze and silver life-saving awards as well as long distance awards. These high attaining pupils take part successfully in annual swimming galas against local schools.
126. The quality of teaching is very good. The instructor has very good subject knowledge which ensures the correct use of demonstrations. She has very good management strategies and links well with the school's own behaviour management systems. She gives detailed feedback to each pupil and sets targets for improvement. She makes interesting resources to motivate the pupils. For example, she made submersible fish to encourage the pupils to surface dive to retrieve them. She sets a fast pace to lessons and ensures very good progress in developing confidence, as she uses interesting activities. For example, the non-swimmers sang different rhymes and ducked under the water in time with the words. This also developed their literacy and music skills effectively. Planning is well structured. Each term is devoted to developing skills in one of the main swimming strokes.
127. The school begins the teaching as soon as the pupils arrive in the school in Year 3. This strategy ensures that pupils have the maximum time to achieve the standards required. The current Year 6 pupils have benefited from one and a half years of swimming, which has had a significant positive impact on current standards. However, changes to the funding of transport have cut the provision by two thirds. Assessment systems are thorough, with both the instructor and the class teachers involved. There are several different certificates to celebrate achievement, which the pupils value. The instructor has devised effective additional certificates between the local education authority levels. This ensures that all progress is rewarded and motivates the non-swimmers. The records of assessment are sent to the secondary schools to ensure continuity of progress.

## 132. **PART C: INSPECTION DATA**

### 132. **Summary of inspection evidence**

128. This inspection was carried out by a team of four inspectors, including a lay inspector, and took place over a period of four days in the week beginning 1 November 1999. The main evidence considered by the inspection team for the report was gathered from:

- .67 lessons or parts of lessons covering all classes in Key Stage 2, including pupils identified as having special educational needs;
- .aspects of acts of worship and a range of other activities;
- .listening to three pupils read from all classes;
- .the literacy and numeracy strategy for all classes;
- .two swimming lessons at a local school and a discussion with the swimming instructress;
- .a range of previous and current samples of pupils' work from each year group;
- .discussions with pupils about their work;
- .discussions with the headteacher, staff, governors, parents and the link teacher with the secondary school;
- .a scrutiny of a full range of documentation, including the school development plan, policy documents, schemes of work and other associated school documentation;
- .an examination of attendance records, budget statements, teachers' planning, records of pupils' attainments and reports to parents;
- .a meeting held by the registered inspector and attended by four parents shortly before the inspection.
- .The team also considered the responses that parents made in 108 questionnaires.

- **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
Y3 – Y6	251	8	76	0

- **Teachers and classes**

- **Qualified teachers (Y3 – Y6)**

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):	10.1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher:	27.8

- **Education support staff (Y3 – Y6)**

Total number of education support staff:	5
Total aggregate hours worked each week:	70

Average class size:	31.3
---------------------	------

- **Financial data**

Financial year:	1998/1999
	£
Total Income	349071
Total Expenditure	345486
Expenditure per pupil	1350
Balance brought forward from previous year	35028
Balance carried forward to next year	38613



## PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out: 251  
 Number of questionnaires returned: 108

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	38	56	3	3	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	51	43	1	5	0
The school handles complaints from parents well	21	58	15	5	1
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	24	63	10	3	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	34	55	8	3	0
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	43	54	1	1	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	35	56	8	1	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	29	60	5	6	0
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	39	56	2	2	1
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	36	58	3	2	1
My child(ren) like(s) school	38	59	1	1	1