

INSPECTION REPORT

Crook Primary School
Crook

LEA area: Durham

Unique Reference Number: 114056

Headteacher: Mrs Antonella Lupton

Reporting inspector: Mr Michael Barrand
17322

Dates of inspection: 8 – 11 November 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 707241

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior School
Type of control:	County
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Cllr. Bob Pendlebury
Date of previous inspection:	11 – 15 October 1993

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mike Barrand, Rgl	Science Physical education	Attainment and progress Attitudes, behaviour and personal development
Bill Walker, Lay Inspector	Equal opportunities	Attendance Support, guidance and pupils' welfare Partnership with parents and the community Efficiency of the school
Sue Chesters	Special educational needs English as a second language Information and control Technology	Leadership and management
Mary Farman	Music Under-fives Mathematics	Curriculum and assessment
Val Roberts	Design and technology Religious education History	Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development Staffing, accommodation and learning resources
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What the school does well

- new headteacher making positive impact on school improvement
- high percentage of good and very good teaching
- very good procedures for monitoring discipline and good behaviour
- very positive links with the community
- good provision for pupils with special educational needs

Where the school has weaknesses

- I. comparatively low standards in English and science and in mathematics at Key Stage 2
- II. does not make sufficient use of national information about pupils' attainment
- III. governors do not adequately exercise their statutory responsibilities

The school has a number of strengths, which outweigh its weaknesses. However, the weaknesses, of which the school is aware, are important ones and will form the basis of the governors' action plan that the school will send to all parents or guardians of pupils at the school.

How the school has improved since the last inspection

The school has improved since 1993, when it was put into special measures. It addressed all the issues raised then and moved forward. The school was taken out of special measures after a further inspection in 1995. However, some time after this but prior to the appointment of the new headteacher in April 1999 there was a period when the school lost some of its momentum for improvement. For example, in 1998, in the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 and in behaviour, there was some decline. However, it is now again a continually improving school. The school has addressed the issues from the 1995 inspection by implementing, for example, full assessment procedures and new and effective schemes of work for all subjects. There is a good monitoring system in place to evaluate the success of teaching and learning. The headteacher has the clear intention and skills to make the many good procedures and policies effective and is well supported in this by an enthusiastic and competent teaching force. Several of these initiatives are already secure and have a positive impact on school life, such as those recently introduced for curriculum planning and behaviour. The school also has reorganised pupils into ability groups for literacy and numeracy lessons and this is having a positive impact on standards. Overall, there is in the school a good climate for improvement, particularly in raising standards.

Standards in subjects

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

Key Stage 2 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	E	E
Mathematics	E	E
Science	E	E
All subjects	E	E

--

Children's overall attainment on entry is well below what is expected of children rising five years of age. In 1999, in the national tests and tasks at the end of Key Stage 1, the percentage of pupils reaching Level 2¹ or above in reading and writing was below the national average but the percentage reaching the expected level in mathematics was close to the national average. In the same tests at the end of Key Stage 2, the percentage of pupils reaching the expected Level 4 or above was well below the national average in English and science. It was below in mathematics. However, the school has a very high number of pupils on the special educational needs register and this has a very negative impact on the overall standards from year to year. In 1999 there were more boys than girls in the school. This was unusual since in most years numbers are comparable. The difference was most marked at the end of Key Stage 1 and had some bearing on the results in that year.

The inspection evidence confirms a similar position for this academic year in respect of the percentage of pupils achieving the nationally expected levels. The high percentage of pupils with special educational needs, especially at the end of Key Stage 2, adversely affects the picture, even though these pupils make good progress and the provision is good. At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment is below national expectations in reading, writing and science and in mathematics it is in line with expected national levels. At the end of Key Stage 2 the number of pupils attaining the expected Level 4 is below the national average in English, mathematics and science, although a majority of pupils do reach the standards. There is evidence that the recently introduced initiatives such as grouping pupils according to ability in literacy and numeracy lessons, a more focused curriculum and consistently good teaching are having a beneficial affect on levels of attainment, particularly at Key Stage 2. Standards in information and communication technology are in line with national expectations at both key stages. Standards in religious education at the end of both key stages are in line with those in the Locally Agreed Syllabus.

Standards, particularly at the end of Key Stage 2, are of concern but, allowing for the increasingly high number of pupils on the special educational needs register, the school is, nevertheless, well placed to make and maintain improvements in this position.

- **Quality of teaching**

¹ **ON LEVELS**

By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils are expected to attain Level 2 in all National Curriculum subjects. Those who achieve Level 3 are therefore attaining above nationally expected levels. It is a national expectation that all pupils should reach Level 4 by the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils who reach Level 5 are therefore attaining above the nationally expected level for their age.

Teaching in	Under 5	5 – 7 years	7 – 11 years
English	very good	good	good
Mathematics	very good	good	good
Science	very good	good	good
Information technology		good	good
Religious education		satisfactory	good
Other subjects		satisfactory	good

The quality of teaching throughout the school is never less than satisfactory. In approximately 70 per cent of lessons seen, it is good or better. The quality of the teaching of children under five is particularly good. There were very good lessons at Key Stage 1 in design and technology, physical education and music and at Key Stage 2 in most subjects of the National Curriculum, particularly mathematics.

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	The behaviour of most pupils is good but a significant minority of pupils frequently behave poorly, despite the very good efforts of all teachers.
Attendance	The percentage is slightly below the national average but the school has effective procedures to encourage good attendance and punctuality.
Ethos*	There is a caring, dedicated environment in which everyone is valued, based on pupils reaching a good level of self-discipline and striving to achieve consistently good standards.
Leadership and management	The headteacher provides very good leadership, with the valued support of a hardworking staff. The governing body is supportive but insufficiently involved in the management of the school.
Curriculum	The school provides pupils with a broadly based and well balanced curriculum and successfully implements the national literacy and numeracy strategies.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	Good overall. Pupils have regular opportunities for reflection in daily worship and value the variety of experiences in art, music and science. The school encourages good social and moral behaviour through planned programmes and clear discipline procedures.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	The increased expertise of the staff and the use of the very good accommodation make a significant contribution to the learning opportunities for all pupils.
Value for money	The school provides satisfactory value for money.

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

The parents' views of the school

What most parents like about the school
iv. They feel encouraged to become

What some parents are not happy about
XIII. The school does not always handle

- v. The school is approachable when they have problems.
 - vi. The teachers provide good role models.
 - vii. They are well informed about what is taught.
 - viii. The school encourages a good standard of work.
 - ix. Their children have opportunities to be involved in more than their daily lessons.
 - x. They are happy with the new homework policy.
 - xi. The school establishes positive values and attitudes.
 - xii. Their children like school.
- involved in the life of the school.
- XIV.They are not well informed about their
- XV.The standards of behaviour are

The inspectors:

- xvi. found evidence to support the positive view of the parents;
- xvii. consider that there is scope to improve the quality of information provided about pupils' attainment and progress;
- xviii. agree that the behaviour of a few pupils is sometimes unacceptable;
- xix. do not have concerns about the way in which the school handles complaints.

Key issues for action

In order to improve the quality of education provided, the headteacher, staff and governors should work together to raise standards, especially at Key Stage 2, by:

- 1. developing the use of national and local information about the attainment of pupils in order to support more fully curriculum planning in English, mathematics and science;**
(paragraphs: 27, 32, 37, 46, 50, 52, 57, 108, 114, 120, 122, 125, 135, 173)
- 2. encouraging the governing body to exercise more rigorously its responsibilities as a critical friend of the school.**
(paragraphs: 66, 69, 72, 82, 84)

In addition to the key issues, the following related areas should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

- 1 extending the expertise of the deputy head and senior teacher, through planned training and target-setting, to develop their roles as members of the Senior Management Team;
(paragraphs: 69, 70)
- 2 monitoring planning further to ensure that all pupils consistently have suitably challenging tasks set for them in lessons;

(paragraphs: 50, 52,57)

3 reviewing the schools aims;
(paragraph: 74)

4 evaluating the management of the teaching of reading;
(paragraphs: 17, 101-102, 121)

5 improving resources in information technology;
(paragraphs: 25, 34, 81, 131)

6 regularly reviewing the effectiveness of the behaviour policy;
(paragraphs: 24, 36, 60, 116, 134, 163, 172)

7 developing across the curriculum the opportunities that already exist in some subjects for pupils' independent research and investigation;
(paragraphs: 52, 122)

8 reviewing the annual report to parents;
(paragraph: 66)

9 developing the use of the library.
(paragraphs: 79, 81)

9 Introduction

1. The school is at the threshold of an era of positive development after a very recent period of standing still. The skills of the newly-appointed headteacher and the level of good quality teaching are the principle strengths in an energetic school, which is now making a determined effort once more to raise standards to acceptable levels.

2. The last full inspection of the school was in October 1993. As a result of this inspection, the school was put into special measures because it was failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education. The school was again inspected in July 1995 by Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools (HMI) to check the progress being made. The opinion of HMI was that the school no longer failed to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education. The school was taken out of special measures.

3. The current inspection took as its basis the full inspection report of 1993 and gave consideration to

the report of 1995 as necessary, thus giving an assessment of the school's progress over a six-year period.

3. Characteristics of the school

4. The school is situated in the centre of the town of Crook in County Durham. It was part of the Crook South ward in April 1991 when the most recent census of population took place. The majority of pupils live in the immediate area of the school in a mixture of housing types. The local community is a stable one with many generations of the same family living in the town. There is also a dormitory population. Employment in the area is varied with unemployment at slightly above the national average. The area receives external funding in the form of a Single Regeneration Budget. In January 1998, the school was bigger than other primary schools with 386 pupils (199 boys and 187 girls) on roll, compared with the average size nationally of 242 pupils). In September 1999, the number of pupils on roll was 336 (169 boys and 169 girls). Numbers are down for this year but are due to rise again.
5. The school admits children into the reception class in the September of the year in which they are five years of age and there are at present 25 children in the school who are under five. The majority of children have low levels of attainment when they enter the reception class but they make good progress. Nevertheless, by the time they enter the National Curriculum at the age of five, standards are still below national expectations for many children.
6. In January 1998, the percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs (19.4 per cent) was broadly in line with the national average and the percentage (2.6 per cent) of pupils with statements of special educational needs was above the national average. The percentage (0.6 per cent) of pupils with English as an additional language was lower than in most schools. The percentage (27.5 per cent) of pupils eligible for free school meals was above the national average.
7. In January 1999, the year of the school's summer results of the national tests and tasks shown in this report, there were 28.4 per cent of pupils with special educational needs, with 2.1 per cent of pupils with statements of special educational needs. The percentage of pupils with English as an additional language was 0.5 per cent and the percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals was 27.8 per cent. A further point is that in January 1999 there were 195 boys and 178 girls in the school. This is unusual

since in most years the numbers of boys and girls in the school are very similar.

8. In the current academic year, the number of pupils on the register of special educational needs is 117 (35.6 per cent), including eight (2.4 per cent) pupils with statements. There are four (1.2 per cent) pupils with English as an additional language. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is 26 per cent.
9. Thus, whilst the percentages of pupils with free school meals, with statements of special educational needs and with English as an additional language have remained more or less similar year by year, the number of pupils in the school identified as having special educational needs is clearly rising.
10. The school has detailed aims but principally it aims to give children access to a broad and balanced curriculum that seeks to:
 - build upon the experiences children bring from home and pre-school education;
 - help children acquire knowledge, skills and concepts relevant to their life now and in the future;
 - help children to understand the world in which they live and the interdependence of individuals, groups and nations.
1. The school has identified priorities and targets for the year 1999/2000. It met most of its target for the previous academic year. It has established new priorities in addition to completing earlier targets. The school has agreed with the local education authority suitable attainment targets at the end of both key stages for the next three years.

11. Key indicators

Attainment at Key Stage 1²

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1

for latest reporting year:

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	34	26	60

11. National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	22	24	30
	Girls	23	23	23
	Total	45	47	53
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	75(75)	78(78)	88(93)
	National	82(80)	83(81)	87(85)

11. Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	18	24	18
	Girls	21	23	20
	Total	39	47	38
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	65(71)	78(84)	63(96)
	National	82(81)	86(85)	87(86)

Attainment at Key Stage 2²

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2

for latest reporting year:

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	31	28	59

11. National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	18	22	20
	Girls	12	13	16
	Total	30	35	36
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	51(45)	59(60)	61(40)
	National	70(65)	69(58)	78(69)

11. Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	12	15	14
	Girls	8	9	8
	Total	20	24	22
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	34(59)	41(57)	37(52)
	National	68(63)	69(64)	75(69)

11.

² Percentages in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

11. **Attendance**

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year:			%
	Authorised	School	7.7
	Absence	National comparative data	5.7
	Unauthorised	School	0.0
	Absence	National comparative data	0.5

11.

11. **Exclusions**

Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age) during the previous year:		Number
	Fixed period	27
	Permanent	0

11. **Quality of teaching**

Percentage of teaching observed which is:		%
	Very good or better	23
	Satisfactory or better	100
	Less than satisfactory	0

11.

11. PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

11. Educational standards achieved by pupils at the school

11. Attainment and progress

1993 – 1995

2. At the time of the last full inspection of the school in 1993, standards were below national norms and unsatisfactory in relation to pupils' abilities at both key stages in all subjects of the National Curriculum and in religious education. The inspection findings of 1995 showed that standards had risen and, although there were still weaknesses, were sound overall in English, mathematics and science, with standards in English better at Key Stage 1 than at Key Stage 2. There were weaknesses in number skills at both key stages. The national test scores for Key Stage 1 at that time confirmed this. No comparative national data were available at that time for Key Stage 2. However, subsequent data confirmed the position. There was clear improvement in several areas

between 1993 and 1995.

1995 – 1998

3. At Key Stage 1, from 1995, an analysis of the pupils' average National Curriculum levels compared with the national picture shows a steady improvement in reading, writing and mathematics. Nevertheless, taking the three years 1996 to 1998 together, pupils' performance in reading and in writing was well below the national average. It was close to the national average in mathematics. A similar analysis at Key Stage 2 shows a less consistent picture with some improvement but latterly a sharp decline in levels of achievement in English, mathematics and science. Taking the three years 1996 to 1998 together, pupils' performance was well below the national average in English and science. It was close to the national average in mathematics
4. It is clear that, by 1998, standards were not secure in English and science by the time pupils left the school but were consistently sound

in mathematics.

1999

5. Children's overall attainment on entry to the reception class in many areas of learning is below what is expected of children rising five years of age and for some children attainment is well below. They have particularly poor language skills, which affects all areas of learning. Children under five make good progress in developing their language and number skills but by the time they are five many children are unlikely to attain the skills they require to meet the nationally agreed areas of learning expected of this age group. For the clear majority, attainment is still below the nationally expected levels in all areas of learning by the time they start the National Curriculum at Key Stage 1.

6. At the end of Key Stage 1, on the basis of the national tests/tasks (1999), the percentage (75 per cent) of seven year olds reaching the nationally expected Level 2 or above in reading was below the national average. The percentage (23 per cent)

reaching the higher Level 3 was also below the national average. In writing, 78 per cent reached the expected Level 2 or above and this was below the national average. The percentage (3 per cent) reaching the higher levels was close to the national average. In mathematics, 88 per cent of pupils achieved Level 2 or above and this was close to the national average, as was the percentage (18 per cent) reaching the higher Level 3.

7. This indicates a decline in reading from the 1998 position. The percentage of pupils achieving the higher Level 3 in writing was sustained but the number gaining the expected Level 2 fell. There was also a reduction in mathematics of the number of pupils gaining the expected Level 2 but achievement overall in mathematics was still satisfactory.

8. At the end of Key Stage 2, based on the national tests in 1998, the percentage (51 per cent) of eleven year olds attaining the expected Level 4 or above in English was well below the national average. The percentage (10 per cent) attaining the higher Level 5 was below the national average. In mathematics, the percentage (59 per cent) reaching the expected Level 4 was below the national average. The percentage (18 per cent) reaching the higher Level 5 and above

was close to the national average. In science, 61 per cent of pupils reached the expected Level 4 and above and 10 per cent reached the higher Level 5 or above. Both these percentages in science were well below the national averages.

9. This indicates little change in English, although the level of achievement of the more able pupils has risen slightly. The higher attainers also held the position in mathematics with satisfactory levels of achievement but the number of pupils gaining the expected national standard fell to an unsatisfactory level in mathematics. [J1]There was no change in the unsatisfactory levels of achievement in science compared with the national figures. The more able pupils continue to perform satisfactorily in English and mathematics.
10. In comparison with those of all pupils in all schools in 1999, the performance of the school's pupils in the tests in reading at the end of Key Stage 1 was well below the national average and in writing and mathematics it was below the national average. This was a much worse position than in the previous year but the previous year's cohort were generally regarded as more able. The school feels that the current position better reflects the overall picture

and the inspectors agree with this view. Taking into account the low levels of attainment at entry, this is understandable, although reading is currently a cause for concern. Compared with pupils from similar backgrounds, pupils at the school did satisfactorily in writing and mathematics but significantly less so in reading. At the end of Key Stage 2, the performance of the school's pupils in the three subjects tested nationally was well below the national averages in English, mathematics and science, compared with that of all pupils in all schools. In the comparison with pupils from similar backgrounds, the position was the same. This is a cause for concern.

11. Over time, there is little difference between the achievements of boys and girls at Key Stage 1. There is some under-achievement of girls at Key Stage 2. The inspection findings confirm this. Further, in 1999, there were more boys than girls in the school. In most years, numbers are very similar. This unusual difference was most marked at the end of Key Stage 1 and had some negative influence on the results in that year.
12. The inspection evidence confirms a similar position for this academic year in respect of the percentage of pupils achieving the nationally expected levels. The high percentage of pupils with special educational needs, especially at the end of Key Stage 2, depresses the picture significantly, even though these pupils make good progress and the provision is good.

At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment is below national expectations in reading, writing and science and in mathematics it is in line with expected national levels. Similarly, by the time they leave school, a majority of pupils do reach the expected levels in English, mathematics and science but the total number of pupils who do so is below the national average.

13. Several important factors have affected standards overall in recent years. Most of the negative influences currently show good signs of improvement. There were several changes in leadership at the top of the school. This situation has stabilised recently and there is now a promising outlook. The number of pupils in the school identified as having special educational needs is clearly rising but there is good provision. The poor behaviour of a small minority has returned but the school is now addressing this positively and numbers in this category are falling. The curriculum did lack consistency, structure and relevance in several areas but the school has tackled this issue well. The benefits of the national strategies in literacy and numeracy are taking effect, particularly in mathematics. The quality of teaching has improved significantly. Thus, whilst standards currently are low in most areas of English, mathematics and science, particularly at Key Stage 2, the school has a good capacity to improve on them by the time pupils leave the school

14. There is evidence that the recently introduced initiatives, such as the grouping of pupils based on ability in literacy and numeracy lessons, a more focused curriculum and consistently good teaching are having a beneficial affect on levels of

attainment, particularly at Key Stage 2. However, the bad behaviour of a small but significant number of pupils, despite the very good efforts of the staff, impedes their progress and that of the rest of the pupils in their classes.

15. Standards in information and communication technology are in line with national expectations at both key stages. The school has had a recent influx of quality resources with a planned program of usage across the curriculum but resources are still insufficient for pupils to make the most of the National Curriculum. Standards in religious education at the end of both key stages are in line with those in the Locally Agreed Syllabus.
16. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and makes a beneficial impact on overall standards, although numbers on the register of pupils with special educational needs are very high in some year groups. The provision for pupils with English as an additional

language is also good and these pupils achieve according to their level of language acquisition. The numbers are small and as such do not influence the overall standards in the school.

17. The school has agreed with the local education authority suitable long-term targets in English and mathematics for the ends of key stages. Some pupils of higher ability do not consistently achieve at an appropriate level. A contributory factor in this is that some teachers do not consistently plan challenging work for these pupils
18. Throughout the school, pupils use their developing literacy and numeracy skills suitably to support learning in other subjects. Overall, standards in literacy are below national expectations at both key stages. Standards in numeracy at Key Stage 1 are satisfactory and at Key Stage 2 they are below expectations.
19. Children under five in the reception class make good progress in their personal and social development. Most children make good progress in the

development of their language and literacy, mathematical and creative skills. They develop a sound knowledge and understanding of the world and make satisfactory progress in their physical development.

20. At both key stages, pupils make good progress in most aspects of English, mathematics, information technology, art, design and technology, music and physical education. They make satisfactory progress at both key stages in religious education and geography. Pupils make satisfactory progress at Key Stage 1 and good progress at Key Stage 2, in science and history.
21. Over time, the rate of progress for most pupils at Key Stage 1 has been good in reading writing, mathematics and science until recently, when the rate of progress has slowed, except in mathematics. At Key Stage 2, progress over time until recently, in English, mathematics and science, has been inconsistent, with some pupils making unsatisfactory progress. The current good progress in lessons at both key stages is primarily a result of good quality teaching and well-focused subject strategies.
22. Most pupils suitably practise and develop their knowledge, skills and understanding. There are clear indications that new initiatives, such as the National Literacy Strategy and the focus on

numeracy, are increasing the rates of progress over time in most subjects of the National Curriculum. The number of pupils with special educational needs in any one year group has an important influence on the overall rates of progress. Most pupils show levels of attainment in all year groups that reflect their making at least satisfactory progress from the time they entered the school. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress against targets in their individual education plans. Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress in the acquisition of language skills. A small number of pupils with high prior attainment do not consistently make good progress.

32. **Attitudes, behaviour and personal development**

23. Children under five settle quickly into the reception class. They continue to develop their social skills and confidence. The standards of behaviour are high. Children soon

understand the routines of school life and rapidly become independent and responsible. All this contributes very positively to the very good progress children make in the reception class. Children co-operate very well with adults and each other. They work well together in the classroom. The children under five develop a strong sense of concentration and share by taking turns amicably.

24. Most pupils have positive attitudes towards school and this is an improvement. They enjoy coming to school, a fact supported by parents. There is still not a consistently strong commitment from all pupils to high academic achievement. However, such a commitment is developing slowly. Most pupils try hard and want to do well. They show interest in and enthusiasm for their work. Pupils concentrate well in most lessons and persevere to finish their set tasks. The more able respond well to challenging activities, although in a few lessons they do not have sufficient opportunities to do this regularly. The vast majority of pupils are keen to follow instructions from their teachers. They take advice readily and learn from their mistakes. Pupils respond particularly well when they receive encouragement to develop their investigative skills, as a result of searching questions put to them by their teachers. Pupils are eager to join in discussions in class, asking good questions and giving sound replies. They are less confident in small groups. Pupils talk positively about school and feel that their teachers listen to what they have to say. Most have confidence; a few have too much. Pupils take a pride in their work, particularly their creative work, such as that produced in the art club. They talk well and enthusiastically about it. The standard of their written work suffers from inadequate but improving literacy skills but most try hard to present it well. Work in number is usually neat and well presented. Pupils select and use resources sensibly and with care. The clear majority of pupils are well motivated and look for ways to improve their work.

Pupils enjoy their work in information technology but become frustrated at the insufficiency of resources. Pupils with special educational needs, other than some of those with behavioural problems, have satisfactory attitudes to school. Pupils with English as an additional language have a good response to the provision made for them in the acquisition of language skills.

25. Behaviour is good overall and this is an evident improvement since the 1993 inspection.

The large majority of pupils work and play well together. The behaviour of pupils outside the classroom, in corridors, at playtimes and at lunchtimes shows less self-control, particularly when supervision is not as close. However, this is mostly boisterousness and exuberance, lacking in malice. The assertive discipline policy is applied consistently and well and most pupils respond well to it. Pupils appreciate the systems of rewards and sanctions, which mostly achieves its stated aims. Most pupils know when they have done wrong, are not afraid to own up and accept the consequences of their actions. There was no evidence of bullying or racial tension seen during the inspection and pupils feel that this is no longer a problem in the school. Their parents agree with them. Pupils and staff have mutually agreed school and classroom rules and in this way pupils feel involved, accepting that there is a way of working which is mutually beneficial. Most pupils show respect for the beliefs of others and for property. They look after their school well.

26. This said, there is a small but significant minority in every year group and particularly at the end of both key stages, that operates outside the conventional ways of acceptable behaviour. This minority is disruptive, inattentive, demanding and unco-operative. It is a matter of some concern and frustration to teachers that they have to spend excessive amounts of time managing this poor behaviour from a few pupils. The quality of teaching is such that the negative effects on the progress of other pupils are minimised but they are nevertheless evident. The majority of pupils simply ignore the bad behaviour of their colleagues and carry on with their work, although inevitably a few succumb to the temptation to join in the disruption. Most teachers employ all the best features of good quality teaching to engage all their pupils in productive learning and they also consistently apply the largely effective behaviour management policy. Support staff provide invaluable help in this area as well and further trained adult assistance in some classes would be beneficial. [J2]The school endeavours with some success to persuade all the parents of pupils with behaviour problems to be as supportive as possible. It also maintains constant vigilance and new initiatives bring renewed support. It is a credit to the professionalism and competence of the staff that they approach these difficulties with good humour and patience. There were 27 fixed period exclusions during the school year prior to the inspection. A

significant number of pupils on the special educational needs register are on it because of behavioural difficulties.

27. Most pupils respect their teachers and each other. Relationships overall are good. Pupils work well in pairs and in small groups, sharing ideas and equipment profitably. There are good levels of co-operation and most pupils help and support each other. Pupils are pleased when they do well and they enjoy their own and other pupils' successes, showing sensitivity and appreciation. Pupils listen carefully to their teachers and, for the most part, to each other. They try to carry out their teachers' requests properly and to the best of their abilities. Most pupils recognise the diversity that is in the school family and, especially the older pupils, make good use of the times given to them for reflection. Opportunities to show real initiative and leadership qualities are rather limited. Nevertheless, many pupils carry out with care and consideration the routine responsibilities given them in school, such as the various monitor duties, watering plants and carrying messages. It is mostly the pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 that receive and welcome extra responsibilities. However, the School Council, with its pupil representatives from throughout the school, is a positive initiative in this area and is gaining in stature. Pupils regard this highly. Staff and members of the business community have interviewed and appointed the prefects, who provide good role models for younger pupils. Overall, pupils speak warmly and with affection about their school, in particular about their new headteacher and all their teachers. They feel well prepared and confident about the next stage of their education and, in this perception, they are correct.

37. **Attendance**

28. The school has had a consistent level of attendance for several years but the level remains slightly below the national average. The school works hard to encourage more regular attendance but needs the co-operation of parents to be successful in this. Most pupils arrive in good time, enabling teachers to make a prompt start to the day and to lessons. Punctuality has improved following the recently introduced requirement for pupils to line up and walk into school together. There are still a few pupils who arrive late regularly but teachers manage this well so as not to disrupt the daily routines or the start of lessons. There is little unauthorised absence.
29. The education welfare officer supports effectively the school's efforts to improve the rates of attendance and punctuality and investigates thoroughly any areas of concern. The school stresses properly the responsibility of parents in ensuring that their children attend school regularly and on time. Its commitment in this regard has a positive effect on attainment and progress.

39. **Quality of education provided**

39. **Teaching**

30. In the majority of lessons throughout the school, the standard of teaching is good or better. Teaching is excellent in some one per cent of lessons and very good in 22 per cent. It is good in 46 per cent and satisfactory in 31 per cent of lessons. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed during the inspection. This represents a substantial improvement in the quality of teaching reported on in the last inspection, when only 40 per cent of teaching was judged satisfactory or better.
31. The previous inspection report stated that teachers' planning lacked detail and precision and noted their expectations of the children as low. The previous inspections found that teachers had insufficient subject knowledge in some areas, did not asking pertinent questions and did not listening carefully to what pupils had to say. Inspection findings confirm a substantial improvement in all these aspects of teaching.
32. The school has recently introduced an arrangement whereby pupils of like ability are taught together. This helps teachers to focus more sharply on the needs of the pupils. This reorganisation has a beneficial impact on the quality of teaching and offers good capacity for improvement, as teachers refine their techniques.
33. The quality of teaching for children under five is particularly good. In some 71 per cent of lessons it is very good and it is good in the remaining 29 per cent of lessons seen. The members of the Early-Years team have a clear understanding of the needs of young children. They have high expectations of the quality of work and behaviour and set challenging and interesting tasks. They work

very well together as a team in their planning and dealings with children. All members of the team place a strong emphasis on the use of good quality language. They encourage the children to work independently and to make choices in their work.

34. At Key Stage 1, the overall quality of teaching is good. It is very good or better in 12 per cent of lessons. It is good in 48 per cent of lessons and satisfactory in the remaining 40 per cent. Very good lessons were seen in design and technology, physical education and music. The teachers implement the Literacy Hour and Numeracy Strategy satisfactorily. The structure of the literacy and numeracy sessions has a positive effect on the quality of teaching and planning in these subjects. Teachers use learning resources effectively, although there are instances during literacy lessons when the text offered to pupils is too small for them to access easily and this impedes their learning. In the best lessons at Key Stage 1, planning is clear and links closely with the National Curriculum. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and performance. Teachers give the pupils clear explanations and their lesson plans have clear objectives for what pupils are to learn.
35. At Key Stage 2, the overall quality of teaching is also good. It is very good or better in 22 per cent and good in 47 per cent of lessons. The quality of teaching in 31 per cent of lessons is satisfactory. Teaching is good in English, science, religious education, music, history and information technology. The teaching of mathematics at Key Stage 2 is consistently good. The best lessons are characterised by the teachers' outstanding subject knowledge, as in a very good information technology lesson when pupils were inspired to enter quite complicated information onto a spreadsheet. Together with the teachers' obvious enthusiasm for the subject, this excited pupils' interest and made them eager to learn. Teachers match the work to the needs and abilities of groups and individuals and ask questions well to explore knowledge and to move learning forward.
36. Teachers' subject knowledge across the school is good. Throughout the school, teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. They manage the pupils well, especially the small percentage who display inappropriate behaviour. They apply the school's behaviour management

strategy consistently and to good effect. The good relationships between pupils and teachers contribute significantly to the good attitudes pupils have to their learning. Several teachers use humour effectively in their lessons and this helps to generate a happy working atmosphere, as in an outstanding mathematics lesson when the teacher made a 'mistake' in order to gain attention. Teachers make good use of learning resources and are very good at blending a wide range of teaching strategies to match the needs of the lesson. Lessons move at a challenging pace and this maintains pupils' interest. Teachers make good use of the plenary session at the end of Literacy and Numeracy lessons to reinforce effectively the pupils' learning. They use regular assessments of pupils' work to help them decide what it is appropriate to teach next. The marking of pupils'

work is constructive and teachers encourage them to use the comments to improve their work. The teachers set regular homework and, when parents co-operate, this assists the effectiveness of the teaching. A strong feature of teaching throughout the school is the consistent use of targets for learning during the lesson. Teachers share these with pupils and this adds a strong focus to the teaching. Where teaching is less successful, teachers' lesson planning lacks detail and fails to identify specific learning targets for groups of pupils of different abilities. This means that the lesson tends to lack the challenge that characterises the best teaching.

37. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. The co-ordinator is very effective and has good expertise. This reinforces the good systems in place and the liaison with staff, external agencies and parents as necessary. In their planning and teaching, teachers

make good use of the information in pupils' individual education plans. They also make good provision to develop the language skills of those pupils for whom English is an additional language.

47. **The curriculum and assessment**

38. The previous inspection report in 1993 contains a key issue about improving guidance and developing the curriculum. It also contains an issue about the need to consolidate the implementation of policies, plans, guidelines and monitoring systems. The subsequent report in 1995 contains a key issue about setting clear and tightly focused learning objectives for all lessons.

39. There is clear and helpful guidance for staff in the curriculum policies and guidelines. The curriculum co-ordinators and headteacher closely monitor curriculum plans. This enables them to give pointers for future developments. The school is successful in meeting the requirements of the second issue. There are policies, plans, guidelines and monitoring in place for all areas of the curriculum. There is very careful monitoring of work in English, mathematics and science. This is structured and systematic. It gives teachers a clear overview of progress in each of

these subjects. Each pupil has a level of attainment in all aspects of these subjects on entry to a new class. There is assessment of these levels throughout the academic year against the moderated portfolio of work. The informal monitoring system for the core subjects of religious education and information and control technology, and the foundation subjects, gives an effective picture of standards and progress. The school does not use the results of local and national assessments fully to inform its curriculum planning. The assessment co-ordinator has this as the school's next step forward in the development of its assessment procedures. For all lessons there are clear learning targets which have a suitably tight and specific focus. Improvement since the two previous inspections is therefore satisfactory.

40. The school's current curriculum provision is good. It provides a broadly based and well balanced curriculum for all pupils. It teaches all subjects of the National Curriculum. Work in religious education follows the locally agreed syllabus. The curriculum is relevant to pupils' needs and abilities, including children under five, pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language. The school identifies differing abilities within each year group and uses a system from Year 2 to Year 6, whereby pupils are taught in ability classes for English and mathematics. This has a positive impact on raising standards. However, the school does not yet routinely provide all the most able pupils with sufficiently challenging work.
41. The curriculum meets statutory requirements to teach the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. The provision for sex education is in line with the governors' policy. Sex education and drugs awareness fit naturally into science work and religious education, where there can be discussions on moral issues. The school makes good and effective use of the expertise of visitors such as the school nurse and police officers. There is good provision for pupils' personal, health and social education. The school provides a range of stimulating activities, for example using the expertise of engineers through their business links, for pupils to develop intellectually, physically and socially. The curriculum is relevant to pupils' needs, abilities and interests. There is close liaison with the receiving secondary school. This assists in preparing pupils well for their transfer at the end of Year 6.
42. Planning of the school curriculum is effective. The school sets clear targets to identify what pupils are to learn in each lesson. The targets are for the whole class. They are not specific to groups or individuals. Each pupil knows what the target is. This shows a satisfactory level of improvement since the last inspection. Curriculum guidelines and schemes of work give a solid framework in the medium term and in the long term, for building on pupils' knowledge and skills. This has a positive impact on the quality of education pupils receive. The impact of the literacy and numeracy strategies is also raising standards, particularly in mathematics. There is suitable emphasis on the investigative element of mathematics. There is close co-operation and sharing of expertise amongst teachers in their planning. This is effective in ensuring consistency in work between year groups and key stages. Opportunities for investigation feature in planning, particularly in mathematics, science, design and technology and art. However, there are fewer opportunities for pupils to develop strategies and skills for independent learning.
43. The nationally agreed Desirable Outcomes for Learning form the basis of the curriculum for children under five. The

curriculum for these young children is good. It provides full and effective coverage of the nationally agreed areas of learning. All children have full and equal access to the areas of learning. The school makes very good and effective use of Durham's baseline assessment to identify the needs of individual children. The procedures for assessing the achievements and development of children under five are very good. The teacher and nursery nurse work closely together as a team. This ensures that children learn in clear progressive steps as they move from working within the Desirable Outcomes for Learning to working at Key Stage 1 of the National Curriculum.

44. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, have equal access to and equality of, opportunity in the curriculum. The school is very effective in its implementation of the Code of Practice³ for pupils with special

³ ON SEN CODE OF PRACTICE

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.

educational needs. It has an up-to-date register of pupils with special educational needs and all members of staff understand the Code of Practice. The records of registered pupils provide accurate profiles of need. There is systematic monitoring of the progress of pupils with special educational needs. The arrangements for annual reviews are securely in place. Pupils have realistic and achievable targets in their individual education plans. The school carries out regular reviews of these plans and involves parents at all stages.

45. The school makes good provision for extra-curricular activities. It offers pupils an interesting and wide range of clubs and events. These include sporting, drama, art and music activities. Pupils from all year groups participate in the school council. The school has two concerts each year. Older pupils have residential weekends which support the development of their personal and social skills. Staff and pupils take part in an organised cycle ride around the area. Boys and girls have equal opportunities to take part in all these activities.
46. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment are good. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspections. The school has a whole-school assessment policy and is tracking pupils' progress as they move through the school, from reception to Year 6. This is successful in addressing the key issues concerning assessment in the previous reports. The school meets statutory requirements for assessing and recording. There are systematic and well-structured assessment procedures for the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. The procedures for assessment in religious education and information and control technology are effective but informal. There are informal systems in place for assessing the foundation subjects of the National Curriculum. There is regular marking of schoolwork and homework. Teachers set targets for each lesson and they mark pupils' work according to these targets. Marking is supportive and consistent and makes informative comments to reinforce and extend learning. The school makes pupils aware of their targets and their progress towards achieving them. It does not identify targets in the annual reports to parents.
47. The school uses assessment well to identify pupils who may need additional help. This identifies behaviour and learning problems as well as pupils that are more able who need work that is more difficult. All teachers do set suitably challenging work for higher

attaining pupils, based on information but there are a few inconsistencies in how regularly they do this. Although the school does not make the best use of external analysis of data, [J3]it does successfully analyse the results of standardised tests in English and mathematics to identify trends in attainment. It then takes any necessary steps to address these trends. This is evident in the successful grouping arrangements for Years 2 to 6 in English and mathematics. The school is making effective use of assessments in English, mathematics and science to improve standards. It makes satisfactory use of assessment to plan work for more able pupils who need work that is more difficult but there is an imbalance in the use of assessment. The effectiveness of using it to plan work for pupils that are more able is inconsistent. The use of assessment

to inform curriculum planning is therefore satisfactory.

57. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

48. Overall, the provision for spiritual, moral and social development is satisfactory and indications for further improvement are positive. There is clear improvement in this provision since the last inspection.
49. The school makes satisfactory provision for pupils' spiritual development and there is evidence of developing good features. Programmes for collective worship have a clear focus and engage pupils' attention through imaginative presentation by teachers and visitors. The headteacher ensures that there are planned periods of reflection within the themes for collective worship but occasionally the time allowed is insufficient. Nevertheless, it is clear that pupils are becoming accustomed to these moments and use them suitably. Pupils respond well to prayer. A moment of absolute quiet was experienced whilst pupils contemplated the miracle of the sharing of the five loaves and two fishes. Themes such as 'Remembrance Day' encourage pupils to understand feelings of loss. Some pupils successfully capture a spiritual feeling when illustrating icons in religious education. Art is valued in the school and the recently commissioned mural in the entrance of the school celebrates the spirit of the community. Pupils admire the work in progress and come to respect aspects of their community revealed by the overall picture. They are often amazed by the results of the models constructed with the help of visiting engineers. Where opportunities are provided, pupils participate with some joy in the action hymns in assembly.
50. The provision for moral development is good. Parents are more confident about their children's behaviour in school. The school makes pupils fully aware of what is acceptable behaviour and teaches the difference between right and wrong. Pupils have participated in setting up class and school rules, which are well displayed in all classrooms. Teachers have benefited from further training in assertive discipline⁴ and they reinforce the expected code of conduct consistently throughout the school. Circle time⁵ and programmes for personal and social education support pupils' moral development. Staff are consistent in their praise of and

⁴ ON ASSERTIVE DISCIPLINE

Assertive discipline has three main parts: clear, unambiguous rules, continuous positive feedback when pupils are successfully keeping to these rules and a recognised hierarchy of sanctions, which are consistently applied when rules are broken.

⁵ ON CIRCLE TIME

In these lessons, pupils sit in a circle and, through agreed rules, have the opportunity to speak and listen to each other talking about issues, which touch them all.

respect for pupils whilst operating the policy of assertive discipline. Themes in religious education explore moral issues, such as forgiveness and selfishness. Visiting clergy give these themes greater emphasis. The headteacher's daily visit at to all classes to make awards consistently reinforces these expectations. There remain a significant minority of pupils who present challenging behaviour in some classes. Members of staff work well and with some success to improve the understanding of what is acceptable behaviour but, without even more support, it is difficult to see how some of these pupils will make more rapid progress in their development in this area.

51. The provision for pupils' social development is good. School rules and prayers emphasise good social behaviour and teachers consistently remind pupils of their expectations. Pupils expect to be rewarded for positive responses and privilege time is highly valued by the majority of pupils. They value the daily awards to individual pupils and appreciate the inclusion of teachers in the exercise. Members of staff set good role models through their politeness and the way to welcome visitors. There is a good atmosphere in the playground. The range of extra-curricular opportunities, including competitive team sports, encourages pupils' social development. Across the years, pupils can join clubs for team sports such as football, cricket, netball, gymnastics and athletics. Gymnastics is included in activities linked with athletics and pupils interested in the performing arts join activities such as drama, dance and instrumental playing. The school has a well-placed and good display of cups and plaques that celebrate its successes. Pupils in Year 6 receive encouragement to take on responsibility through monitoring tasks, supervising dinner queues and organising trolleys for packed lunches. They have opportunities to put themselves forward as prefects. The school expects nominees to put forward their case for selection and members of staff and the business community interview them for the position. The pupils' council has 16 pupil councillors from across the school and pupils know how to present to the council any problems they have. There is a notice board which highlights events and dates when the council will meet and a suggestion box is always on display. Pupils have opportunities to raise funds to support charities as well as in-school initiatives, such as the mural for the millennium.

62. The provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory overall. The compilation and use of a book on the history of Crook is a good example of this in its celebration of the local community. An appreciation of cultural diversity within the wider community is not as well developed, although, overall, the school does prepare pupils satisfactorily for life in a multi-cultural society. Visits to heritage centres, museums and musical performances such as 'Joseph and his Technicolor Dream Coat' complement cultural development across the school. Visitors include a working artist, retired engineers and members of local clergy. The school includes this element in its policies and the headteacher informally monitors all areas of this aspect, through daily visits to all learning environments and leading assemblies during the week. However, cultural development mainly focuses on the differences between faiths, when pupils are studying principal world religions. The school displays a variety of posters to illustrate these differences but few extend pupils' understanding of the contribution other cultures bring to mathematics and scientific and technological development.

62. Support, guidance and pupils' welfare

52. The school provides good educational and personal support and guidance for pupils. Effective systems for the monitoring of academic attainment, particularly for the under-fives, consistent implementation of policies for attendance and punctuality and recent initiatives to develop the personal responsibility of pupils have all contributed to a marked improvement since the previous inspection.
53. The very good relationships which the staff have built up with pupils ensure that all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, take full advantage of the educational opportunities offered. Teachers know their pupils well and build up their confidence, equipping them with the personal skills to cope with everyday life in the school. A new attendance policy has raised the awareness amongst pupils and parents of the importance of regular attendance and punctuality. Effective measures to promote discipline and good behaviour are in place. They are widely known and recognised throughout the school community. Bullying was previously a matter of some concern to parents but they express satisfaction with the current procedures, now implemented successfully in the school. Pupils recognise that bullying does occur occasionally but they know what action to take should they have any concerns.
54. The school complies fully with requirements in relation to child protection. The designated person for child protection has taken part in recent training and is familiar with the guidelines. All members of staff have received appropriate advice and they understand the importance of making use of the curriculum to raise awareness and build preventative approaches to child protection. The governing body has recently reviewed the health and safety provision and has agreed a new policy, based on local authority guidelines. It has also allocated responsibility to named members of staff whose duty it is to carry out regular risk

assessments and submit written reports to the governing body when appropriate and at least annually. The new procedures are for implementation in the current school year.

65. Partnership with parents and the community

55. Since the previous inspection, parents have continued to support their school and have appreciated the efforts of teachers to involve them as partners in their children's education. Much of the information provided for parents is good, particularly the prospectus, the regular newsletters and the recent initiative to share details of the numeracy curriculum at a parents' consultation evening. Annual reports on pupils comply fully with statutory requirements but the quality is variable and few identify targets for parents to give their children additional support. Minutes of governors' meetings tend to be brief and sometimes do not convey adequately to parents the work of the school management or the reasons for decisions.

56. Parents feel encouraged to be involved in the life of the school and many offer support in the classroom, assistance with supervision on visits or in the very important fund-raising events organised by the 'Friends of The School'. The school has recently taken steps to improve the quality and consistency of homework and has given guidance to parents on how to support more effectively their children's work in the home, by shared reading and by helping with research projects. Teachers with responsibility for pupils with special educational needs involve parents well in their work. The open approach adopted by the school to partnership with parents in all areas contributes positively to pupils' learning and development.

57. The school makes very good use of resources in the community and environment to enrich the educational provision. A wide and varied range of curriculum-linked visits and contributions from visitors, coming into school to talk on academic, pastoral or religious topics, help to broaden the perspectives of pupils. This work is now developing as the school takes advantage of its links with the local business education partnership. This enhances the curriculum for literacy and numeracy and builds awareness in pupils of the responsibilities of citizenship. It is intended that this will lead to closer liaison with other schools in the area. The energy and enthusiasm of the headteacher are notable features of this development. The school has established good social and curricular links with the high school and these effectively prepare pupils for the next stage of their education.

68. The management and efficiency of the school

68. Leadership and management

58. The leadership and management of the school have improved considerably since the last inspection in 1993. After its first inspection, during the following few years, the school successfully addressed the issues raised and became a continually improving school. The rate of improvement slowed somewhat latterly and the school had several changes in its leadership. However, since the recent appointment of a new headteacher, it is now poised for further development and has good capacity in its systems and ethos for significant improvements, some of which are already in place. Nevertheless, there are still issues requiring attention in the management structure of the school and the involvement of governors in the work of the school.
59. The management and leadership of the school are good. The newly appointed headteacher gives strong, professional leadership, with a clear vision of the work of the school, firmly rooted in raising standards. The dedicated, hardworking staff share this vision and have a common sense of purpose. Together they have implemented several new initiatives in a short space of time. For example, they have developed new planning systems and produced schemes of work for all subjects. They have introduced a very effective behaviour policy. This has had an immediate positive impact on pupils' behaviour in lessons and has the full support of all staff. Parents support the new code of behaviour and most express satisfaction with the outcomes. The school has successfully introduced the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. The senior management team is keen to work on further school improvements. However, the team is not fully effective. It comprises the deputy headteacher and senior teacher, neither of whom has undertaken recent training for their specific duties, currently and for the future. The school sets and achieves targets in many aspects of its work but does not set targets at senior management level.
60. The supportive governing body has an appropriate committee structure. It is supportive and fulfils all statutory requirements but is insufficiently involved in the management of the school. The committees do not meet on a regular basis and do not keep detailed minutes for all meetings that do take place. Long-term strategic planning is not extended sufficiently to enable governors to evaluate the impact of their decisions on standards. The minutes kept for the main governing body meetings do not always record decisions made by the governors, for example approving the budget.
61. The school development plan is a clear working document which will take the school into the year 2000. However, it is not clearly prioritised and does not efficiently link costs to the budget. At the beginning of the appointment the plan was sufficient to support the headteacher, who has now identified the need to develop this as the driving force of the school.

62. Subject co-ordinators work well in endeavouring to maintain the improvement in standards. They monitor planning and the regular assessment of pupils' work. The school has implemented a good quality monitoring policy to further extend curriculum monitoring. This clearly identifies the roles of the co-ordinators and the senior management team. It is effective in the monitoring of standards through teaching and pupils' attainment.
63. The school has admirable aims, values and policies, which parents and staff acknowledge as worthwhile. However, currently the focus of the aims is too wide for the needs of the school and this reduces their impact. The ethos of the school is of a caring, dedicated environment in which everyone is valued. It is based on pupils reaching a good level of self-discipline and striving to achieve consistently good standards.
64. The governing body meets statutory requirements regarding pupils with special educational needs. There is a good policy for these pupils, which fully meets the requirements of the Code of Practice. The annual governors' report to parents includes a statement on the school's provision for special educational needs. There is a detailed up-to-date register of pupils with special educational needs. This includes information about their areas of difficulty and guidance to staff on dealing with them. The provision for special educational needs is good and addresses pupils' needs well, both those with learning difficulties and those with behaviour problems. The school makes good use of all outside agencies in this provision. It also makes good provision for pupils for whom English is not the first language.
65. The school has a clear and unambiguous commitment to equality of opportunity. Governors recognise the need for vigilance in the school's policies and practices and staff make every effort to establish good practice within the classroom and about the school.
66. There is some way to go before the leadership as a whole is a fully cohesive and effective group in all aspects of its responsibilities. It has done much effective work in this area to bring about overall good provision and now requires structured improvement in some areas to take the school forward quickly. Some procedures are already in place to do this.
77. **Staffing, accommodation and learning resources**
67. Provision for staffing, accommodation and learning resources is good overall. Significant improvement has taken place since the last inspection. Staffing has stabilised and all members of staff are on permanent contracts. The subject knowledge and expertise of teachers have improved, particularly since the implementation of the literacy and numeracy strategies to meet the demands of the curriculum. Several co-ordinators are particularly well

qualified in their subject areas. They have a clear understanding of their roles and all staff work effectively together to improve the standards of pupils in the school. The co-ordination of provision for pupils with special educational needs is particularly good across the school. There are appropriately skilled classroom assistants and effective additional support for pupils' literacy skills. Appropriate procedures for induction are available should the need arise. The school has its own staff appraisal procedures in place. Arrangements for professional development within the responsibilities of the headteacher are good and extend the former good practice. They are closely related to identified priorities to implement and develop the national strategies for literacy and numeracy, personal and social education, assertive discipline procedures, homework and parental involvement. The professional development of staff so far has enhanced the teaching of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies.

68. Accommodation is very good. Both outdoor areas and indoor areas are spacious. The school makes imaginative use of parts of the site, providing very good environments in which pupils develop, for example the recent resurfacing and marking out for games of the playground. There are internal quadrangles that have good potential for development, like the one recently returfed and having seating constructed to provide a good area for more reflective leisure time for pupils. Colourful designs painted on the surrounding walls contribute to the attractive nature of the area. The vegetable garden is under development and one area is intended to provide better outdoor facilities for the children under five. Classrooms are spacious, bright and welcoming and several have extensions for reading or discussion, where books and curriculum interests are well displayed. There are separate halls for dining, music and physical education. The space offers good opportunities for dance and drama. There are good facilities for television and video-supported lessons. The facilities for specialist and class music lessons are equally good. The library is a well-arranged and organised area but the school population does not take full advantage of it. Overall, the very good accommodation makes a significant impact on pupils' learning environment.
69. Displays are colourful and well co-ordinated across the school. Many have related questions attached and often encourage pupils to interact with the visual information. They are well organised to raise the interest of pupils in art and their expressive work. The art gallery is a promising start to displaying the work of pupils and well-known artists. The commission of a mural to celebrate the life and history of the community is nearing completion and enhances the entrance to the school. The school is very well maintained and cleaned, although some windows require repairing. It is a bright and clean environment in which pupils

work.

70. Learning resources are good overall and support the demands of the curriculum in most subjects. The improvement in resources for literacy and numeracy has continued to develop pupils' reading, writing and mathematical skills. Resources for information and communication technology are insufficient to match the skills and interests of the staff and the pupils. The range of books in the library is limited, with only sufficient texts for the level of present use. Some subjects, such as history and religious education, have presently enough resources to meet the demands of the curriculum but not to meet staff needs. However, the present level of resources overall provides good support for the curriculum, particularly in English and mathematics, and the use of external resources such as heritage sites, museums and visitors to the school further extends pupils' learning.
81. **The efficiency of the school**
71. Since the previous inspection the school has made good progress in the efficient and effective use of resources. The headteacher is familiar with the sources of funding and readily identifies and rationalises the use of monies to support the school's educational priorities. The headteacher has prepared a school development plan, which effectively guides the set short-term priorities. The plan lacks the itemised costings necessary to provide a clear, identifiable link with the annual budget but this deficiency is a result of the short time since the headteacher's appointment. However, there is now a need for the governors to fulfil their strategic responsibility by preparing a detailed educational and budget plan for the forthcoming year and outline planning for at least one year beyond that.
72. The school has responded well to concerns expressed previously about its use of staffing accommodation and resources. The headteacher now deploys the teaching and support staff effectively across the school to teach the children under five, to teach the National Curriculum at Key Stages 1 and 2 and, in particular, to support the raising of standards in literacy and numeracy. The staff with responsibility for pupils with special educational needs make good use of resources and funding. The school uses its educational training grants effectively to support staff development. Teachers have taken advantage of opportunities to extend their experience by changing classes and year groups from time to time, when supply teachers are in school. Subject co-ordinators work hard to ensure good provision in their particular area. The school uses its good accommodation effectively to benefit the curriculum, whilst the teacher with special responsibility ensures that resources are appropriate and available to support teaching objectives.

73. The school has sound internal financial controls to ensure the proper processing of financial transactions and the prompt detection of any errors. The headteacher and administrator show a good level of awareness of financial the systems and the established procedures in the school, complying with the guidance and recommendations of the auditors. There is, however, an outstanding recommendation from the most recent audit carried out in January 1997. It concerns the security of stocks and other property and required the school to draw up a stock book in accordance with the advice given. The governors should ensure the immediate implementation of this requirement. Day-to-day routines are carried out efficiently and unobtrusively. The school runs smoothly, enabling teachers to concentrate on their primary task of education in the classroom.
74. The unit costs per pupil are low. Taking into account the low attainment of pupils on entry, their good rate of progress through the school, the good quality of teaching, particularly for the under-fives, and the levels of attainment, which are still below the national expectation when pupils leave, the school gives satisfactory value for money.

85. **PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS**

85. **Areas of learning for children under five**

75. The school admits children to the reception class at the beginning of the year in which they are five. Most children attend the local nursery school before they enter full-time school. The reception class team builds effectively on the work of the feeder nursery school. It makes very good provision for the all-round development and education of these young children. The curriculum for the children under five effectively promotes the desirable learning outcomes⁶. Curriculum planning is thorough and detailed. Its basis is the nationally agreed outcomes for learning for children under five. This gives children a firm foundation for work at Key Stage 1 of the National Curriculum. The early years' team has a clear commitment to raising standards. They attend in-service training courses together, plan lessons together and liaise closely with the nursery school. The record keeping system is clear and informative and gives all members of staff a well-informed base for the planning of work. The members of staff in the reception class use the baseline assessment procedures very effectively to assess children's level of achievement. They use this knowledge to plan future work based on what the children know, understand and can do. The reception staff continue to use the records from the nursery school. The records of achievement go with the children when they move into Year 1. The reception class provides a good level of support for children with special educational needs. There are no pupils with English as an additional language in the reception class. All children have full and equal access to the areas of learning. Parents value the work children do in the reception class.
76. On entry to the reception class, children's levels of attainment in all areas of learning are below the expectation for children of this age and for several children levels are well below. Some recognise that print conveys meaning and that books are read for enjoyment. They begin to develop their number skills. Some have suitable social skills. Many lack the ability to use pencils and scissors correctly. They make rapid progress in developing their language and number skills in the reception class. However, by the time they are five many children are unlikely to attain the skills they require to meet the nationally agreed areas of learning expected of this age group. All children make good progress in their personal and social development. Most children make good progress in

⁶ ON DESIRABLE LEARNING OUTCOMES

QCA (Qualifications and Curriculum Authority) formerly SCAA (school Curriculum and Assessment Authority) has produced a set of 'Desirable Learning Outcomes for Children's Learning on Entering Compulsory Education'. These outcomes are a set of skills, knowledge and understanding that children might be expected to achieve by the age of five in six areas of learning: language and literacy; mathematics; knowledge and understanding of the world; creative development; physical development and personal and social development.

the development of their language and literacy, mathematical and creative skills. They develop a sound knowledge and understanding of the world and make satisfactory progress in their physical development.

87. Personal and social development

77. At entry to the reception class, many children have difficulty in their relationships with other children. Children settle very quickly into the security of the reception class. They make good progress in developing their personal and social skills. Children are confident when moving around the classroom and in their dealings with each other and adults. They relate well to adults and to other children and share and take turns amicably. Most children show good levels of concentration, for example when making jointed teddy bears. They persevere to finish their tasks and take pride in their work. The reception team encourages children to work independently and make choices. For example, children move confidently to work in the different areas of the classroom. They soon understand the routines of school life and are confident when they move around the school. An example of this is when the children change their clothes for physical education sessions and then walk to the gymnasium. Children take care of classroom equipment and quickly learn to tidy it away. By the time they are five years of age, most children are on target to achieve the expected levels in the development of their social skills. However, their levels of independence are still below average.

88. Language and literacy

78. The provision for the development of language and literacy is very good. Many children enter the reception class with below average language skills and make good progress. The reception class uses the literacy strategy to develop and extend children's listening, speaking and reading skills. The reception staff further develop and extend this through a careful selection of books, stories and opportunities for role-play. The members of staff make effective use of 'Jolly Phonics' to reinforce and develop early reading skills. Children enjoy this activity and make rapid progress in learning letter sounds. All children listen carefully to stories and join in with familiar sentences and refrains. Some begin to retell their favourite stories. They choose books to take home and enjoy looking at pictures. All children know that pictures and print convey meaning. They know they should read books from left to right. Most children handle books carefully. Children respond well in class and group discussions. They make good progress in developing their skills of speaking and listening. However, many children have difficulty speaking in sentences. Children consolidate and develop their early writing skills. Many have difficulty holding and using pencils correctly. By the time

they are five years of age, the number of children reaching the end of the desirable learning outcomes is lower than average.

89. **Mathematics**

79. The provision for children's mathematical development is very good. Most children make good progress in consolidating and developing their number skills. Many children enter the reception class with a developing range of mathematical skills. The reception staff build on and effectively develop these early skills. Children have an hour of number work each day. By the time children are five years of age, they count and order objects to five and count accurately to ten. They know and recognise the place of numbers up to five on a number line. About half of the children know and recognise the place of numbers up to ten. Children know and understand mathematical language such as 'full', 'empty', 'little', 'big', 'bigger' and 'biggest'. They use these terms accurately when they plant pots of bulbs for the three bears. Children develop their mathematical learning through structured play in the class shop and through construction activities. These include the use of the computer to develop skills and understanding of shape and movement. Children make significant gains in their ability to consolidate, build on and develop their pre-school experiences. Most children are on target to achieve the desirable learning outcomes for mathematics by the time they are five years of age.

90. **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

80. The school has very good provision for developing children's knowledge and understanding of the world. Children's knowledge in this area of the curriculum is weak when they enter the reception class. They make good progress in developing this area of learning. Children have many opportunities to explore the natural and manmade world. They compare their own movements with those of a jointed teddy bear and learn about living things. They understand the importance of light and water for growth to take place when they plant bulbs. Children apply this knowledge to themselves. They understand that humans need water and food. Many are confident in skills such as cutting, folding and sticking. They use a computer as a matter of routine and develop confidence in their ability to use the keyboard and mouse for control. Children have ready access to water, wet and dry sand. However, by the time they are five years of age, many children do not reach the expectations of the desirable learning outcomes.

91. **Physical development**

81. The school makes good provision for children's physical development and they make good progress. They use pencils, crayons, scissors and other

equipment with increasing control. Their attainment, however, is below average for their age. Children use play dough and wet sand to mould into shapes. They use apparatus in the hall to develop their balancing and climbing skills. Children run fast in the playground with a good awareness of space. There is no specifically designated area for outdoor work. Children use the playground at different times from the rest of the school. They play well together outside.

92. **Creative development**

82. The school's provision for children's creative development is very good. They make good progress as they learn basic techniques to enable them to use and control materials. Many do not, however, acquire the level of skills necessary to reach the desirable learning outcomes by the time they are five. Children mix paint to achieve different colours. They use brushes confidently to apply paint to paper and to box models. Children sing a variety of songs from memory and express themselves well through their singing. They use their imagination well in role-play activities.

83. The quality of teaching for the children under five is at least good. It is very good in approximately 71 per cent of lessons seen. The teacher and nursery nurse work very effectively together as a team. They have a clear understanding of the needs of young children. Both members of staff have high expectations of the quality of work and behaviour. They set challenging and interesting tasks that effectively consolidate and develop children's knowledge and understanding. The team uses language very well. This ensures that, by the age of five, children make good progress in the communication skills of speaking and listening. The members of staff teach specific skills, such as using paint and equipment, correctly. They place an emphasis on encouraging pupils to work independently and make choices. The reception staff work closely together to plan a well balanced and broadly based curriculum for children under five.

94. **English, mathematics, science, information technology and religious education**

94. **English**

84. In the 1999 tests for seven year olds, the percentages of pupils attaining or exceeding the national Level 2 in reading (75 per cent) and writing (78 per cent) were below the national averages. The percentage (23 per cent) of pupils attaining the higher Level 3 in reading was also below the national average. However, the percentage (3 per cent) of pupils attaining or exceeding the higher Level 3 in writing was close to the national average. In the 1999 national tests for eleven year olds, the number of pupils attaining the expected

Level 4 (51 per cent) was well below the national average. The number of pupils exceeding the national requirement and attaining level 5 or above (10 per cent) was also well below the national average.

85. Inspection findings confirm these levels of attainment. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is below national expectations. Overall, attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is also below expectations. However, the school has made significant improvements in its provision recently and this has had a marked impact on pupils' progress at both key stages, particularly in reading and writing. In addition to the successful implementation of the National Literacy Strategy, the school has installed a new phonics teaching programme. The school has also grouped pupils for English lessons so that pupils of like ability are taught together. Each class also has lessons in drama to help to improve pupils' speaking and listening skills. In addition, the school provides a system of additional literacy support, clearly targeting small

groups of pupils in Years 3 and 4. This involves extra sessions of teaching in small groups. This measure has a beneficial effect and pupils gain in skills and confidence. These initiatives already show an improvement in levels of attainment. Furthermore, the classes at the end of each key stage contain a larger than usual number of pupils with special educational needs and this has a very marked impact on overall attainment. Thus, although the majority of the pupils attain at nationally expected levels, the percentage doing so is below average.

86. The school has successfully implemented the National Literacy Strategy. This has a beneficial effect on pupils' progress. In writing, pupils demonstrate an improving command of skills such as punctuation and sentence structure. In reading, pupils benefit as they experience a widening range of reading material.

They read more accurately and with greater confidence and expression. Improvements are also evident in speaking and listening skills, where the emphasis in the strategy on the development of oral skills has a good effect. As teachers become more experienced in applying the scheme, they begin to see the need for flexibility and adaptability to suit the particular needs of their pupils. For instance, teachers generally acknowledge that there is too little time allocated for pupils to write at length. The school has responded to this need by allocating extra timetable time for writing.

87. Throughout the school, pupils with English as an additional language, those with special educational needs and a significant number of lower attaining pupils make good progress. Their teachers give them appropriate tasks in reading and writing designed to help meet their specific needs. Higher attaining pupils

make good progress, particularly when they are provided with sufficiently challenging work to meet their overall needs. Consequently, these pupils achieve levels that are above average in all elements of the subject.

88. Standards of speaking and listening are below national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1. However, whether discussing a story, analysing a text or giving opinions about a topic, the small majority of pupils demonstrate sound vocabulary skills. They speak satisfactorily and state their opinions clearly. Pupils come into school with below average speaking and listening skills. Throughout the key stage teachers work hard to provide their pupils with a wide range of imaginative tasks to help broaden their experience and increase their confidence. Pupils in the reception class role-play well such activities as shops. Pupils in Year 1 act out plays, give performances in assemblies and at the end of lessons report back to their classmates on what they have learned. Nevertheless, by the time pupils leave the school at the end of Key Stage 2, standards in speaking and listening overall are below national expectations. Most pupils speak with increasing confidence to a range of listeners. They ask and answer questions readily, respond enthusiastically to literature and express themselves increasingly clearly. They learn to present information they have gathered from a variety of sources. Most literacy sessions end with a discussion about what pupils have learned during the lesson. Some pupils read out completed work and this reinforces learning and increases confidence. Pupils in Year 4 report quite accurately on the different articles they have found in 'The Echo'. Pupils in Year 6 discuss reasonably effectively the merits of the story of 'Rikki-Ticki-Tavi'.
89. The majority of pupils make good progress in speaking and listening. Teachers take care to use appropriate vocabulary and terminology in lessons in other subjects such as science, geography and art. Throughout the

school, pupils make good progress in the acquisition of speaking and listening skills. At Key Stage 1, pupils acquire and use new technical language such as 'rhyme' and 'onomatopoeia'. Younger pupils talk about 'author' and 'illustrator' and answer questions about story content. At Key Stage 2, pupils build upon the skills of speaking and listening and take advantage of opportunities for constructive talk in pairs and in groups. Pupils in Year 4 discuss well newspaper headlines and acquire and use vocabulary such as 'subheadings,' 'articles,' 'reports' and 'columns'.

90. At the end of Key Stage 1, standards of reading are below the national average. Nevertheless, the majority of pupils read fluently and with accuracy books presented at the appropriate level for their age group. They read and follow written instructions for their work. They recall stories they have read and describe the main points of texts they study. When sharing texts in literacy sessions, pupils learn to use a full range of reading cues, which they use effectively when reading independently. From entry into the reception class pupils follow a programme of 'Jolly Phonics' which considerably aids their phonic development as they progress through the key stage. This helps most pupils as they learn to read and write. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' reading standards are still below average. Nevertheless, the majority of pupils read for pleasure and with understanding. They comment confidently on the differences in style between

books and use their skills of inference and deduction in their reading. Pupils use sources such as dictionaries, encyclopaedias and thesauruses. This helps their understanding. However, there are a considerable number of pupils, particularly in Year 6, with special educational needs, for whom attainment is below average. They experience great difficulty in understanding idiomatic and expressive language beyond the literal. Their problem is made worse by a lack of support from home. The school is aware of this problem and attempts to build up a home-school reading partnership. This is inconsistently applied, however, and in need of further development.

91. Pupils in both key stages make good progress in reading. The school attempts to raise standards with new initiatives. The phonics programme aids the early acquisition of reading skills. The strong focus on reading in the literacy hour enables pupils to make progress more rapidly. Where parents support the school by hearing their children read at home, their children make better progress. There are instances of pupils reading books that are insufficiently challenging for them, however, and there is too rigid an adherence to reading scheme books in some classes.
92. At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment in writing is below average. The majority of pupils work in a range of forms including stories, poems, diaries, factual accounts and instructions. Standards of spelling and punctuation are below those expected of seven year old pupils. Nevertheless, there are some good examples of writing, in which pupils use a wide range of punctuation marks, including inverted commas. In literacy sessions, pupils demonstrate their knowledge of the sound and spelling system, which they use to read and write in other subjects. Standards of handwriting are sound. The school has a good strategy for introducing cursive handwriting at an early age and this helps the flow of their writing and their spelling. However, pupils do not always use their best handwriting skills, acquired consistently in handwriting lessons, when working in other subjects. At the age of eleven, writing standards are below average. The majority of pupils write reasonably well in a range of styles and for a variety of purposes, including stories, poems, scripts and reports. There are some good examples of extended writing in English. Pupils develop, organise and communicate ideas, for example in their book reviews. A significant minority of pupils write in linking paragraphs. Pupils' spelling of regular and irregular words is usually correct and they use a wide variety of punctuation marks suitably. Standards of handwriting and presentation are variable at present. While most pupils use joined, neat, cursive handwriting this is not consistent in all classes in all subjects.
93. In writing pupils make good progress at both key stages. There is evidence that their progress has improved significantly with the implementation of

the literacy hour and with the recent system of putting pupils into ability groups for English. As they move through Key Stage 2, their rate of progress accelerates, as the level of challenge in their work increases. Pupils learn to adapt their writing for different audiences, whether responding to the challenge of writing a fact file about a monster or writing a story such as 'Cinderella' or 'Jack and the Beanstalk' from the point of view of a particular character. Pupils increasingly use the skills of planning, drafting, revising and proof reading before producing a final clear copy of their work. They become increasingly competent in spelling and grammar.

94. Pupils make effective use of their developing literacy skills in other subjects. In science, they write up the results of their experiments and in design technology they use their labelling skills. They write good descriptive pieces in geography and argue their case forcibly when discussing the harmful effects of pollution on the planet.
95. Pupils respond well in English lessons. Apart from the small percentage who show unsuitable behaviour, they listen carefully to their teachers, try hard to answer their questions and to participate in the lessons. They are keen to contribute and to extend their knowledge. They listen to and value the contributions made by their classmates. They work well in pairs and groups, sharing ideas and equipment profitably. Most pupils concentrate well for lengthy periods and take a pride in finishing their work on time. Pupils are proud of their work and are happy to discuss it with visitors. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language respond well to the activities provided for them in reading and writing and contribute to the discussions well.
96. Teaching in English lessons is never less than satisfactory and is good or better in 80 per cent of lessons. Where teaching is good or better, lessons are characterised by the good subject knowledge of the teachers and the high quality of their planning. They manage the pupils well and use good quality assessments to inform themselves of their pupils' progress. They offer the pupils challenging tasks and conduct their lessons at a brisk pace. Not all teachers consistently provide written tasks of sufficient challenge for more able pupils. In these lessons pupils make good and sometimes very good progress. All teachers help to extend pupils' skills in subjects across the curriculum. Where teaching is less effective, learning targets for different pupils are not clearly defined and the pace of the lesson slows. The school deploys its support assistants effectively and they make a major contribution to pupils' progress.

107. **Mathematics**

97. The improvement in mathematics since the last inspection is satisfactory. Standards are

close to the national average at the end of Key Stage 1. Pupils' work in number is better than their work in using and applying mathematics. They satisfactorily use their number skills across the curriculum. Standards in mathematics are below average at the end of Key Stage 2 for all attainment targets except number and algebra. Pupils attain standards close to national averages in their number work. The pupils' ability to use and apply mathematics across the curriculum and in everyday life is satisfactory. The most able pupils show some under-achievement. The school recognises this deficiency and is taking steps to remedy the situation.

98. By the age of seven the pupils' attainment is close to the national expectation in mathematics. This reflects their performance in the 1999 standard assessment tasks and tests. By the age of eleven the pupils' attainment is below the national average. The pupils' attainment in the standard assessment tasks and tests in 1999 shows a decline in the results since the 1998 tests. This decline is greater at Key Stage 2 than at Key Stage 1. Both cohorts have an unusually high number of pupils with learning and behaviour difficulties and of pupils with special educational needs. This affects to a great extent the overall standards. A further factor influencing last year's Key Stage 1 results is the higher proportion of boys than girls in the present Year 3. These aspects tend to have a negative impact on pupils' levels of achievement. The inspection findings confirm the results of the tasks and tests. The school is aware of the lower attainment. It is already addressing the issues through the implementation of the numeracy hour and by grouping pupils in ability classes in mathematics. This is having a positive impact on attainment and is raising the self-esteem of all pupils.
99. At Key Stage 1, the younger infant pupils add and subtract numbers to ten, recognise pattern, simple relationships and sequences. They satisfactorily understand the language related to these operations. The older infants use mental recall of addition and subtraction facts to solve problems with whole numbers. They identify two-dimensional shapes and use an accurate mathematical vocabulary such as 'corner', 'face', 'triangular' and 'prism'. The more able pupils correctly identify ascending and descending sequences of number in ones and tens. They understand the meaning of 'digit'. They know number bonds to ten as well as bonds of numbers between five and ten. The more able pupils know that a circle has one continuous side. Pupils use the language of symmetry accurately and approximately half of them understand the proportion of symmetry.
100. At Key Stage 2, the younger pupils use a variety of methods and language when carrying out addition and subtraction operations. They use their knowledge of the two, three, four and five times tables to solve written and mental problems. The most able pupils understand

and use the nine times table when they make up their own function machines. In Year 4, pupils are confident in their use and application of doubling and halving numbers. They understand the correlation between double and half. The most able pupils know how to double numbers with three digits. They explain their reasoning confidently and understand that there are a range of different strategies for working out answers. Pupils in Year 5 know how to round single-digit decimals up and down to the nearest whole decimal. The less able pupils round numbers to the nearest ten and multiply two-digit numbers accurately by ten. Most have difficulty in dividing by ten. The pupils in Year 6 develop their skills of estimation as they work out how many symmetrical shapes they can make. They move on to test their predictions. All pupils look for patterns as they try out ideas. They explain their reasoning logically. The more able pupils use mental recall to multiply and divide by ten. They add decimals accurately to two decimal places. All pupils understand the language of multiplication.

101. Throughout the school, the pupils have a sound knowledge of shape and space. They know how to measure time and gain a sense of the passage of time through sequencing the days of the week. The pupils recognise and understand the need for a standard measurement of time. The school is promoting well the skills and understanding of measurement of length, mass and capacity and pupils apply these skills in work, such as design and technology at Key Stage 2. Pupils' work in mathematics makes a satisfactory contribution to their literacy skills. They learn to read problem sums and follow written instructions.

102. There is a marked improvement in pupils' progress since the last inspection. At the age of eleven, pupils have satisfactorily developed skills in numeracy. They know and use number facts, such as times tables, in their written and mental work. Pupils in Year 6 understand how to add, subtract and order decimals. They know how to work out percentages. Pupils use a range of suitable computation methods to work out mathematical problems. They show an increasing ability to reason logically when they explain their findings.

103. Progress throughout the school is good overall. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection. The limited progress in some lessons reflects the quality of teaching and an under-estimation of pupils' potential. There is some slowing of progress at Key Stage 1, where the behaviour of some pupils restricts their learning. Most pupils at Key Stage 1 make good progress in developing their ability to use and apply mathematics in everyday situations. They also make good progress in extending their number skills. At Key Stage 2, progress slows where tasks are insufficiently challenging. Most pupils make good progress in developing their

mathematical skills and concepts. Some pupils in Year 4 make very good progress in their ability to explain their methods and reasoning. Most pupils in Key Stage 2 make good progress in their ability to use and apply mathematics. They make good progress in developing and increasing their number skills.

104. The pupils of below average ability, those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language have effective support from class teachers and support assistants. They receive suitable individual help, which enables them to make good progress against the specific targets set for them.
105. Pupils' attitudes to their work show a good level of concentration and perseverance. They have positive attitudes and want to do well. Most pupils are keen to join in discussion. They respond well and enthusiastically when they receive encouragement to develop their investigative and thinking skills by challenging and thought provoking questions from the teachers. The positive approach to learning enables pupils to develop the ability to work independently when exploring ideas at Key Stage 2. Their overall behaviour is good. A small minority of pupils behave unsatisfactorily during some lessons. This is rare but, where it occurs, pupils do too little work and this affects progress. Pupils handle resources sensibly. In the majority of lessons there is a productive working atmosphere. This is a clear improvement since the previous inspection.
106. The quality of teaching is never less than satisfactory. The majority of teaching at both key stages is good. Some teaching at Key Stage 2 is very good or better. Teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of the subject. They all plan their work carefully, use a variety of methods and strategies and lessons move swiftly. Teachers make use of many formal and informal opportunities for pupils to practise their number skills, for example counting and subtracting during registration and in action rhymes and songs. In the most effective lessons, teachers have high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour. They plan work that matches the needs and abilities of all pupils. In these lessons there is a clear structure and the criterion for work is clear. The teachers challenge and explore thinking by the skilful use of questions and plan work based on subsequent attainment. There is systematic, regular and thorough practising of number. This enables pupils' use of number facts and patterns to become automatic. Teachers use a correct technical vocabulary to advance pupils' knowledge and base new work on the knowledge of pupils' understanding.
117. **Science**
107. At the end of Key Stage 1, in the national assessments carried out by teachers in 1999, the percentage of

pupils reaching the expected Level 2 or above was very low compared with the national average. The percentage reaching the higher Level 3 or above was well below the national average. The inspection findings reflect the 1999 position. The majority of pupils reach standards at the end of the key stage which are below expectations. However, the current percentage achieving standards that are well below is less than that indicated in the national tests of last year. There is some improvement since the last full inspection but standards have fluctuated somewhat over a number of years; for example, the figures for 1998 show attainment at above national averages. These results were for pupils in the current Year 4 but this is a somewhat more able cohort overall and is not typical of the school as a whole. The reasons for the recent

improvement are found in the consistently good teaching and a well thought out curriculum, with a structured programme of practical investigative work. These factors stimulate pupils to try their best. A sharper focus is now required on attainment in other areas of the science curriculum.

The high number of pupils with special educational needs currently in classes and increasing over the years influences very negatively pupils' levels of achievement, when comparisons are made with the national picture.

108. At the end of Key Stage 2, in the statutory tasks and tests taken by eleven year olds in 1998, the percentage of pupils reaching the expected Level 4 or above was well below the national average, as was the percentage reaching the higher Level 5 or above. This is some improvement since the last inspection but the overall position over time is as at Key Stage 1, with consistently low but fluctuating

standards. Indeed there is some evident decline since 1995, until the improvement found in the national tests at the end of Key Stage 2 in 1999 and sustained in this current Year 6. The inspection findings confirm this position overall, in that, at the end of Key Stage 2, attainment is below national expectations. However, although the percentage of pupils attaining Level 4 or above is below the national average, the number of pupils who do so is rising. This is a measure of improvement recently. The number of pupils with special educational needs, despite the good provision for them, is a major factor influencing levels of attainment. However, pupils at Key Stage 2 now build on the satisfactory progress made at Key Stage 1, with a high level of good quality teaching, an interesting and lively curriculum and further developed practical work.

109. There is clearly room for further improvement. With the establishment of sound literacy and numeracy strategies in the school, the opportunity now exists for a refocus on science. Whereas the quality of the practical investigative work is good overall, the teachers firmly direct much of the work. The increasingly constructive atmosphere in the school towards work, brought about by most teachers and pupils co-operating well, gives a good foundation for the structured introduction of more fully independent work, in which pupils regularly plan, prepare and carry out their own experiments and take more responsibility for their own learning. This particularly applies to the more able pupils, some of whom do not consistently achieve as well as they might. This area for improvement requires not only a consistent maintaining of the effective behaviour policy but also a rigorous application of the benefits of the literacy and numeracy strategies.
110. At Key Stage 1, pupils' make careful observations of plants, naming the parts. They produce clear diagrams and drawings, labelling the parts accurately. They learn effectively how to treat growing plants with care. They also know that roots give stability to plants. Pupils make good use of technical terms such as 'stalk' and 'stem'. At the end of the key stage, pupils know that water can be liquid, solid or gas and can be changed by heating and cooling. For example, they know that water changes to steam, that steam is a form of water and needs more space. They note the characteristics of materials and predict change.

For instance, most predicted accurately what would happen to ice, heated in a microwave oven. Pupils understand in simple terms what constitutes a fair test. They present their findings in a variety of ways but this work is under-developed and presentation is impaired by weak, albeit slowly improving, literacy skills. Oral work is good.

111. At Key Stage 2, pupils understand that water is taken in through the roots of plants and is carried through the stem to other parts of the plant. The majority of pupils learn this effectively through an interesting experiment with celery stalks in coloured water. They conduct useful investigations by growing beans, noting and recording accurately the changes over time. Pupils have improved observational and recording skills, using worksheets and tables well. The pupils of higher ability, however, are not regularly stretched

in their investigations and are capable of more thorough and wide-ranging research. Pupils in the middle of the key stage carried out an interesting task with the assistance of a visiting specialist. In groups, they constructed a three-dimensional map of a section of a town to bring together at the end of the session. This showed an awareness of different habitats and dwellings, in this case human. The more able recognised environmental dependence and protection, talking coherently about inter-linking service roads, cycle paths and different types of properties. They also carried out fair-test principles by observing similar criteria for construction in each group and handled different construction materials well. Pupils evaluated their work and drew conclusions well at the end of the lesson. Towards the end of the key stage, pupils are knowledgeable

about seeds and bulbs. They are aware of the different methods of seed dispersal and recall and write up successfully their activities. At the end of the key stage, pupils carry out interesting investigations with confidence and care. They discuss, with understanding, how to separate undissolved solids by filtering. They know and understand the process of evaporation. Pupils are aware of safety guidelines in their experiments and the more able know about the need for a 'control' in an experiment. They make good predictions of outcomes; for example, they accurately say which solids when dissolved can be reconstituted by heating.

112. Progress for most pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, is satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2. Progress is built on and the levels of attainment reflect this in the recently

increasing numbers achieving nationally expected levels. As they move through the school, pupils gain a satisfactory understanding of scientific skills and concepts. They show reasonable gains in their ability to plan, organise and carry out scientific investigations. Pupils apply their knowledge to other areas of the curriculum, for example when discussing scientific and environmental aspects in geography. This accelerates progress in these subjects. They also make good progress in their understanding and use of appropriate scientific vocabulary, which contributes well to the development of literacy skills. Pupils increasingly find their developing numeracy skills useful in their work in science.

113. Pupils in all classes show interest and enthusiasm. They have satisfactory attitudes to work. Older pupils at Key Stage 2 show good attitudes. These promote good progress. Pupils have satisfactory motivation for work. They show good levels of concentration and most take pride in their work. Most pupils respect their teachers and relationships are good. The behaviour, even in the less formal

practical work, of most pupils is good. A small but significant minority of pupils are disruptive and, although well contained by teachers, their behaviour does inhibit their progress and that of their classmates. This is less prohibitive when teachers have extra help in classrooms. Pupils work well together, respond well to questions, discuss ideas and the more able occasionally use a mature level of reasoning to work out ideas. Unless directed by the teachers, boys and girls tend to work separately in practical activities. Whilst the investigative work they undertake usually excites them, pupils listen carefully, follow instructions and behave in a responsible and sensible manner, sharing tasks and resources fairly. They pay suitable attention to safety issues. Not many pupils show real curiosity about scientific matters and this is a result of under-developed independent learning techniques. However, there were several occasions when pupils were struck by the 'magic' of science, as when a balloon expanded in a microwave and popcorn 'popped', or when the individual group work on three-dimensional habitat maps came together.

114. The quality of teaching is good throughout the school. There is some very good teaching at Key Stage 2. Teachers have good questioning skills to find out what pupils know and they use pupils' responses well to take learning forward. Teachers have good, caring relationships with their pupils and have good class management skills. Most teachers plan and prepare very well, except for some inconsistencies in planning suitably challenging work for pupils that are more able. Routinely, teachers do not plan for pupils to show initiative. Teachers enjoy teaching the subject and communicate this to their pupils. They use praise and reward effectively. Most teachers manage the few disruptive pupils very well and apply the school's behaviour policy consistently. Teachers make good use of the good resources. They apply the good assessment procedures well in their planning and support these with sound informal assessment of pupils' attainment. Lessons overall have pace and purpose and teachers show good command of the subject knowledge. Their estimate of how long it will take pupils to complete tasks is not always accurate and not all teachers make the important distinction between lesson targets and learning objectives, for example the difference between what pupils are to complete in a lesson and what they are to learn. The overall quality of teaching contributes well to pupils' progress.

125. **Information technology**

115. The provision for information and communication technology has considerably improved since the last inspection. The knowledgeable co-ordinator inspires all members of staff and, through in-service training, teachers have increased their knowledge and understanding of the use of information technology. Members of staff now have

confidence in their own skills. However, there is a serious lack of hardware and this deficiency inhibits the proper development of the curriculum. The current ratio of computers is one computer to 25 pupils and it is therefore not easy for pupils to practise routinely their skills in the classroom. The members of staff manage the situation in the best way they can to ensure the optimum use of the few computers available. However, it is difficult to sustain this. In spite of this, the well-developed schedule for use of the available equipment and the enthusiasm of the staff, particularly the co-ordinator, ensures that pupils at both key stages receive their entitlement as specified by the National Curriculum.

116. At Key Stage 1, pupils know and use correct, subject-based language, as in knowing the parts of the computer and calling them by the right names, such as, 'monitor', 'printer' and 'keyboard'. They use the mouse properly to control objects on screen, clicking onto items on screen and dragging them to a new position. For example, they use this method to dress a teddy bear and explain what they are doing, as they make their choices of what 'screen clothes' the teddy bear is to wear. In Year 2, pupils communicate their ideas through pictures, entering and storing information. They use the flood facility to change colour and fill shapes, as in their work on islands. They draw an island shape with a beach and use 'flood' to illustrate their maps in appropriate colours. Pupils use effectively a variety of information technology devices in other lessons; for instance, audio-cassette taped stories in their listening corners.
117. At Key Stage 2, pupils use spreadsheets and enter information into cells. For example, pupils in Year 5 plan the cost of a school trip by entering the information onto the spreadsheet. They then use formulae to total the cost of each item and find the overall cost of the trip. The majority of pupils understand well the work they undertake on computers. However, they have underdeveloped keyboard skills because of the lack of opportunities for practice, due to the low number of computers. Pupils understand well that technology affects many aspects of life. For example, they know that many everyday utensils are computer-controlled. Pupils transfer their literacy skills effectively to computer work. In Year 4, for example, they develop their literacy skills on the computer by practising placing apostrophes in the correct places in sentences.
118. All pupils, including those with special educational need and those for whom English is not their first language, make good progress. Their eagerness to learn means that they make good use of the time they have allocated to computers and this enhances the progress they make in a short space of time. The good quality teaching and well-timed intervention in lessons accelerate pupils' learning. This, together with the good quality questioning which teachers

use to revise previous work and introduce new ideas, means that progress both over time and in lessons is good. Pupils also use well skills learned in other subjects to add to the progress they make in information technology. For example, pupils in Year 5 effectively use a knowledge of co-ordinates, gained in numeracy and geography lessons, to complete spreadsheet tasks in information technology.

119. Pupils in all classes enjoy the time they have working with computers. At both key stages, response is good. Pupils behave well and take great care of the machinery they use. The teachers motivate pupils very well to learn and work on computers so that they become totally engrossed in their work. Pupils listen well to adults and follow instructions accurately to achieve success. They are pleased when they do well and enjoy other pupils' successes.
120. The quality of teaching throughout the school ranges from satisfactory to very good but is good overall. In the good lessons, teachers have good subject knowledge and explain targets to pupils very clearly. They plan a very good mixture of activities and very effectively link other work with that on the computers. One good example of this is when pupils all worked on spreadsheets to price a school outing. There were insufficient computers for all pupils to have access to them, so they had to work on the same task, either taking turns on computers or with paper and pencil. However, by this means, they understood very well the processes involved in spreadsheet work and discussed the practical application of using the computer as well as the advantages and disadvantages of the two ways of working. Pupils made very good progress in this session and gained much from the experience.
131. **Religious education**
121. Attainment in religious education is in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus across both key stages. This is a clear improvement

since the last inspection. Throughout the school, pupils develop knowledge of the principles of Christianity and the major world religions. They have recently encountered aspects of Hinduism, Sikhism and Judaism and have a satisfactory understanding of these. At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils understand the importance of rituals such as baptism and the need to consider the feelings of those around us. They illustrate their understanding of the Creation imaginatively from work they have done on the Old Testament. Pupils make connections between parables told in assembly and their understanding of Jesus discussed in lessons. They link caring and kindness with stories such as 'The Good Samaritan'. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have a deeper knowledge of the establishment of the Christian church and identify more clearly the elements that make up a place of worship. They understand more fully that values are not only things they acquire but also feelings that are important to the way they live. Higher attaining pupils write with some insight and honesty on their own personal characteristics. Pupils understand that different religions have artefacts that represent important parts of beliefs and handle the 'mezuzah' with some respect.

122. Pupils throughout the school make satisfactory progress. Whilst work is not specifically targeted at different levels those pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language access all opportunities and make satisfactory progress. At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have an increasing knowledge of Christianity through their work on Christian rituals and Christian places of worship. Principles behind Christian teachings reinforce prior learning in Circle Time and programmes for personal and social

education. Pupils' understanding of different faiths and denominations increases when they visit places of worship such as a Baptist Church and Durham Cathedral. The making of group books moves their understanding forward on personal beliefs and values and, at the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' special books include chosen values, for example, "I choose these things because they are valuable to me, especially my mum and dad".

123. Pupils have satisfactory attitudes to learning at both key stages. Pupils in Year 1 listen very attentively and are keen to participate in role-play. Generally behaviour is good but a few individual pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 disrupt the discussion and concentration of the rest of the group. The teachers give recognition to the number of children who ignore this negative behaviour and continue to produce satisfactory work. Higher attaining pupils illustrate religious icons well and draw careful diagrams. It is in these activities that an enthusiasm for the subject shows more clearly. Elsewhere, where written opinion is sought, particularly at Key stage 2, the presentation of work suffers from weak spelling and punctuation. However, pupils make satisfactory use of their developing literacy skills.

124. The quality of teaching is good overall. At Key Stage 1 it is satisfactory and, where planning and expectations are high, there are good features. At Key Stage 2, the quality of teaching is good. Subject knowledge is secure for most

teaching intentions but the expectations of some teachers and the objectives they set for themselves cannot always be carried out when the management of individual pupils becomes a priority.

Low expectations also influence the presentation of some pupils' work.

However, where expectations are high, written work is impressive and of good quality. Teachers carefully ascertain what pupils know before the planned content of the lesson begins.

Their questioning skills are good and stimulate the coming activity.

The best planning integrates lively discussion with matched resources. Pupils in Year 1 reinforce their knowledge of baptism in the well-timed role play of the baptism service. Those in Year 4 are made alert to the idea of spiritual values by well-chosen resources and a shared understanding with their teacher.

Overall, teachers manage their pupils

well and consistently apply the policy for assertive discipline. Pace is brisk in the best teaching but the timing of lesson activity is not always secure. Whilst the teaching of aspects of Judaism is good, pupils in Year 6 are capable of a higher work rate than seen in the time allocated. Marking is satisfactory but based often more on praise than giving targets for improvement. Purposeful evaluation is under-developed. An adequate source of artefacts and resources supports the teaching and learning but, whilst of good quality, these are not extensive in range. There are several good displays of artefacts connected with world religions across the school and these support pupils' awareness.

125. The contribution of assemblies to the subject depends much on the talents and commitment of the staff who lead them, as occasionally pupils have insufficient time to reflect on or listen to the music scheduled for the month. However, assemblies have improved considerably since the last inspection and the capacity for improvement is good. Visiting clergy support the assemblies well.

136.

136. **Other subjects or courses**

136. **Art**

126. The organisation of the school's curriculum meant it was only possible to observe a small number of lessons during the week of the inspection. However, a close scrutiny of the displays of pupils' work and teachers' plans, together with interviews with both staff and pupils, confirms that pupils reach the standards expected for their age. They make satisfactory progress throughout the school. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language also make satisfactory progress. This represents an improvement since the last inspection, when standards were below average and unsatisfactory in relation to the pupils' capabilities.
127. The youngest pupils use their pencils and crayons effectively to depict playground swings. They build up their knowledge and understanding of a variety of media and techniques. They mix paint, learn to control their brush strokes and show an understanding of the use of colour in their pictures illustrating the change of colour through the seasons. Pupils learn effectively techniques of collage when working together, for example to make pictures of fish. They explore the use of pencil for line and tone, as when they produce detailed drawings of a piece of fruit or design patterns using line. By the age of seven, pupils are aware of different styles of painting and discuss meaningfully work in the pointillist style of Georges Seurat. In work linked with their geography topic, pupils in Year 2 paint pictures of the imaginary island they have heard about in a story, denoting accurately its major geographical features.
128. Pupils at Key Stage 2 have and use well the experience of working with a range of materials in two and three-dimensional forms. In Year 3, pupils investigate a wide variety of patterns. They create good posters using pencil crayon, design party games and paint dramatic pictures of fireworks and rockets. They produce quite accurate close observational drawing of the windows of old Crook Primary school and, in a link with their geography, draw and illustrate a local street plan. Pupils in Year 4 study how famous artists use line in their work. They study a famous masterpiece and learn how to describe accurately the style of the artist. In passing, they mention famous artists such as Klee, Van Gogh and Lowry, offering comparisons of their styles. At the end of the key stage, pupils produce good quality observational drawings for their portfolio. They develop ideas for painting based on the work of Matisse and explore the use of colour, line and tone in various examples of South American art. They learn effectively about perspective and how to apply colour expressively and imaginatively to convey feelings and emotions.

129. Pupils respond well in lessons. They are keen to answer their teachers' questions and to contribute to discussion, particularly when discussing the work of famous artists. They enjoy using a variety of different media and develop strong opinions about different forms of art, which they are keen to articulate. They take a pride in their work, for example when describing the work they produce in their art club. During the small number of lessons observed, they concentrate well on the task in hand and co-operate well with their fellow pupils, sharing equipment and ideas profitably.
130. Based on the small number of lessons seen, the quality of teaching is judged to be at least satisfactory. It is evident from a close scrutiny of the school's documentation that teachers plan their lessons carefully. The subject co-ordinator has produced a good scheme of work to guide them in what to teach and to offer progressively work that is more difficult. This, together with good quality displays in the public areas of the school, confirms the school's high expectations in this subject. Art is an improving subject and the only impediment to its further progress would be the relatively small amount of time allocated to it as it rotates with other subjects.

Design and technology

131. Pupils throughout the school attain standards in design and technology that are in line with expectations for pupils of seven and eleven years of age. This is an improvement since the previous inspection.
132. At Key Stage 1, pupils understand the need to plan their work and apply their findings from earlier work in the planning. They discuss how to make a product. For example, they discuss how to make a swing move. Pupils plan their designs carefully. They know that a pattern

has to be accurate in size. An example of this is when pupils design and make a paper pattern for a finger puppet. They list the components they need and label parts accurately. They use their previous knowledge of how playground equipment moves, to generate and develop their ideas.

Pupils use a suitably accurate vocabulary and know how to use tools and equipment safely. They are confident in choosing and using joining materials and know that different materials are suitable for different purposes.

For example, pupils choose furry material to make an animal puppet.

133. At Key Stage 2, pupils build effectively on their skills when designing and making products. An example of this is when they make triangular structures from rolled paper tubes. This makes effective links with their work in science. They predict at which weight the structure will fail and understand that a

triangle provides the strongest structure. Pupils design and make pop-up cards and explain how they make them. They confidently select suitable materials to make models and understand the need to evaluate products against their initial plans. All pupils have sound skills in their ability to cut, bend and glue materials. They evaluate their work as it develops and apply a satisfactory range of problem-solving techniques. Pupils modify their designs to improve the quality of the finished product and use and handle tools correctly and safely.

134. Pupils' work in design and technology makes a satisfactory contribution to the development of literacy and numeracy skills. They learn how to label and measure accurately. Pupils throughout the school, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, make good progress in their skills of designing and making. This is evident from the increasing quality of pupils' design plans and of the quality of finished products. All pupils make significant gains in their ability to select and use materials suitable for the task. They make good progress in their ability to develop an accurate technical vocabulary. Pupils show a significant increase in their ability to use and handle tools and equipment safely and accurately.
135. Pupils respond well to their work in design and technology. They take pride in their work and persevere to make quality products. They show much interest in the subject and have enthusiasm for their work. The skilful and enthusiastic teaching gives pupils a good level of motivation to learn and make progress. Pupils help and support

each other as they work and behave well in class. They have responsible attitudes to their work and respect the efforts of others. This makes a positive contribution to the sound standards pupils achieve.

136. The quality of teaching in design and technology is never less than satisfactory. Three quarters of teaching is good. A quarter of teaching is very good. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection. Teachers have clear expectations of achievement and progress. They have a sound knowledge and understanding of design and technology skills. Teachers plan to give all pupils, including those with special educational needs, equal access to the design and technology curriculum. They use questions skilfully to explore understanding and move learning forward. The work provides challenge for pupils of all abilities. It promotes the effective and systematic development of skills. All teachers successfully promote pupils' skills of appraising and evaluating their designs and products. Pupils' work reflects the overall good quality of the teaching.

Geography

137. The majority of pupils attain standards appropriate for their age. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress at both key stages. This represents a considerable improvement since the last inspection, when standards were below average and unsatisfactory relative to pupils' capabilities overall at both key stages.
138. Younger pupils study the layout of the school, successfully locating the various areas on simple maps. They develop good ideas about how to make their local area safer and in an imaginative, well-focused activity, 'Where in the world is Barney Bear?' At the end of the key stage pupils study an island environment, read about a little girl who lives on an island and learn effectively to contrast her life with their own.
139. Early at Key Stage 2, pupils investigate their local area in greater depth, studying prominent local features and buildings. They use aerial photographs effectively and produce detailed maps of the town. They also begin a detailed study of weather conditions in different climatic regions of the world, learning to compare and contrast the bitter cold of Antarctica with the desert regions. Pupils in Year 4 consider ways of improving the environment and study in depth how people live in a village in India. They make effective comparisons with life in Crook.

Pupils in Year 5 learn about the importance of water in our lives and come to terms with the problems of living in a mountain environment. They also consider effectively important local issues as, 'Should the High Street be opened to traffic?' At the end of the key stage, pupils complete a detailed investigation of rivers and study news items, taking account of geographical location. For instance, pupils in Year 6 learn about the 1994 Estonia ferry disaster, locate the various Baltic States on a map and plot the intended route of the ferry.

140. Pupils make satisfactory progress overall at both key stages. Younger pupils maintain established knowledge of their locality and consolidate new learning when drawing simple plans of their area. Older pupils show an increasing knowledge of the physical features of their environment. Pupils display a developing awareness of how geographical features affect the way that people live in the various regions of the world and also of the effect of people on their environment. At present the school does not have a strategy to guide the progressive development of mapping skills and this does slow progress in this area.
141. The majority of pupils have good attitudes to their lessons and enjoy their work. They are interested in finding out about their own locality and comparing it with the way that other people live in different regions. They listen well to their teachers and make every effort to contribute during lessons. They display good levels of concentration and involvement in their work and co-operate well in group sessions, sharing ideas and equipment sensibly.
142. Teaching in geography lessons is never less than satisfactory and is good in one quarter of lessons seen. Teachers plan their lessons well and manage the pupils effectively. In the best lessons, teachers have high expectations of what their pupils can achieve. They plan activities to meet the learning needs of their pupils. The pupils respond well to this challenge, which stimulates commitment and interest. Teachers use equipment and resources effectively and a good variety of teaching techniques. Assessment in geography is informal and ongoing.

History

143. Pupils attain standards appropriate to their age at both key stages. At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils make satisfactory progress and, at the end of Key Stage 2, they make good progress. All pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language make satisfactory progress.
144. At Key Stage 1, pupils have a growing sense of time through their understanding of their place in the family and the events that have taken place in their lives. Younger children talk well about the holidays they have spent with their families and teachers later develop this through lessons on seaside holidays in the past. Pupils' work in geography on their local environment links well with their study of homes of long ago. They begin to recognise the different types of homes in their locality and to use simple time-related vocabulary to describe 'old and new' designs. They talk coherently about the 'before and after' homes in which they have lived.
145. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' understanding of the life and times of their grandparents further develops through a study of children in World War 2. Pupils gain a clearer picture of the life of children at different periods of time. They reflect on the feelings of evacuees and in 'packing their bag' understand the effects of war on everyday life. They understand more of the history of their locality through their study in the Crook booklet of how children recorded their work and the style of handwriting they used. Pupils have a sound recall of the colourful things in history they have encountered, such as work on the Egyptians, Aztecs, Invaders and Settlers. They are less secure with knowledge and understanding of the lives of famous people.
146. Pupils across both key stages respond enthusiastically in the lively lessons seen. They listen well and participate actively in discussion. Pupils at Key Stage 2 present their work well and the beneficial impact of the Literacy Hour is obvious in the work of the higher attainers. Where written work is extensive, pupils of lower ability are

less successful with grammar and punctuation. However, pupils show good progress in recording information, taking notes and organising a factual account.

147. The allocation of history for this term limited the number of lessons seen but the quality of teaching observed was never less than good. Subject knowledge is secure, teachers' expectations are high and lesson preparation is of a good standard. Teachers show an enthusiasm which is caught by pupils. They plan and carry out interesting activities in lessons. The high expectations of some teachers produce the good presentation of work by pupils in Year 5. The use of information technology to highlight aspects of life in World War 2 was very well chosen. In lessons seen, the pace was brisk and the management of pupils good. The preparation and use of time lines in classes are good and historical displays are effective. Assessment is not active but there are plans to develop this in line with nationally agreed schemes of work. The limitation of time for history affects the level of recall some pupils have. The formation of the Crook booklet for historical purposes is a useful addition to the school's resources for teaching and learning, which, whilst adequate, are not extensive. There are limited visits, beyond the immediate locality, to enhance pupils' work in the classroom but there are plans for a visit to a Roman settlement and heritage museums.
158. **Music**
148. Since the last inspection, the school has improved the music curriculum to support the development of pupils' musical skills and knowledge. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, make good progress. Most pupils at both key stages achieve standards expected for their age, although the high percentage of pupils with special educational needs in some classes does adversely affect the overall picture. Good extra-curricular and peripatetic musical activities enhance provision and add to pupils' enjoyment of music.
149. At Key Stage 1, pupils respond well to their lessons and sing a range of songs from memory. They follow rhythms well, watching the conductor

carefully and repeating the rhythm set. They sing with gusto and enjoyment and have clear diction. They know and confidently perform a good range of songs and rhymes. Pupils relate minor keys to sad songs and major to happy tunes. For example, in a singing practice, the pupils demonstrate this by using sad or happy faces when they recognised minor or major keys in the music played to them.

150. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils understand and use correct terminology such as 'tempo' and 'texture'. They follow tunes by clapping the rhythms and the majority change tempo mid-tune successfully. They recognise changes in tempo. For instance, the majority of pupils in Year 3 followed the tempo changes well in Greig's 'Hall of the Mountain King' and adjusted their actions accordingly throughout the piece. Pupils begin to understand the meaning of musical terms such as 'rallentando' and 'accelerando'. They recognise signs and symbols that represent changes in rhythmic patterns. They sing a good variety of two and three part songs and recognise that texture in music relates to layers of rhythms and melodies.
151. Pupils at both key stages make good progress. They practise singing to improve their performing skills and gain confidence. Pupils effectively build on the skills they have learned and increase their knowledge and understanding of different types of music. This results in good progress over time. The majority of pupils listen well and follow their teachers' advice and this produces good progress in lessons.
152. Pupils enjoy their lessons and concentrate hard. They are keen to follow instructions and seek advice readily. They use effectively the advice they receive and improve their performance. The majority of pupils behave well and most work well in lessons. A small but significant minority of pupils lose interest in lessons, demanding teachers' attention in an attempt to disrupt the class. This often means that these disruptive pupils make less progress. However, the teachers ensure that lessons stay on course, enabling the remaining majority of pupils to maintain their good progress.
153. The quality of teaching is good overall. Teachers plan and organise lessons well. They use the specialist co-ordinator

effectively to extend their own subject knowledge.

They seek and take the co-ordinator's advice to improve their own skills. Most teachers work through the planned activities at a good pace, keeping the pupils interested and motivated. There is a good policy outlining the aims of the subject and giving guidelines for practice, which supports well the quality of teaching.

The school has a very good level of quality resources and good use is made of visits and visitors to enhance the quality of teaching and learning. Displays, both in the music room and around school, further add to the interest shown in music. For example, the lively display of the 'Carnival of the Animals' maintained pupils' interest in the music.

164. Physical education

154. The school has improved its standards since the last full inspection in 1993. The timetable for the inspection meant that only a few lessons were seen. However, it is possible to make judgements, based on discussion with staff and pupils and the observations of a small number of lessons at both key stages. During the inspection,

lessons were seen in gymnastics, dance and games skills. Throughout the school, pupils achieve standards commensurate with their age.

155. At both key stages, pupils are aware of the value of warming-up and cooling-down sessions. Most listen well and follow instruction carefully. Pupils pay due regard to safety and use small apparatus safely and properly. They find space well when moving around the hall, varying speed and direction and showing control and discipline. They find good routes, taking care not bump into one another. They demonstrate with confidence and, when given the opportunity, show appreciation of others' performances, making constructive comments.
156. The present situation in respect of swimming is unsatisfactory and pupils have not received swimming lessons for some 18 months, because of a variety of problems in the local education authority to do with access to swimming pools and transport. However, according to the school's records, the clear majority of pupils, when they leave school at the end of Key Stage 2, swim 25 metres unaided, having had effective swimming lessons when they were in Year 4.
157. In recent years, pupils have participated in fewer residential visits to promote physical development. The reason is a lack of funding. However, some pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 regularly have opportunities to participate in residential camping weekends. The school provides good opportunities for regular extra-curricular sporting activities. These include clubs for athletics, gymnastics, football, cross-country, netball, basketball and cricket. Pupils participate in a cycling proficiency scheme and national award schemes for gymnastic and athletics. Pupils in Year 6 took part in a 16-mile cycle ride and there are plans to extend this activity, using local cycling paths in conjunction with the national cycling body. The school enters county organised tournaments and events for all sports and proudly displays any trophies it wins.
158. At Key Stage 1, pupils respond well to music in their dance lessons and move in time to a steady beat. They contrast ways of walking, for example walking like characters from 'Mr Men' books, such as 'Mr Strong' and 'Mr Jelly'. They respond well to given signals and move in various ways, making different body shapes by stretching and curling. At the end of the key stage, pupils practise sending a beanbag in a variety of ways, throw and catch accurately with, for example, two hands or one hand and at different levels. They practise games skills of chasing and dodging. In gymnastics, pupils show good starting and finishing positions, putting together satisfactory and varied sequences whilst moving across a mat.
159. At Key Stage 2, pupils run, skip and hop with control and energy, using different

pathways. They throw a ball underarm accurately to a partner and anticipate the space to move into to catch it. They develop satisfactorily their co-operative and ball skills in team games. The majority perform a variety of jumps well, using all four limbs. They develop this into interesting sequences, successfully transferring weight and maintaining balance. At the end of the key stage, pupils pass a handball very accurately between pairs. They know the difference between different types of passes, for example that the chest pass is the most direct. They know how to watch the ball carefully in order to receive it successfully. The more able pupils pass the ball well whilst on the move. They play versions of competitive games, such as 'captain' ball, with skill and vigour, observing the rules and competing with good spirit.

160. The vast majority of pupils make good progress at both key stages as they develop, practise and refine their skills, acquiring new learning, for example learning to hold a good position in gymnastics. The good teaching throughout the school ensures that several pupils make good progress at both key stages. Progress over time is satisfactory. Pupils demonstrate this regularly in the standard of their control of movements and sequences. Pupils make good progress when, because of effective teaching and some teachers' good subject knowledge, they focus on improving specific elements in their skills. This is particularly evident in good lessons

when the level of pupils' skills at the beginning of the lesson is compared with that at the end. Pupils' progress is also more rapid when they listen well and take the advice of their teachers about their skills. A small but significant number of pupils make unsatisfactory progress, despite the good efforts of their teachers. This is a result of poor behaviour. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language make good progress in physical education lessons, with support from members of staff. However, the high percentage of pupils with special educational needs, especially those with behavioural difficulties, does affect significantly the overall standards in some classes.

161. Most pupils enjoy their lessons and are responsible, interested and active. They behave well and show high levels of positive involvement. They co-operate well together, playing competitive games keenly but properly. They have respect for rules and make honest attempts to observe them. Some show initiative and a sense of leadership, although the opportunities to develop this are limited. They respond well to instructions, waste little time and try very hard.

Relationships are good between pupils and teachers and, in most cases, between pupils and pupils. The majority show sensitivity towards others and readily appreciate others' successes. However, a very small number of pupils do not behave well and are a constant source of frustration to teachers and pupils alike. The quality of behaviour management by most teachers is such that this does not interfere over-much with the good progress made by the sizeable majority. Clearly, these badly behaved pupils make only limited progress.

162. The quality of teaching is good at both key stages, with some very good teaching seen. Teachers prepare well, although they do not plan work routinely to challenge the more able pupils in their classes. There are also occasionally some deficiencies in the planning for the different needs of boys and girls. Teachers have clear targets for what they want their pupils to learn. They recall prior work and explain new work very well, with good questioning techniques. All teachers manage their classes and resources very effectively. Lessons usually have good pace and timing, with firm control. Most teachers are confident about teaching physical education and have good subject knowledge. In the best lessons, teachers break down pupils' learning of skills, practise and reassemble to produce improved performances. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and attitude to work, giving good encouragement, especially to the less able. Relationships are good. Pupils work in a safe and secure environment. Assessment is ongoing and informal. Most teachers make lessons fun but purposeful for pupils.

173. **PART C: INSPECTION DATA**

173. **Summary of inspection evidence**

163. This inspection was carried out by a team of six inspectors, including a lay inspector, and took place over a period of four days in the week beginning 8 November 1999. The main evidence considered by the inspection team for the report was gathered from:

- 78 lessons or parts of lessons covering the children under the age of five in nursery and reception classes and all classes at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 , including pupils identified as having special educational needs and those with English as an additional language;
- aspects of acts of worship and a range of other activities;
- listening to three pupils read from Year 2 and Year 6 classes and a number from all other classes throughout the school and checking the pre-reading and reading skills of the children under the age of five in the reception class;
- the full literacy and numeracy hours for all classes;
- a range of previous and current samples of pupil s' work from each year group;
- discussions with pupils about their work;
- discussions with the headteacher, staff, governors, parents and the link teachers with the nursery and the secondary schools;
- 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 survey of the swimming provision;
- a meeting held by the registered inspector and attended by 26 parents shortly before the inspection.
- The team also considered the responses that parents made in 86 questionnaires.

- **DATA AND INDICATORS**

- **Pupil data**

September 1999	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with statements of SEN	Number of pupils on school's register of SEN	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
YR – Y6	336	8	117	87

- **Teachers and classes**

- **Qualified teachers (YR – Y6)**

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):	14.60
Number of pupils per qualified teacher:	23:1

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

Total number of education support staff:	5
Total aggregate hours worked each week:	117

Average class size:	26
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- **Financial data**

Financial year: No on Roll: 373	1998 - 1999
	£
Total Income	546575
Total Expenditure	546545
Expenditure per pupil	1465.27
Balance brought forward from previous year	13115
Balance carried forward to next year	13145

PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out: 336
 Number of questionnaires returned: 86

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	28	60	11	1	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	28	58	9	5	0
The school handles complaints from parents well	14	56	19	10	1
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	16	66	8	10	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	20	59	11	7	3
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	20	65	11	1	3
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	22	53	17	7	1
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	16	69	5	8	2
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	20	53	22	3	2
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	16	43	21	14	6
My child(ren) like(s) school	40	51	6	2	1

Other issues raised by parents

- .. The teachers provide good role models;
- .. Parents are happy with the new homework policy;
- .. The standards of behaviour are sometimes unsatisfactory.