

INSPECTION REPORT

Bowes Hutchinson's C.E. (A) School
Bowes, Barnard Castle

LEA area : Durham

Unique Reference Number : 114237

Headteacher : Mrs S Griffiths

Reporting inspector : Mr S Dobson

Dates of inspection : 11 - 13 October 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 707258

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Information about the school

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
Type of control:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	4-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr P Nicholls
Date of previous inspection:	February 1996

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MAIN FINDINGS

What the school does well

- There is consistently good quality teaching. The quality of teaching is good or better in almost 90 percent of lessons seen and it is never unsatisfactory. This contributes significantly to the progress that the pupils make in lessons.
- There is excellent provision for pupils' moral and social development. All of the pupils develop very well in these areas.
- There is very good provision for pupil's cultural development. Pupils have a very good range of cultural experiences.
- There is good provision for pupils' spiritual development both within the context of Christian values and in their appreciation of the world around them.
- Very good support and guidance is given to pupils. Pupils are cared for very well. Pupils are very secure and happy in school and they are helped to become both independent and reliable.
- A very good partnership has been developed with the parents and an excellent partnership with the community.
- Good management is provided by the headteacher, the governors and the team of staff in their respective roles.
- Very good use is made of the financial and other resources available. This is an efficient school; time, resources and expertise are used very well.
- Very good behaviour is seen at all times. There are no instances of bullying.
- Very good relationships exist between the pupils and the pupils and staff.
- Pupils achieve standards higher than expected for their age in information technology and achieve satisfactory standards in all other subjects of the National Curriculum.
- There is a very good ethos. The school delivers an education which mirrors its aims.

Where the school has weaknesses

- Some of the skills taught, for example in writing or investigative work, are not revisited regularly enough for the pupils to be able to fully benefit by building on their earlier learning. However, the curriculum is currently undergoing reorganisation to accommodate new initiatives and to make other improvements.
- Pupils have too few opportunities to accurately record their work. Because of this, pupils sometimes fail to consolidate their learning and they have too few chances to look back on their earlier work in order to gauge improvement in their work.
- The standard of presentation of work is unsatisfactory and this often leads to inaccuracy. However, there has been some recent improvement in the standard of handwriting.
- The standard of spelling is unsatisfactory. Pupils are careless and this significantly impairs the quality of their work.

The above four items will form the basis of the governor's action plan, which will be sent to all parents or guardians of children at the school.

How the school has improved since the last inspection

The school has made a good improvement since the last report. All of the issues have been addressed. There have been two attempts to review the curriculum since 1996. Just over a year ago, the staff began a programme of re-writing and the new curriculum plans effectively support pupils' progress. The system has not been in place long enough to raise standards overall.

The management role of the second in charge of the school is clear and effective. It is also developmental for the person in post. The headteacher has maintained and enhanced the level of staffing through maximising all sources of funding. The staffing enhancement, for which the school has gained funding from the Trustee

The school has very good links with the cluster group of schools and uses these links well to support both quality of teaching and learning.

In the last year, the school has taken steps to improve the quality of handwriting throughout the school and particularly at Key Stage 2. There is some improvement, most pupils form letters correctly and are developing an appropriate style. However, there is a need to pursue this target further.

Standards have been maintained in all areas of the curriculum.

The school has a very good capacity to improve further, because the headteacher and Chair of Governors have a clear vision for the school and there is a committed and dedicated team of staff who are well motivated to improve further.

Standards in subjects

The school has relatively small numbers of pupils in each year group and percentage performance in any one year is not a reliable guide to overall performance. However, over time, the schools performance is at least in line with the national average and is similar to that of similar schools

Quality of Teaching

Teaching in:	By 5	By 7	By 11
English:	Good	Good	Good
Mathematics	Good	Good	Good
Science	Not judged	Good	Good
Information and communications technology	Not judged	Good	Good
Religious education	Not judged	Not judged	Not judged
Other subjects	Good	Good	Good

All of the teaching is at least satisfactory and overall, the quality of teaching is good. Teaching is very good or better in 19 percent of lessons and good in a further 68 percent. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs in withdrawal situations is usually satisfactory. The teaching of numeracy throughout the school is good and the teaching of literacy ranges from satisfactory to very good but is mostly good. The overall quality of teaching is very similar in both key stages. The consistently good teaching in the school is a significant factor in the progress which the pupils make.

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	Pupils' behaviour is consistently very good. They get on well together in the classrooms, helping each other and working very well in groups when asked to do so. In the playground it is most noticeable that older pupils are aware of the younger ones, guiding their play when they consider this to be needed. Boys and girls play and work very well together.
Attendance	Attendance is good. Attendance levels are higher than the national average and there is no unauthorised absence.
Ethos*	The school has a very positive ethos. All of the staff work very hard to make school a lively, interesting and caring place for pupils to learn. Pupils respond very well and visitors to the school notice a very strong sense of the whole school working as a team.

Leadership and management	Good leadership and management ensures that the school is successful and is very well placed to improve further. The headteacher gives very good leadership to the school team, though there is very clearly shared responsibility and full involvement of all members. Similarly the governors give good leadership, having a very good knowledge of the school and carry out their duties responsibly. The governors give good support to the school.
Curriculum	The school's curriculum is satisfactory and is improving considerably. Changes in the last year to the overall organisation of the curriculum have been effective but have not been in place long enough to help to raise standards. National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been appropriately modified to meet the needs of the school.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	There is a high percentage of pupils with special educational needs and these pupils make satisfactory progress within their capabilities. The school has made tremendous efforts to set up appropriate learning programmes for these pupils and generally these are effective. Some of the work undertaken with specialist support outside the classroom is not linked well to the remainder of the pupils' learning.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	The school has very good accommodation; in particular the school grounds are a very good resource. The school is well equipped and resources are plentiful and of good quality for most subjects. There are sufficient teaching staff and, thanks to additional funding provided for the school, the number and quality of support staff is good.
Value for money	The school gives good 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	What some parents are not happy about
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The level of support for pupils with special educational needs • The attitudes and values that the school promotes • The support that the pupils get from the teachers • The openness of the school; parents feel welcome. • The standards of behaviour. • The quality of homework given. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The parents indicated no significant dissatisfaction with any aspect of the life of the school either at the parents' meeting with the Registered Inspector or on the questionnaires.

The inspection team fully endorses the positive views of the school which the parents hold.

KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

This is a very successful school in most areas of its work. In order to raise standards further the headteacher and governors should ensure that:

- the process of curriculum development which is now operating in the school continues to pay particular attention to ensuring that pupils regularly build on the skills that they have developed in each subject; (paragraphs 13, 34)
- pupils are required to consolidate and extend their learning through more regular and accurate recording of their ideas and findings; (paragraphs 9, 104)
- pupils are expected to record work more accurately. This should include attention to the standard of handwriting and overall presentation. Teachers should do this by stating clearly what is expected, teaching pupils how higher standards can be achieved and insisting that these requirements are met to the best of each pupil's capability; (paragraphs 9, 17, 84, 85)
- pupils' spelling improves. Teaching and support staff should do this by insisting that pupils pay appropriate attention to spelling in their written work and learn positive habits of self-correction. (paragraphs 9, 84).

INTRODUCTION

Characteristics of the school

1 The school serves the families of Bowes, those living in some outlying districts and some from other areas who choose this school in preference to others. There are 51 pupils on roll of whom 16 have special educational needs. 12 pupils with special educational needs attract support from outside agencies. The percentage of pupils with special needs and those with a statement of need is high. The number of pupils entitled to free school meals is below the national average.

2 The pupils come from a mixture of social backgrounds. The standards achieved by children at the start of their time in school are as expected overall though there are significant variations. There is evidence of some children starting school with limited language development and some with limited physical development, especially fine control. Many of the pupils attend the part-time playgroup which operates in the school.

3 The school aims to provide a secure, happy environment which is thoughtful caring and Christian. The school intends to provide for the needs of all pupils including those with special educational needs and to make the best of the potential of each pupil in preparing them for the next stage of education. The school also aims to be welcoming to pupils and their parents.

Key indicators

Attainment at Key Stage 1¹

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

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	6	4	10

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	6	6	6
	Girls	4	4	4
	Total	10	10	10
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	100(100)	100(100)	100(100)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	6	6	6
	Girls	3	3	4
	Total	9	9	10
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	90(100)	90(100)	100(100)
	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	2	2	4

Results are not reported due to low numbers of pupils and the possibility of identifying individuals. However, all pupils attained at least the nationally expected levels for pupils age 11.

Attendance

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

		%
Authorised Absence	School	4.5
	National comparative data	5.7
Unauthorised Absence	School	0
	National comparative data	0.5

¹ Percentages in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

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

Exclusions

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

	Number
Fixed period	0
Permanent	0

Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is :

	%
Very good or better	19
Satisfactory or better	100
Less than satisfactory	0

PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL

Attainment and progress

4 When children start school in the reception classes, their skills in language are variable with some above and some below expected levels. Their skills in literacy, mathematics, personal and social development, creative, physical and knowledge and understanding of the world are broadly as expected for children of four years old. The children make good progress overall and by the end of the academic year they attain at least the levels described by the national desirable learning outcomes for children aged five.

5 The numbers of pupils entered for the National Curriculum tests at the age of seven and eleven each year are relatively low and it is difficult to identify meaningful trends or comparisons with other schools. The national, end of Key Stage 1 test results and the teacher assessments for 1999 indicate that a well above average number of pupils attain the expected levels but a lower than average number reach higher levels. Over the last four years, pupils' attainment has been broadly in line with national averages in English, mathematics and science. Inspection evidence indicates that by the end of Key Stage 1, pupils reach the nationally expected levels in all three subjects. They exceed the levels expected nationally in information and communications technology.

6 By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils attain as expected for their age in English, mathematics and science. Many reach levels above the national expectation in information and communication technology. The national end of Key Stage 2 tests for 1999 show that standards of attainment are above average in English, mathematics and science when compared to all school and when compared to similar schools. However, this is based on a small cohort of pupils. Taken over four years, pupils' achievements are slightly similar to the national average in English and mathematics and above the national average in science.

7 Pupils of all levels of attainment, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in both key stages in English, mathematics and science. They make good progress in information and communications technology.

8 Pupils in both key stages who are on the school's register of special educational needs, make satisfactory progress and attain satisfactory levels in relation to their prior attainment. The teachers pay close attention to their needs in class lessons and they are supported well. In withdrawal situations they make satisfactory progress in developing their basic skills, as identified in their individual education plans, but they are not sufficiently well equipped to use these skills when they return to their classroom situation. For example, pupils who show themselves capable of using simple addition in a one to one situation, do not have the

9 Pupils make satisfactory progress in English at both key stages. By the end of Year 2, they attain levels expected nationally in reading and writing. They make good progress in speaking and listening. They listen attentively to each other and to adults and are confident when answering questions. Pupils read a variety of books and begin to talk about what they have read and the parts that they have enjoyed. They use their knowledge of sound and letter relationships to read unfamiliar words. When they write, pupils are able to construct good sentences that are punctuated adequately, but many of them make only limited attempts to spell words correctly or to write neatly. By the end of Year 6, pupils attain appropriate levels in speaking and listening. They make confident and relevant contributions to discussions. Pupils attain levels in line with those expected nationally for the age group in reading. They are able to read to extract information and a few of the pupils clearly read for pleasure. Pupils are able to use writing accurately for a range of purposes and can write interesting accounts though few of them write very long stories or accounts and therefore have few chances to show that they can structure writing well. Pupils use punctuation satisfactorily. The presentation of written work is often untidy.

10 Literacy is given appropriate attention. The National Literacy Strategy has been adapted appropriately to meet the needs of the mixed age and mixed ability classes and the strategy is having a positive effect, particularly on pupils' reading. Pupils are required to use their reading skills in all subjects. They use their writing skills in a range of subjects and for a variety of purposes.

11 Pupils in both key stages make satisfactory progress in mathematics. By the end of Year 2, pupils attain the levels expected nationally for seven-year-olds. For example, they are able to calculate using familiar number patterns and those who have difficulties, especially those with special educational needs, use apparatus well to support them in their work. Those pupils who have good recall of number facts, are able to use subtraction and multiplication effectively. By the end of Year 6, many pupils attain the levels expected nationally for eleven-year-olds. For example, pupils understand symmetry and can rotate shapes accurately. Most of the pupils can use fractions to solve problems. Some of the pupils in Key Stage 2 do not have a firm grasp of multiplication tables and this impedes their progress.

12 The teachers have adapted the National Numeracy strategy appropriately for this situation and are reviewing its implementation. Pupils use numeracy skills in other subjects of the curriculum such as science and design and technology and this helps them to consolidate their learning.

13 In science, pupils make satisfactory progress in both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. By the end of Year 2, pupils attain appropriately for their age. They have a good understanding of life and living things and are knowledgeable about such topics as materials and changes. They know how to carry out investigations and can talk about their observations using appropriate vocabulary. By the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment is appropriate for their age. They have a sound knowledge of all parts of the science curriculum and they can carry out investigations, making predictions based on scientific understanding. In individual lessons progress is usually good, but there are too few opportunities to consolidate learning and therefore over time, progress is satisfactory.

14 In information and communications technology, pupils attain levels that are at least in line with the national expectations for their age by the end of both key stages and many pupils reach levels which are higher. Pupils in Year 2, use the keyboard and the mouse to enter text and data. They can edit, save and print their work. They use the keyboard accurately. Even the youngest pupils use the mouse to control elements of a program. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils in Year 6 are confident when entering and editing text and illustrations, selecting and changing fonts and colours to create particular effects. Recently they have made particularly good use of a digital camera. They have made great gains in confidence. Pupils at both key stages make good progress.

15 Pupils at both key stages make satisfactory progress in design and technology, geography, history, and physical education. They make good progress in major elements of music and art. Pupils make good progress in French.

16 Since the last inspection standards in all subjects have been maintained and there has been

improvement in information and communications technology.

Attitudes, behaviour and personal development

17 Pupils have a good attitude to learning. By the time they reach five years old, they have made good progress in their personal and social development, know what is expected of them and are active members of the school. The youngest pupils learn what is expected of them and throughout the school, pupils concentrate well in lessons, especially in whole class sessions when talking with the teachers. They are mostly willing participants in discussions and clearly understand the role of discussion in their learning. Almost all of the pupils complete tasks given, either in class or for homework. They suggest ideas when asked to do so. Mostly, pupils show interest in their work, and make positive contributions to classwork. The only shortcoming in pupils' attitude is their lack of attention to spelling and presentation of work.

18 Pupils' behaviour at all times in and around the school is very good. They are courteous to other children and to adults and they show a genuine consideration for the needs of others, even when engrossed in play. Their relationships are constructive, in both classes group work is successful in part due to the pupils behaving very well and co-operating with each other.

19 They show respect for differences. In this school there is a well above average number of pupils with special educational needs. The other pupils show good consideration for their needs and are supportive. Many of the pupils take initiative, for example some of the younger pupils begin to clear up and make workspaces ready for others before they are asked to do so. Older pupils are particularly vigilant when in the playground, sometimes helping the youngest pupils to play their games more effectively. The school council is a very positive opportunity for pupils to take responsibility.

Attendance

20 Attendance at school is good and is above that of primary schools nationally. There is no unauthorised absence. Pupils mostly arrive in good time and the procedures that are necessary at the start of the school day are carried out efficiently so that lessons can begin promptly.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED

Teaching

21 Overall, the quality of teaching, including the teaching of literacy and numeracy, is good. In 6 percent of lessons the quality of teaching is excellent and in 13 percent it is very good. In a further 68 percent of lessons the quality of teaching is good and in the remaining 13 percent the quality of teaching is satisfactory. This represents a significant improvement in the quality of teaching since the last inspection when it was judged to be 'sound in all lessons and frequently good.' The quality of teaching is a significant factor in the standards that pupils achieve and it is an indication of the school's potential to raise standards further.

22 The quality of teaching for children under five is good. The teachers plan well for these children, though much of the direct teaching in the early part of the academic year is carried out by the classroom auxiliary. Good teaching, involving interesting activities and lots of talking with adults, enables children to make good progress in the reception class and to attain levels described by the national desirable learning outcomes for children aged five. The teachers have a good knowledge of an appropriate curriculum for the under fives and a good understanding of how young children learn. The teachers' plans clearly indicate what is to be taught and learnt and the children are managed very effectively, involving them with the whole class and giving opportunities for them to progress at their own pace. This helps to promote their personal and social development as well as their intellectual development. In a lesson about the making toast, the children were asked relevant questions both before and after the bread was toasted, the children were able to identify changes and then were encouraged to present their findings to the older pupils who were working on a similar but more complex topic.

23 In Key Stage 1, the quality of teaching is good. Two teachers share the class and the same good standard is consistently maintained. This consistently good quality of teaching enables pupils to make good progress in lessons. The teachers are particularly good at setting relevant learning targets and asking questions of the pupils which prompt them to investigate further. Lessons are very well planned. The teachers are particularly adept at setting appropriate challenges for pupils with special educational needs and these pupils get very good support.

24 In Key Stage 2, the quality of teaching is very similar to that in Key Stage 1 and is good overall. The strengths of the teaching in Key Stage 2 lie in the very good management of pupils' learning, based on effective planning and good use of assessment. The teacher knows the pupils well and uses a good variety of methods and strategies which include grouping pupils by prior attainment for literacy and mathematics.

25 Where the quality of teaching is very good or excellent, there are clear learning objectives and the teacher has very good subject knowledge. For example, in a Key Stage 2 music lesson, the teacher explained clearly what she wanted the pupils to do and to learn and intervened very effectively once they began to struggle to hold their individual parts in a complex rhythm. The teacher modelled good practice and some of the higher attaining pupils were able to copy this and lead their own group to a successful conclusion. The good pace of the lesson was maintained by using a range of different teaching strategies involving activities for the pupils. This excellent teaching enabled pupils to make very good progress in the lesson. Similarly at Key Stage 1 in an English lesson, the teacher introduced a book by relying on pupils' ability to make suggestions based on their interpretation of pictures. Stopping short of the ending of the book, the pupils were then asked to return to the beginning and use higher order reading skills to review the book. Pupils were eager to find out the ending, were motivated to read to the best of their ability, and, supported by the teacher, made good progress in developing their reading. This approach increased pupils' motivation and involved them in using a range of skills including prediction.

26 Where the quality of teaching is good, planning is clear and teachers use a good range of strategies to involve and motivate the pupils. All lessons are well organised and the management of pupils is almost always a very good feature of lessons. In these lessons, whilst pupils mostly achieve what the teacher has planned for them, teachers expect too little in the presentation of written work and, as the lesson closes, pupils have only a superficial record of their work to look back on. Pupils' progress is good during the course of these lessons but sometimes the learning is not consolidated.

27 In the 13 percent of lessons where the quality of teaching is satisfactory, the lessons are appropriately planned and resources are organised. The teachers have a good rapport with the pupils and have high expectations for their attitude to work. On one occasion at both Key Stages, the pace of the lesson slowed because the teacher's explanation was over-long.

28 The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs varies between satisfactory and good and is satisfactory overall. Teachers have a good knowledge of pupils' individual education plans and take an equal share with the special needs co-ordinator in writing the targets for pupils' learning. Plans for teaching are generally appropriate and assessment of the pupils' progress towards the targets in their individual education plans is carried out regularly. The most frequent shortcoming in these lessons is the lack of a stimulating input, and this occurs in some withdrawal situations for pupils with special educational needs. In these lessons, pupils are less well motivated than in their classroom situations particularly if given worksheets which offer them little chance of success. All teachers manage the pupils well, enabling them to make progress intellectually and socially. Support staff are well briefed and make a positive contribution to pupils' progress.

29 Teachers have very good knowledge and understanding of the curriculum for children under five and of the subjects of the National Curriculum. There are particular strengths in teachers' subject knowledge in French, music and art. Good use is made of specialist expertise in music throughout the school and this makes a significant impact on the standards pupils attain in music.

30 Teachers' expectations for pupils' behaviour are good throughout the school. They use the school's system for managing behaviour well. Teachers' expectations for pupils' attainment are generally appropriate. The quality of teachers' planning and assessment is good. The contribution to be made by support staff is planned and they are well briefed before the lesson. Good use is made of homework at both key stages. The

tasks which teachers set for pupils are relevant and contribute to the progress they make.

The curriculum and assessment

31 The curriculum very effectively supports the school aims. It is broadly based and prepares pupils for the next stage in their education. It meets the statutory requirements and appropriate attention is given to health and sex education. The curriculum is suitably extended beyond the minimum requirements with a broad range of initiatives such as the Eco school project, and environmental education based project, and the teaching of French.

32 The school provides equality of access and opportunity for all pupils. The curricular needs of pupils on the special needs Code of Practice register are fully met.

33 The curriculum provided for children who are under five years old is good. It is appropriately based on achievement of the Desirable Learning Outcomes for Children entering compulsory education. Because the children are taught in a mixed age class, they are able to join in with the older pupils when this is appropriate. However, there is provision for them to be taught separately and a good range of activities is provided for them to extend and consolidate their learning.

34 The long-term curriculum planning for English and mathematics follows national guidance. The teachers implemented the National Literacy Framework last year and have introduced the National Numeracy strategy during the current year. This guidance has been adapted to meet the needs of the different age groups within the same class. The teachers have made a good start; they have good strategies for lesson evaluation and pupil assessment and are well placed to raise standards. Long term planning for other subjects, particularly history and geography is within a topic cycle and this is repeated over a four-year period in both key stages. This is insufficient and pupils do not revisit key elements to re-inforce and consolidate their learning sufficiently often. The school has begun to make changes to this planning and to improve the curriculum but it has not been fully implemented, being one year into a two year cycle of planning. The school have recently adopted national guidance to support schemes of work but these are recent and are only just beginning to have an effect as they are not fully embedded into practice. The planning for information and communications technology is good. Medium and short term planning is thorough and effective.

35 The curriculum is very successfully enriched through a wide range of initiatives, visitors and visits. The arts are promoted well. The curriculum is made relevant by first hand experiences in museums such as Beamish and Eden Camp. The grounds are used very well with pupils recycling materials, and maintaining a 'secret' garden. Pupils begin to learn French as an additional language. Extra curricular activities include chess and computer clubs and pupils have opportunities to play the ocarina and stringed instruments.

36 The school has very effective systems for assessing and recording pupils' achievements in English mathematics and science and these are having a direct impact on raising standards. An analysis of school assessments and the data available from national tests is used to identify strengths and weaknesses in curriculum provision and to identify pupils requiring additional support. Pupils discuss individual targets for improvement with teachers and these are reviewed regularly. This is having a positive effect on progress. Assessment is used well to inform future planning; all lessons are evaluated and planning is adapted to take account of the evaluation.

37 The curriculum for pupils with special educational needs is appropriate. Teachers take account of need within lessons and withdrawal lessons are based on the basic skills which the pupils still need to acquire. The school has provided additional time from its own resources to support one group of pupils with physical needs. This additional work is reported as having clearly benefited these pupils.

38 At the time of the last inspection the school was asked to continue the development of the curriculum and this has been done with some success. A year ago the school began to rewrite all schemes of work and these are successful in helping to raise standards.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

39 A major strength of the school is its outstanding provision for the pupils' moral and social development. Very good provision is made for their cultural development and there is good provision for their spiritual development. This is an improvement in provision since the last inspection report. The school has a caring community ethos which embodies clear values and enables pupils to reflect on relationships, as they affect their own and other people's lives. The aims of the school are shared by the school community and have a positive effect on this ethos. Parents feel that the school promotes very positive attitudes and good moral values.

40 During some assemblies there are opportunities for reflection. Discussion about the Jewish faith and a visit to a synagogue provide a broader view of religious and spiritual beliefs and encourage openness and sensitivity to values and beliefs which are different from their own. Pupils reflect on the wider world; for example, they collect items for the refugees from the crisis in Kosova. Within the curriculum they share the joy in poems and music. In a very good poetry lesson, pupils were led into a darkened hall lit by over forty candles. The pupils were clearly moved and impressed by the sight. Through opportunities, such as selecting a pupil to receive recognition for good behaviour during the assembly celebrating pupils' achievements, they gain an appreciation of others.

41 Provision for moral development is outstanding. The school teaches its pupils the difference between right and wrong. Pupils are aware of the school rules and the reason for them. The school has very good strategies for managing behaviour. It is evident from the very good behaviour of all pupils that the consistent approach and high expectations of the staff have a positive effect on the atmosphere in school. Pupils show respect for each other and care for the environment through for example, extensive environmentally based work in the school and the village. Pupils of all ages play and work well together. Older pupils are protective of the younger ones. The quality of relationships throughout the school is very good and staff provide very good role models for pupils.

42 There is excellent provision for social development. The school offers a range of activities to develop social skills through individual and group activities. It provides a range of extra curricular provision, which includes sport, chess and computer clubs. Pupils take an active role in the community with events such as the local carnival and encouraging the whole village to re-cycle materials. The pupils' social skills are further enhanced through their contact and work with the many visitors who are invited into school; for example a local potter. They learn about setting targets in the adult world from a member of the armed forces and older people from the community are encouraged to join the pupils for lunch. Residential visits for older pupils give them opportunities to learn about living and co-operating in a community setting away from home. The School Council is given responsibility to act and support other pupils with problems and concerns. There is a suggestion box for pupils to use and this allows issues to be addressed. Older pupils are given responsibility to encourage and support positive behaviour within the school community.

43 There is very good provision for cultural development. Every opportunity is taken to enrich the curriculum through visits and visitors. A wide range of artists has worked on projects in school making fabric wall hangings, painted murals and sculptures. Through purposeful use of the local environment, pupils gain a close insight into their own local heritage. A very wide variety of educational visits are organised to museums and places of historical and environmental interest. Pupils experience theatre both within school and in neighbouring towns. They learn to converse in the French language and become familiar with some French customs. Through music and art they learn to appreciate a diversity of different cultures. An appreciation of the lives of peoples of other cultures is less well promoted.

Support, guidance and pupils' welfare

44 The school supports pupils very well and places great importance on having appropriate procedures to ensure their well being. Teachers have very good relationships with their pupils and know them well.

45 Pupils' progress and personal development are monitored well partly because of the very good relationships the staff have with them but also because teachers regularly check what they are doing. They are given good guidance on their work on a one-to-one basis and systematic records are kept of what the classes

have achieved in lessons. Pupils also are expected to review their own work and personal achievements every week, considering things done well and those done not so well and these reviews are shared with parents. Pupils with special educational needs are set appropriate targets.

46 The school has very good procedures for monitoring and promoting discipline and good behaviour. The rules are displayed around the school in classrooms and the playground. They are simple and few and are based on the need for safety and for respect for others and property. There are rewards for making good efforts in work and behaviour as a source of encouragement. Four older pupils belong to the school's council and they play an important part in sorting out problems between pupils and in promoting good behaviour positively. Pupils can also, if they wish, write about any problems they have and put the note in a box for the attention of the teacher. Pupils rarely feel the need to do this. Parents have no concerns about bullying in school.

47 Attendance at school is very well monitored and pupils are happy to come. The school has regular contact with an educational welfare officer who makes sure there are no problems. Parents contact the school without fail if their child is likely to be absent.

48 Pupils' health and safety is taken care of very well. There are very good procedures for child protection and the school has regular visits from an appropriate range of professionals such as the educational psychologist and the school nurse. First aid and the administration of medicine in school are covered very well and the premises and equipment have been professionally checked to make sure there are no hazards. Supply teachers or those new to the school have good guidance so that they know what the required procedures are for pupils' welfare. Pupils are very well supported on transfer to secondary school. There is a wide and developing range of links between the schools. This is big improvement on what was reported at the time of the last inspection. The younger children have a very good introduction to school life because of the close relationship the teachers have with the local playgroup that is held on the premises.

Partnership with parents and the community

49 The school has a very strong partnership with parents and the community and this supports pupils' achievement. The quality of this relationship has been maintained since the last inspection.

50 The quality of information which parents receive from the school is very good, both formally and informally. Formal documents are written in a pleasant, readable style and newsletters are sent out weekly to keep parents up-to-date. Parents feel very welcome in school and have very good opportunities to talk to teachers and to look at their children's work. The school's annual reports to parents contain all that is required though targets in individual subjects sometimes lack clarity.

51 Parents are very strongly involved with the school both in fund-raising through the Friends of Bowes association and through giving practical help. They have provided, among other things, a magnificent outdoor play area which parents built. The school has a regular team of parental helpers who are given good guidance on what they can do. Parents are involved at home as pupils share their own weekly records of what they have achieved in school with them. They enter their own comments in these records and also on their children's reading at home. Judging by the large number of snails seen in the Key Stage 2 classroom during the inspection, parents also encourage their children to take things into school which are relevant to their lessons. The home/school agreement has now been formalised after consultation with parents and the signed copies have been returned to school.

52 The school has built up an excellent range of links both among the local community and with businesses and organisations further afield. These greatly enrich the educational opportunities pupils have in school. The school is very much a part of the local community and its premises such as the field and outdoor play area are open for use out of school time. The local playgroup and the youth club are based in school and senior citizens are welcome to have school lunch, should they wish. Pupils attend the village church once a month for a service. The school has been instrumental in providing waste facilities for the village through its work as an Eco School. Visitors into school include the local artist and also an artist in residence who work on a wide range of creative projects in clay and textiles. Other visitors include a 'weather man', a basketball coach and a jazz dance company and shortly a trio who play wind instruments will come to play in school. The school

takes pupils out on visits, for example, to places of historical interest and to farms and also to a local newspaper, to widen their experience. There are also very good links with other small schools in the area. This also helps pupils in this relatively isolated community to develop socially.

THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL

Leadership and management

53 The overall quality of leadership and management is good. The headteacher provides very good leadership. Since taking up the post less than two years ago, the headteacher has very successfully built an effective team of staff who work well with the governors to give a very clear sense of purpose and direction for the school. The headteacher and the staff are very approachable and parents appreciate this. The governors take their role very seriously, fulfil their responsibilities well and contribute effectively to the management of the school. The headteacher and the governors work well together and provide a good sense of purpose for the school.

54 The headteacher provides very good leadership, clearly knowing and understanding the strengths and shortcomings of the school and being able to share that knowledge with others. The head has clearly gained the respect of the staff, pupils and the community. The headteacher is very well organised and this supports the teachers well, giving them the opportunity to get on with the job of teaching. The headteacher has a good overview of the standards achieved by the pupils, through teaching at Key Stage 1 and visiting the Key Stage 2 classroom. The headteacher has an overall good knowledge of the quality of teaching and learning. The headteacher helps maintain and improve standards by encouraging all staff to undertake appropriate development training.

55 The members of the governing body are clearly very interested in the school and its future and they provide strong and effective support for the headteacher and the staff. The majority of the governors are also parents and they have a very close working knowledge of the school. There is an effective working partnership between the governors and the staff and this supports the school in having a good capacity to improve further. The governors fulfil their responsibilities diligently and gather their own information, for example through the work of the curriculum committee.

56 All of the staff share responsibilities and there is open and frank discussion. Whilst teachers have responsibilities for the co-ordination of particular subjects, there is very much a team effort when subjects are under review. This works very effectively in this small school setting. The management of special educational needs is good. The school's procedures are appropriate and the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator ensures that the pupils receive good support.

57 Monitoring of the work of the school is good. Teachers seek information about their subjects through their own lesson evaluations and through review of pupils' work. The headteacher is involved in the classrooms both as part-time teacher and as manager. The governors gather sufficient information to make sound judgements.

58 The school's aims and values are clearly stated in the school's policies and other documents and they inform the work of the school. The policies for the subjects and for other aspects of the life of the school are clearly and simply written and are useful. Staff and pupils know what is expected of them. Parents fully support the values of the school and consider this to be an important feature and a main reason for choosing this school.

59 The school development plan is clear. It is based on a three-year cycle of review to which other targets are added as necessary. The governors and all the staff are involved in the planning and are keen to see issues addressed. When undertaking development, the school seeks good value for money but does not formally evaluate its spending decisions.

60 The school has a very positive ethos. All of the staff are committed to making this a successful school. Equality of opportunity is assured for each pupil and each pupil is encouraged and supported. This school is a very happy place for pupils where they enjoy their learning.

61 The action plan, based on the last report, has mostly been well managed. The issues have been or are in the process of being addressed well. The school fulfils all of its statutory requirements.

Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

62 The staffing, accommodation and leaning resources in the school are good overall.

63 The staff are appropriately qualified and there are sufficient in number and experience in order to teach the curriculum to primary aged children. Curriculum co-ordinator duties are shared between the staff. Appraisals, in which the teachers assess their own work over a twelve-month period, are up-to-date. There are appropriate arrangements for the induction of new teachers and there is clear documentation to support them and supply teachers on school procedures. Teachers participate in training with those from other small schools in their cluster group, for example, on planning for the Literacy Hour and one teacher has observed the teaching of literacy and numeracy in another school.

64 Partly through funds provided by the Trustee Governors, the school employs classroom auxiliaries who make a good contribution to learning, particularly at the beginning of the school year when pupils are settling in to their new classes. Teachers share their planning with the auxiliaries who are in a good position to support pupils. Another assistant is provided to give an appropriate amount of time to the support of pupils with special educational needs. The hours available for secretarial support are adequate for routine purposes, but as more responsibilities are being delegated to the school, this allocation of time needs to be reviewed. There are sufficient staff to supervise pupils at lunchtime and to keep the buildings clean and well maintained. All staff have had training on child protection issues and many have also been trained to administer first aid.

65 The school's accommodation is very good. The school has a hall for assemblies, physical education and music and also has a separate dining hall. Otherwise unused areas are imaginatively used, for example, to provide a computer area separate from those in the classrooms. There are sufficient areas so that groups can be withdrawn to work on specific projects such as large-scale textiles. The playground and playing field provide very good areas for pupils' education and recreation. There is a safely fenced wildlife garden and a garden area which pupils tend. Pupils have the use of a well-designed and constructed play area provided by the Friends of Bowes association. The school entrance is used well to celebrate pupils' achievements by displaying trophies and albums of photographs and press cuttings. The whole building is bright, attractive and well-maintained and is a good environment in which pupils learn.

66 The school is very well supplied with resources. Pupils are well provided with computers. The books in classrooms and in the library are of good quality and are in good condition. Those in the library are not all as readily accessible as they should be as the top shelves are rather high but those for the youngest pupils are stored well in racks which they can look through easily. Much of the equipment is readily accessible in the classroom and there is an additional storage area for art materials and paper. There is good physical education equipment and a good range of musical instruments although their storage in the hall is a little obtrusive. There is a very good range of outdoor play equipment for pupils to use at playtime. The school makes use of outside resources such as the school's library service, activity centres and museums to support work in the curriculum.

The efficiency of the school

67 This is a very efficient school. All resources are used well to support the quality of education and the development of the pupils.

68 The quality of financial planning is very good. Development targets are set with close regard to what is possible. For example, the provision of an additional classroom auxiliary was researched and found to be possible within the money available and this provision has been of great value to the school. The forecast rise in school numbers has already been planned for. The school operates fully within the budget that it has set and seeks to gain good value for money from its spending. The resources available to support pupils with special educational needs are fully used for that purpose.

69 Good use is made of the staff's time and expertise, for example using one teacher's skills in music across the school to help raise standards and using another member's expertise in French to offer a foreign language. The time of classroom auxiliaries and special needs support staff is similarly fully used, though the time available for in-class support is not always used to maximum benefit.

70 Learning resources are used very well both by the teachers in their lessons and by the pupils independently. This is noticeable when the children under five years old make use of the materials and spaces provided in the classroom and the older pupils make use of the library and the computers. The accommodation is used well and the outside area is used particularly effectively. The classrooms are stimulating, but in some areas the space available is not used to give pupils the best possible areas for working.

71 The school is efficiently administered. The school secretary gives good support. All routine administration tasks are carried out effectively and parents and visitors are welcomed to the school. The school has relatively high costs per pupil, which is usual for small schools. Nevertheless there is consistently good teaching and the pupils' overall progress in all areas of their development indicate that the school gives good value for money.

PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS

Areas of learning for children under five

72 At the time of the inspection there were 11 children in the reception year, working alongside pupils in Key Stage 1. The quality of education for these children is good and they make good progress. The teachers involve these children with Key Stage 1 for short periods where this is appropriate but generally plan and provide separately for them. The quality of provision for pupils under five has been maintained since the last inspection.

73 Children make good progress in personal and social development, very quickly coming to understand what is expected of them in terms of behaviour and self-management. They are given good guidance by the adults in class and at other times, for example in the playground, by older pupils in the school. The children learn to be aware of each other and to take turns or share, for example when involved in baking activities. Most of them make rapid gains in confidence, and are able to talk about their work to the whole class.

74 They make good progress in language and literacy. They are involved in very detailed discussions with the adults at many times in the school day, for example sequencing their thoughts and actions when following a recipe to make bread, or clearly expressing their needs to wash after working with play dough. Similarly, whilst listening to a story about dinosaurs, they are able to ask questions which show they have followed the storyline. In the classroom, they have many opportunities to write and they are learning to recognise the sounds of letters as a part of their literacy lessons. Children select books for their own enjoyment and take books home to 'read' with their parents. The children under five develop positive attitudes towards reading and writing.

75 Children make good progress in the mathematical area of learning. They gain a sound knowledge of early number and shape in mathematics. Many have learnt to recognise numerals to 10 and to count accurately from 1 to 6 and backwards to 1. They can read the spots on dice and are able to count forwards up to six places on a snakes and ladders board. Most of the children have learned to recognise squares, triangles and circles and can name these as a part of their mathematics games. Work in sand and clay gives them early knowledge of quantities and measures: more, less, larger and smaller.

76 Children make good gains in knowledge and understanding of the world. They learn about the properties of materials through work with dough and flour, through the other activities in the classroom in sand and water and through sorting activities. In one good lesson, children were involved with an adult making toast and their attention was drawn to the changes that occur when bread is toasted. In response to good questions, the children were able to describe the changes and made sensible suggestions as to why this happened. All of the children have the opportunity to work with an adult on the computer and the children showed good skills in

using the mouse to drag images and drop them in chosen locations on the screen to achieve particular effects. All of the children show good confidence in this sort of work.

77 Children make satisfactory progress in their physical and creative development. Many of them are able to use a paintbrush with care and hold this and other implements appropriately. They show increasing skills when painting and it is clear that some of them take care in making observations of what they wish to draw and paint. When involved in a creative activity making clay crocodiles, the children show great perseverance and a good degree of skill. On the playground, children show a good level of awareness of others. There is satisfactory provision for outdoor activity, though mostly this is as a part of physical education sessions or work on the environment. Provision outdoors for break times is good.

78 The quality of teaching is good. At the time of the inspection, an auxiliary did most of the direct teaching though it was planned well by the teacher. The teacher plans separately for reception children. Very good liaison between the two teachers responsible for this class is helpful and the children benefit from exposure to two different styles. The organisation of teaching spaces for the under fives is good. There is a wealth of interesting activities for the children to participate in and many chances throughout the school day to discuss their learning with an adult. Children have a limited number of opportunities to make choices for themselves.

ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE

English

79 By the end of Year 2, pupils' attainment in all aspects of English is as expected for seven-year-olds with most pupils achieving the expected levels. Few reach levels which are higher. In the national test for seven-year-olds in 1999, the school's results were above the national average. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher level was below the national average.

80 By the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment is as expected for their age in speaking and listening, reading and writing. In the national tests for 11-year-olds in 1999, the schools results were very high, and the proportion of pupils reaching the higher level was also very high. This was based however, on a very small cohort of pupils. Over the last three years and standards have remained constant with around the national average percentage of pupils achieving the expected levels. Annual fluctuations in cohort size make comparisons from year to year a poor indicator of trends in attainment.

81 In lessons throughout the school, pupils make good progress in developing their speaking and listening skills. The majority of pupils gain in confidence and clarity as, for example, when pupils in Key Stage 1 respond to teachers' questions about the story 'Fussy Freda'. Pupils listen well to each other as they share their work and ideas in whole class discussions. Pupils in Key Stage 2 listen attentively to one another and to adults, and respond well to questions, for example, in science lessons when accurately describing the properties of materials. Pupils use their language well in other subjects. For instance, when attending the computer club, pupils explain their difficulties using correct technical vocabulary. Pupils with special educational needs similarly make good progress in speaking and listening, joining in fully with the class discussions. This marks good progress since there is a significant group of pupils in each year group who begin school with limited language skills.

82 Pupils make satisfactory progress in reading throughout the school. Pupils in Key Stage 1 read with understanding. They sequence the events in stories and express their ideas about what might happen next. Pupils consistently use their knowledge of individual letter sounds and blends to read unfamiliar words. By the end of Year 2, pupils' reading skills are as expected for their age. Pupils talk readily about their favourite stories but have only limited knowledge of authors or favourite types of book.

83 Pupils continue to make satisfactory progress from Year 3 onwards. They become more confident readers and are involved in assessing their own reading. They clearly begin to understand the difference between fiction and non-fiction texts and learn how to use contents and index pages to locate information. In upper Key Stage 2 many of the pupils are accurate readers. They use their reading skills well to find information when

carrying out research work, for example in history. By the end of Year 6, pupils' reading skills are as expected for their age.

84 Pupils in Key Stage 1 make satisfactory progress in developing their writing skills. The school has recently introduced a scheme of cursive writing and progress in handwriting is now satisfactory. Most of the pupils in Key Stage 1 learn to form and join letters correctly. Pupils' sentence construction is satisfactory. They write simple sentences using capital letters and full stops. The amount of writing which they produce, is often quite limited and the overall presentation is not satisfactory, though this applies to all subjects which involve writing and not just English. Pupils do not pay sufficient attention to the size of letters, the layout of the work or spelling.

85 Pupils make satisfactory progress in developing their writing in Key Stage 2. They use an appropriate range of punctuation. Pupils draft and edit some of their work. Key Stage 2, pupils write for a range of purposes, for example, they write poems, stories and write stories about castles for other pupils to read. Pupils write particularly well when writing poetry. This is due to good teaching; the elements of writing are staged appropriately from gathering ideas to gathering words before attempting to write. Some of the pupils achieve a very good result, but unfortunately, some of the higher attaining pupils rather simplistically attempt rhyme and lose the point of the exercise. There are some examples of writing for an audience but mainly pupils make short recordings of events or ideas. Handwriting has been taught effectively since the school adopted a scheme, but standards of handwriting and presentation are not yet satisfactory.

86 In the lessons seen, English was taught well. Teachers have received appropriate training to implement the National Literacy Strategy, and have made appropriate adaptations to meet the needs of mixed age classes and the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs. The organisation of pupils into groups of similar levels of prior attainment promotes satisfactory progress. Teachers plan their lessons well. Lesson plans include clearly defined learning objectives and assessment opportunities are identified. Work is generally well matched to pupils' different levels of attainment and good activities are used. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported in literacy lessons and tasks are well matched to the targets in their individual education plans. The English work completed by these pupils in withdrawal situations, meets their basic needs but does not always link well with the work in the classroom.

87 Teachers regularly mark work and assess pupils' progress in English and they give constructive feedback to pupils to help them improve. Teachers maintain reading records which indicate the level of the pupils' reading and what they have read, but do not indicate the skills that the pupils need to develop. Pupils throughout the school regularly take reading books home and where parents give good support, this makes a very positive contribution to their child's attainment and progress. Homework tasks are appropriate and homework is consistently used throughout the school to promote pupils' progress.

88 The majority of pupils demonstrate very positive attitudes; they show interest during literacy sessions and work hard. They talk with enthusiasm about some elements of their work and generally concentrate well, but when writing pupils are in a hurry to finish. Relationships between adults and pupils and between pupils are very good. Pupils behave very well but do not take sufficient pride in their work unless they are using a computer. Pupils use their good literacy skills satisfactorily to support work in other subjects. For instance, speaking and listening skills are very well used to support their work in mathematics, science and music.

89 The English curriculum is broad, balanced and meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. Teachers make good links between English and other subjects, and provide interesting opportunities for pupils to practise and refine their speaking and listening skills. The library is well resourced and used well.

Mathematics

90 At the age of seven, almost all pupils achieve the nationally expected levels and some achieve the higher level 3. Over the last three years, the percentage of pupils reaching the expected levels at the end of Key Stage 1 was very high. However, the numbers of pupils involved are very small and it is not possible to meaningfully describe trends in attainment. The 1999 National Curriculum tests show that pupils' attainment at the age of eleven is very high in comparison with the national average; all pupils reaching the expected levels and some higher. This is in sharp contrast to the previous year when attainment was close to the national average. These fluctuations are due to the relatively small numbers of pupils involved. Over the past four years, average attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 has been similar to national levels. The work of the pupils currently in both key stages indicates that they are likely to achieve the nationally expected levels at the end of the key stage. Pupils currently on the register of special educational needs will achieve appropriately for their capabilities; for some this will be lower than the nationally expected levels.

91 By the age of seven, pupils can calculate effectively using a variety of methods and they can record their results. Although younger pupils and some pupils with special educational needs do not yet have a good recall of number facts; they are able to use practical apparatus to good effect as an aid to calculation and discovery. Those pupils who do have good recall, can apply known rules accurately in addition and subtraction and are developing an understanding of multiplication. The majority of pupils in Key Stage 1 have a satisfactory knowledge of two-dimensional and some three-dimensional shapes and they have an understanding of heavy and light. They use appropriate vocabulary to talk about daily events. They competently solve simple mathematical problems using computer software.

92 At Key Stage 2, pupils are developing strategies for solving problems and searching for patterns by trying out their own ideas while investigating symmetry. At the beginning of the key stage they create simple patterns based on reflection. They progress to understanding patterns created by rotation and reflection and recognise symmetry in the environment. By the end of the key stage they can rotate shapes through an axis using co-ordinates. Younger pupils in Key Stage 2, show an understanding of place value to 1000 and use addition, subtraction, multiplication and division to solve problems, although not all pupils have secure knowledge of their multiplication tables. Older pupils use simple fractions and percentages to describe portions of a whole. They can find perimeters and areas of simple regular and irregular shapes. They make good use of the computer software to represent the data they have collected in frequency diagrams.

93 Attitudes throughout the school are positive. Pupils enjoy mathematics. They apply themselves diligently to the rapid multiplication tasks, complying with the known routines and trying hard to better their performance from the day before. They are secure and prepared to draw irregular shapes on the whiteboard in front of their friends. They work hard at the practical, investigation tasks, for example using geoboards to make symmetrical shapes. They co-operate and work well together. They take insufficient care when recording their work. Relationships and behaviour are very good.

94 The quality of teaching is good. Planning is clear and detailed. Tasks appropriately match the lesson objectives and are differentiated appropriately for the wide range of age and ability in each of the classrooms. Good use is made of the classroom assistant to support group work. Questioning is used well to assess pupils' knowledge and develop further understanding. Resources, including information and communications technology, are used effectively. There is insufficient expectation that all pupils know the appropriate multiplication tables and in the presentation of the work. Day to day assessment is good.

95 The use of mathematics to support other subjects is satisfactory. For example, pupils record temperature against time while investigating in science. They measure while making soup and jacket potatoes in food technology.

96 The school has recently adopted the new national guidance and have implemented the National Numeracy Strategy this term. Planning is detailed and takes account of the differing age groups within each of the classes. Teachers' plans and pupils' work are monitored regularly. Assessment procedures are good with a range of strategies adopted. Test data is analysed and the results used to inform teaching and learning. Pupils are aware of their own achievements and the targets they are working to achieve. Homework is a regular feature of the schools provision.

Science

97 At the end of both key stages, pupils attainment is as expected for their age. In the end of Key Stage 2 tests in 1999, the number of pupils reaching the nationally expected level was well above the national average and a similar picture has been maintained over three years. In science tests, the school's performance is well above that of similar schools. There is some year on year variation due to the small number of pupils. The work of the pupils currently in both key stages indicates that they are likely to achieve the nationally expected levels at the end of the key stage. Pupils currently on the register of special educational needs will achieve appropriately for their capabilities; for some this will be lower than the nationally expected levels.

98 Pupils in both key stages make satisfactory progress over time but good progress in individual lessons at both key stages. At Key Stage 1, pupils use observation skills well to note the characteristics of substances and to note changes. This was seen in a good lesson on changes brought about by heating. Pupils examined a range of foods; apple, egg, potato and bread which were then subjected to heat through boiling, toasting or simply heating in a pan. Pupils were able to use a good range of language to describe what had happened, noticing particularly changes from hard to soft, solid to liquid and liquid to solid.

99 Very good progress occurred in a lesson on sorting materials at Key Stage 2. Pupils were able to sort solid objects into groups and then re-sort into two groups once a selection of liquids was added. Pupils chose clear criteria on which they based their groupings and could express these choices well, even when their choices were not the most instantly obvious. The most able pupils were able to clearly describe the differences between liquids and solids which pour such as sand and salt. Many of the pupils base their ideas on logical, science-based reasoning.

100 Scrutiny of teachers' planning and pupils' work indicate that a suitable range of work is given to cover all of the requirements of the National Curriculum. For example, in the last year pupils in Key Stage 1 have covered various aspects of life and living things, in particular the human body and food. Pupils in Key Stage 2 have undertaken a range of work on materials including the practical application of materials for packaging. They have also worked on electricity, friction, air pressure and power as part of work on forces. The work seen is generally matched to the pupils' capabilities with the higher attaining pupils successfully extending their learning through additional work.

101 A very positive aspect of the school's programme for science is the attention paid to investigative and experimental science. Pupils have the opportunity in most topics to conduct experiments and to test their ideas and find answers. Many of the higher attaining pupils can draw sensible conclusions from their findings. Pupils show great enthusiasm for their work, particularly when involved in practical investigative tasks. Almost all the pupils are eager to discuss their findings.

102 Pupils use their literacy and numeracy skills in science, for example measuring temperature and recording it in table forms and drawing conclusions from the data gathered. They record most of their work in written form but at both key stages, this is often done by the completion of a worksheet which demands too little from the pupils. When they record their work in their books, too often its presentation is unsatisfactory and the act of recording does not help them to consolidate their learning.

103 The quality of teaching is good in individual lessons. Teachers ask challenging and thought provoking questions but demand too little in the quality of written work. Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the science curriculum. Lessons are well prepared and well organised. Teachers work very well with pupils with special educational needs.

104 The science curriculum covers all of the requirements of the National Curriculum but the long gaps which currently occur between the elements of the curriculum and the lack of consolidation in written work slows pupil progress from good to satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress.

OTHER SUBJECTS

Art

105 Pupils at both key stages produce work which is appropriate for their age and capabilities and have a good knowledge of techniques and of the work of artists. Pupils in Key Stage 1 are taught a broad range of skills and techniques. They can mix colours well to achieve a desired effect. They have knowledge of tone and are beginning to experiment with shade. They can paint, print and draw with increasing accuracy. Over time, pupils make steady progress in skill development but good progress in their knowledge of techniques and their effects.

106 Pupils in Key Stage 1 take great care with their artwork. They persevere and concentrate, for example when using clay to make crocodiles. Some of the pupils with special educational needs made a tremendous effort, overcoming some fine hand control difficulties to produce a lifelike and intricate model.

107 At Key Stage 2, pupils continue to make steady progress and whilst their skill levels are as expected for their age, they develop a good understanding of the work of artists. When looking at the work of Antoni Gaudi, pupils are able to talk with knowledge and sensitivity about what they think Gaudi was trying to achieve and they are able to copy some of his ideas and techniques when creating works of their own.

108 The teaching of art is mostly good and in individual lessons pupils make good progress. Teachers are sufficiently knowledgeable to be able to support and encourage pupils. The school is well resourced and pupils have good access to a suitable range of materials.

109 The curriculum is very well planned and this makes a significant contribution to the pupils' progress. In particular, pupils meet and work with a range of artists in school and undertake art projects. This has resulted in good quality large-scale works, often using fabrics.

Design and Technology

110 No lessons were seen during the week of the inspection and therefore no accurate judgement can be made on the quality of teaching. Evidence of pupils' progress was gained from discussion with pupils and teachers, review of planning and scrutiny of samples of work.

111 Pupils make satisfactory progress in both key stages. The youngest pupils undertake construction tasks with building sets, and older pupils in Key Stage 1 learn to use other materials such as fabrics and card to construct artefacts. They learn to select materials and to join them in a range of ways. They begin to appreciate that visual appeal is an important factor when making items. Pupils have made models of insects following designs. Pupils evaluate their products and suggest improvements.

112 At Key Stage 2, skills develop further. Pupils successfully design and make books in the shape of 3 dimensional castles. They design and make bridge structures and learn about the inherent strength of triangle shapes in supporting weight. As a part of their work, connected to science, the pupils attended a 'Kite Workshop' and learnt about the importance of shape and presentation. Teachers' planning indicates that work on food and textiles and resistant materials forms a part of the pupils' experience.

113 The older pupils can talk about what they have learnt and understand the importance of the evaluation element of design and technology.

Geography

114 Pupils' attainment at the end of both key stages is similar to that seen in most schools and pupils make satisfactory progress throughout the school. No lessons were observed during the inspection period and the judgements are based on teachers planning, a scrutiny of pupils' work over the previous year, and discussion with pupils and staff.

115 At Key Stage 1 pupils learn about their village. During a walk around the village they identify landmarks, how buildings are used and identify types of houses. They use aerial photographs to identify familiar places. They consider attractive and unattractive features and discuss possible improvements. As a class they produce a simple plan of the village by identifying strategic buildings and drawing the roads that connect them. They learn the differences between villages, towns and cities. For example they see a video showing the physical and human features of the city of Edinburgh and use the correct geographical language to describe the differences between the city and their village. They identify these known places on a map of the British Isles. During the topic about space, they look at the globe and consider the main features of the world.

116 At Key Stage 2 pupils consider why people go on holiday and investigate holiday destinations. They know where hot and cold places are located on the world map and are aware of the differences in weather around the world. They are able to describe the conditions during a drought, and a hurricane. They produce a travel brochure showing the key features of the destination through the use of secondary sources. They make good use of map reading skills while covering an orienteering course, recognising direction and symbols of the key. They use a globe competently to identify continents, oceans and countries.

117 Pupils enjoy talking about the work they have undertaken. They are animated when describing the visit to the school of a television weatherman and can recall many of the varied weather conditions that he talked about. The recording of their work does not demonstrate the same commitment and there is insufficient pride in its presentation and attention to correctly spelt geographical vocabulary. They are enthusiastic about their educational and residential visits.

118 Long term planning covers all the key areas within the curriculum. However, this has been over a four-year cycle in both key stages, which gives pupils insufficient opportunities to consolidate their learning. The topics at KS1 and the themes at KS2 are not revisited to reinforce and develop learning. The school is aware of the shortcoming and plans to change to a two-year cycle. Also, they have recently adopted the national guidance as a scheme of work for the subject and this is supporting both teaching and learning. Both these initiatives should improve the curriculum. There is good use of the locality, educational and residential visits, and visitors to enhance the provision.

History

119 Pupils' attainment at the end of both key stages is similar to that seen in most schools. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils can recount stories from the past and are beginning to find answers to questions about the past from sources of information such as artefacts, pictures and photographs. They are increasing their historical vocabulary. At Key Stage 2 pupils demonstrate factual knowledge and understanding of aspects of the history of Britain. They show an increasing awareness that the past can be divided into different periods of time and know events from a range of historical periods.

120 Pupils make good progress in lessons but satisfactory progress over time, due to the organisation of the curriculum over a four-year cycle. Pupils in Key Stage 1 are developing a sense of 'then and now' by considering the similarities and differences of their lives and life in the past. They compare kitchen utensils from different periods of time. They build on the factual knowledge that they gained during their visit to Beamish museum. They answer questions and demonstrate an increasing vocabulary for example they know that a tram is a form of transport and a range was used in the kitchen for cooking and heating. At Key Stage 2 pupils develop an increasing sense of chronology through studying different periods in history. They are gaining an insight into the lives of people in Britain since 1930. They are developing an understanding of the precautions people had to take during World War 2; carrying gas masks and sheltering during the blitz. They consider the problems of a child who was evacuated, making choices of what to take in their small quantity of luggage. They are familiar with the main characters and events during Tudor times. They undertake personal research to find out as much as possible about a chosen character of the period such as Anne Boleyn. They explore life in other civilisations such as the Romans.

121 Pupils' attitudes are good. They are keen to respond to questioning about previous learning and show that they can use it when discussing the current focus. They listen attentively to explanations. At KS1 pupils

can become fidgety when they are seated uncomfortably. At Key Stage 2 pupils are keen to discuss but are less well motivated when asked to record. The presentation of work is unsatisfactory. Behaviour is good overall. Relationships are very good and pupils listen to one another's points of view with respect.

122 The quality of teaching is good. Individual lessons are well planned. Staff make good use of questioning to enable pupils to recall previous learning and develop understanding of the current focus. The organisation of the classrooms does not allow pupils to sit comfortably in a large group whilst the teacher talks with them and this detracts from pupils' ability to concentrate over time. At Key Stage 1 teachers make good use of a wide range of relevant artefacts. Displays relating to the historical focus are good and enhance learning.

123 The curriculum is made very relevant to the pupils through the large number of educational visits undertaken; such as Beamish Museum, Raby Castle, and Eden Camp. This is a very good aspect of the school provision. The planning for coverage of the curriculum is in a transient phase; recent national guidance has just been adopted. The current long term planning, over a period of four years in both key stages, does not facilitate sufficient opportunities for pupils to re-visit aspects of the subject to reinforce and develop learning. The school has recently put in place a more manageable cycle which will allow pupils to re-visit aspects more frequently and this will have a positive impact on learning.

Information and Communications Technology

124 At both key stages, standards of achievement for the pupils who are not on the register of pupils with special educational needs are at least in line with the nationally expected levels, and for many, standards are higher. Pupils make good progress because staff not only teach basic skills on a one to one basis, but they also provide many opportunities for them to practise, extend and consolidate their skills.

125 Word processing is used in many subjects and by the end of Key Stage 1, many pupils word process with a good degree of confidence. They use the keyboard with developing accuracy. They control the technology well; the youngest pupils use the mouse with ease and confidence. They are able to store and retrieve their work. By the end of Key Stage 1 many are reasonably fluent in many of the basic skills.

126 As pupils move through Key Stage 2, their confidence grows and those who attend the computer club do particularly well, making good gains in knowledge and understanding. Almost all of the pupils, including those with special educational needs, understand and use information and communications technology to support their work in other subjects through written communications, electronically created images and graphical representation of data.

127 There are many examples of pupils working to a good standard. Pupils produced a calendar for 1999 using imported tables and graphics. They produce attractive and informative programmes for musical events, title pages for stories and recently have produced biographical data for stories they have written using pictures imported from a digital camera. There are also examples of younger pupils using programs well to produce travel leaflets. Within the range of work, pupils use a control program to create designs for a bridge. These are clearly and accurately produced.

128 The school is equipped well for most of the work. Some of the older pupils have recently had experience of using a digital camera and of merging images and text. Their use of text develops well as they gain experience, most of the older pupils being able to use variations in font, style and colour to create work which gives a clear message. The school curriculum is very detailed and, particularly at Key Stage 2, supports pupils in becoming confident with a good range of functions.

129 Teaching is good and pupils are taught regularly. Classroom auxiliaries teach the younger pupils basic skills and class teachers support progress by providing many opportunities to practise and improve. By the end of Key Stage 2 most of the pupils, including those with special educational needs can use information technology for a good range of purposes. All the pupils clearly enjoy using information technology and make good gains in confidence. They co-operate well when sharing technology equipment.

Modern Foreign Language

130 The school has introduced French from Year 3, as part of a broad and balanced curriculum. Only one lesson was seen during the inspection.

131 The pupils in Years 4 to 6 who have already experienced one year of French have achieved a good level of confidence in speaking to each other and responding to and questioning the teacher. They are competent with familiar greetings and can take part in short exchanges using familiar phrases. They are able to understand and act upon familiar instructions and many of the older pupils are able to repeat the teacher's input for the benefit of the new pupils.

132 Pupils have made good gains in confidence. This is particularly noticeable in pupils with special educational needs who participate fully in the lessons. All of the pupils appear to enjoy the lessons. The teacher has good subject knowledge and employs a good range of teaching method to involve and motivate the pupils.

Music

133 The work seen in lessons and the quality of singing in assemblies indicate that pupils achieve appropriate levels for their age. Pupils with special educational needs achieve good levels for their capabilities.

134 Pupils make very good progress in lessons. They sing tunefully paying good attention to breathing and diction. They are able to pitch songs appropriately, communicating the meaning of the songs well. Pupils at Key Stage 2 can maintain a rhythm independently and have very good awareness of others when contrasting rhythms are put together.

135 All of the pupils in Key Stage 2 are learning to play the ocarina. This is a relatively new initiative on the part of the school and already most pupils play tunefully. They can maintain their part when playing a round. Similarly at Key Stage 1, pupils can maintain a rhythm in singing and clapping. They can repeat four note phrases reasonably accurately.

136 The planning for teaching indicates that pupils compose, listen to and appraise music. During the week of the inspection, the theme for musical appreciation was dance band music of the World War II era. Pupils were able to comment sensitively about the music.

137 Pupils at both Key Stages clearly enjoy music lessons. They join in with great enthusiasm and persevere to achieve good results. In group work they co-operate very well, those pupils with special educational needs are particularly well involved.

138 One teacher teaches all the class-based music and not only has a very good knowledge of music but also knows and uses an excellent range of techniques to get the pupils involved. The quality of teaching in lessons is excellent and in these lessons, pupils make very good progress. This is seen when, in the course of a few lessons, the younger pupils have learnt to repeat musical phrases and perform these with confidence in front of others. The teacher makes very good use of the time and resources available, using the hall and classroom to give appropriate workspaces.

139 For some pupils, music is further enhanced by instrumental string lessons.

Physical Education

140 Pupils' attainment at the end of both key stages is similar to what would be seen in most schools. Teachers plan for experiences in the full range of activities within the National Curriculum, although a very limited range was seen during the inspection. At Key Stage 1 pupils perform simple skills safely. They improve their performance through practice and learn to work co-operatively. At Key Stage 2 pupils find solutions to the challenges they encounter. They work safely in pairs. They sustain energetic physical activity over a good

period of time. By the end of Key Stage 2 all pupils can swim at least 50 metres.

141 Pupils make steady progress throughout the school over time. They made good progress in the lessons observed which were part of a new initiative to teach pupils orienteering. All pupils develop increasing control over their movements. They learn the common skills playing team games. They practise gymnastic activities, they express ideas to respond to music, and they experience outdoor activities such as abseiling, sailing and rock climbing. They make good progress learning to swim and gain confidence in the water.

142 Pupils' response is lively and enthusiastic. They work together very well, co-operating to achieve the challenge they have been set. By Key Stage 2 they stay on task for appropriate periods of time in order to solve problems. Relationships and behaviour are very good throughout the school.

143 The quality of teaching is good. Planning is thorough. When it is based on a series of sessions, pupils build on previous learning in a systematic and structured way. Preparation for the orienteering task is very good. Teachers use time and resources well and maintain positive and encouraging relationships with the pupils.

144 The curriculum is broad and balanced. The accommodation is good although as pupils grow older there is some difficulty with the limited space that the school hall has to offer. The school makes good use of its very good grounds including a playing field. The very good outside climbing frames, provided by the parents, enable pupils to access this facility during breaks and lunchtimes as well as out of the school day. Good use is made of the swimming facilities in the locality. Older pupils experience a wide range of outdoor and adventurous activities during a residential visit. The school invites visitors to coach pupils in sports as diverse as basketball, rugby and cricket. In dance, pupils learn to jive when a jive group visits the school. These activities enhance the curriculum and encourage positive attitudes. There are extra curricular football and netball clubs, which are open to both boys and girls. Competitive sport is played against other local small schools and the school is frequently successful in the matches and tournaments.

PART C: INSPECTION DATA

SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE

145 A team of 3 inspectors carried out the inspection over a period of 3 days. The team:

observed 31 lessons or parts of lessons;
listened to pupils in each key stage read;
scrutinised samples of pupils' work;
examined the school's register of special educational needs;
discussed aspects of their work and school life with the pupils;
attended assemblies;
examined the current school development plan and school policy documents;
studied teachers' planning and pupils' records;
interviewed the headteacher, staff and members of the governing body;
analysed the school's budget;
held a meeting prior to the inspection;
analysed the responses in completed questionnaires returned by parents;
checked the attendance registers and observed the daily registration of children;
examined the school's Annual Reports to Parents.

DATA AND INDICATORS

Pupil data

	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with statements of SEN	Number of pupils on school's register of SEN	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
YR-Y6	51	2	16	4

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers (YR - Y6)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent)

2.5

Number of pupils per qualified teacher

20

Education support staff (YR - Y6)

Total number of education support staff

4

Total aggregate hours worked each week

52.5

Financial data

Financial year:

1999

£

Total Income

145,286

Total Expenditure

135,373

Expenditure per pupil

3,008

Balance brought forward from previous year

9,913

Balance carried forward to next year

20,757

PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out:

37

Number of questionnaires returned:

22

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	73	27	0	0	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	86	14	0	0	0
The school handles complaints from parents well	43	48	10	0	0
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	41	50	9	0	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	55	41	5	0	0
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	55	45	0	0	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	73	27	0	0	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	41	59	0	0	0
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	68	33	0	0	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	73	27	0	0	0
My child(ren) like(s) school	71	29	0	0	0