

INSPECTION REPORT

Cockton Hill Infant School
Bishop Auckland

LEA area: Co Durham

Unique Reference Number: 114111

Headteacher: Mr J. Redman

Reporting inspector: Mrs J. E. Platt
11565

Dates of inspection: 1st to 4th November 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 707249

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

| | |
|------------------------------|---|
| Type of school: | Infant |
| Type of control: | County |
| Age range of pupils: | 4 to 7 |
| Gender of pupils: | Mixed |
| School address: | McIntyre Terrace Bishop Auckland Co. Durham DL14 6HW |
| Telephone number: | 01388 604627 |
| Appropriate authority: | Governing Body |
| Name of chair of governors: | Mr J. Goldsborough |
| Date of previous inspection: | 13 th May 1996 |

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Team members | Subject responsibilities | Aspect responsibilities |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| Mrs. J Platt, Registered Inspector | English Art Music | Attainment and progress Attitudes, behaviour and personal development |
| Mrs. N Walker, Lay Inspector | Under fives Equal opportunities | Teaching Attendance Support, guidance and pupils' welfare Partnership with parents and the community Staffing, accommodation and learning resources |
| Mr. R Barton, Team Inspector | Mathematics Religious education Design and technology History Special educational needs | Curriculum and assessment Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development |
| Mrs. S Walker, Team Inspector | Science Information technology Geography Physical education | Leadership and management Efficiency of the school |

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London WC2B 6SE

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What the school does well

- It enables pupils to make good progress in English, mathematics and science and, by the time they leave school, pupils' attainment is above the national average. Standards in religious education exceed the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus.
- It enables the children who are under five to make good progress and to attain the appropriate level by the age of five.
- The quality of teaching is good overall and there is a very strong ethos in the school and a commitment to high standards.
- Pupils behave very well and they are eager to learn. Relationships in the school are very good.
- The headteacher provides strong leadership. He is supported well by staff and governors to manage the school effectively.
- Communications with parents are good. The school makes very good use of parents and the community to enhance pupils' learning.

" **Where the school has weaknesses**

- I. Not all aspects of information technology are fully developed and computers are not used enough to support learning in other subjects.
- II. The school does not make sufficient use of assessment data to set pupils' individual targets for improvement or to track their progress against National Curriculum levels.

The weaknesses listed above are considerably outweighed by what the school does well. They will, however, form the basis of the governors' action plan which will be sent to all parents and guardians of pupils in the school.

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

The school has overcome the majority of weaknesses pointed out in the previous inspection. Standards of attainment have improved in English, mathematics, science and religious education. A high proportion of pupils attain the expected level in these subjects. The action plan from the previous inspection has been closely followed. Standards in writing and music have been raised. Planning systems have been reviewed and new systems make lesson objectives more explicit. Lessons now include time to evaluate and review what has been achieved. The presentation and organisation of pupils' work has improved and is now good. The school documentation has improved and there are policies for all subjects and detailed procedures for planning. There are now satisfactory procedures to monitor teaching, but as yet the system does not include sufficient formal records to provide meaningful information. Data gathered from assessment and tests is not always used to best advantage to set pupils targets for improvement or to track their progress. Taking into consideration the combined skills of the headteacher, staff and governors the school is well placed to make further improvements.

" **Standards in subjects**

This table shows the standards achieved by 7 year olds in 1999, based on the National Curriculum tests:

| Performance in | Compared with all schools | Compared with similar schools | " | |
|----------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------|
| | | | <i>well above average</i> | <i>above average</i> |
| | | | <i>average</i> | <i>below average</i> |
| | | | <i>well below average</i> | |
| | | | | Key |
| | | | | A |
| | | | | B |
| | | | | C |
| | | | | D |
| | | | | E |
| Reading | " C | A | | |
| Writing | A* | A* | | |
| Mathematics | " B | A | | |

The information shows that, at the age of seven, standards are average in reading, well above average in writing and above average in mathematics. When compared with the results of similar schools, standards in reading, writing and mathematics are well above average. In writing all of the pupils achieved the national target level. Standards have been gradually improving since the previous inspection and the general trend is of continuing this attainment. Teacher assessments in science have also been high, with a significant number of pupils achieving above the level set for pupils of this age. Inspection evidence shows that standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science are above the national average, and that standards in religious education exceed the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. This represents good progress. Standards in information technology are average. Progress is restricted by limited opportunities to use computers in other subjects. Progress is satisfactory in art, music, design and technology, history, geography and physical education.

" **Quality of teaching**

| " Teaching in | Under 5 | 5 – 7 years |
|------------------------|---------|--------------|
| English | Good | Good |
| Mathematics | Good | Good |
| Science | - | Good |
| Information technology | - | Satisfactory |
| Religious education | - | Good |
| Other subjects | Good | Satisfactory |

The quality of teaching is good overall and this has a positive effect on pupils' attainment and progress. Teaching is satisfactory or better in 95 per cent of lessons, with 55 per cent good and 5 per cent being very good. The teaching is consistently good for the children under five and this ensures that they settle happily to the routine of school life.

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

"
"

" **Other aspects of the school**

| Aspect | Comment |
|---|---|
| Behaviour | Very good throughout the school and this has a significant impact on the pupils' good progress. |
| Attendance | Average. Pupils generally arrive at school on time. |
| Ethos* | Very good. A strength of the school, it reflects a clear commitment to raising standards in a caring environment. |
| Leadership and management | Good. Leadership in the school is strong and management is effective. Good systems are in place to move the school forward. |
| Curriculum | Good. It meets national requirements and gives appropriate emphasis on numeracy and literacy. Provision for personal and social development is effective and ensures that pupils establish very good relationships. |
| Pupils with special educational needs | Good. Effective support in class ensures that pupils with special educational needs make good progress and have full access to the curriculum. |
| Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development | Good provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This high quality provision reflects the aims of the school to provide a safe and caring environment. |
| Staffing, resources and accommodation | Good overall. There are sufficient staff with appropriate qualifications and experiences. There are adequate resources for most subjects, but insufficient books in the library, and some reading scheme books are very old. There is no suitable provision for outdoor play for children under five. |
| Value for money | Good. |

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

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

Seven parents attended a meeting held prior to the inspection, and 82 parents completed a questionnaire about the school.

What most parents like about the school

- Children are happy and like school.
- The good values and attitudes which the school promotes.
- Good standards of work.
- Pupils' standards of behaviour.
- The staff are approachable to discuss

What some parents are not happy about

- No identified concerns.

problems.

Inspectors' judgements support parents' positive views. Inspectors also identified that the school provides very good opportunities for parents to be involved in their children's learning. There were no significant concerns expressed and the school is held in high esteem in the locality.

• **Key issues for action**

In order to improve further the high standards in the school the headteacher and staff, in conjunction with the governing body, should:

- I. raise standards further in information technology by:
 - continuing to develop staff expertise;
 - ensuring that pupils use computers more frequently;
 - ensuring that skills are taught in an appropriate sequence;
 - planning for the use of information technology in other subjects;
(see paragraphs 11, 26, 31, 70, 73, 93, 101, 107, 110-1, 113-4)
- give closer attention to the information gained from assessment to track pupils' progress linked to National Curriculum levels and to set overall targets for the school.
(see paragraphs 15, 41-2, 64, 93, 102)

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

- make more provision for outdoor play for the under-fives; (see paragraphs 7, 35, 69-70, 81)
- provide more opportunities for imaginative play for the under-fives; (see paragraphs 7, 24, 35, 82, 85)
- implement more formal recording for the monitoring of teaching; (see paragraph 64)
- provide more opportunities for the deputy headteacher to fulfil the managerial role identified in the job description; (see paragraph 60)
- improve the quality and range of non-fiction books and reading scheme books; (see paragraphs 70, 93)
- make better use of the library for research; (see paragraphs 69, 73, 89)
- improve the quality of reports to parents by identifying what pupils need to do to improve (see paragraph 57).

- **Introduction**

- **Characteristics of the school**

1. Cockton Hill Infant School was built in 1908 and is situated in Bishop Auckland. The surrounding area is residential and pupils come from a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds.
2. The school is smaller than average, having 178 boys and girls on roll. No pupils come from homes where English is an additional language. Approximately 27 per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals and this is above the national average. At present 14 per cent of pupils are identified on the school's register of special educational needs and six pupils have formal statements of need. These figures are broadly in line with the national average. Overall attainment levels on entry to the school vary from year to year and, based on the school's assessment as children start school, are slightly below average.
3. There have been no significant changes since the previous inspection.
4. The school has a clear philosophy to provide all children with their full entitlement in a safe and caring environment. Aims include to lay a good foundation for the pupils' future learning and to encourage parental participation and co-operation in the educational process.
5. The current priorities for the school include:
 - implementing the National Literacy Strategy and the National Numeracy Project;
 - reviewing planning to meet the needs of these two national initiatives;
 - raising standards in information technology;
 - the ongoing improvement of the partnership with 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 | 33 | 27 | 60 |

| - National Curriculum Test/Task Results | | Reading | Writing | Mathematics |
|--|----------|---------|----------|-------------|
| Number of pupils | Boys | 25 (18) | 33 (20) | 29 (26) |
| At NC Level 2 or above | Girls | 23 (26) | 27 (28) | 25 (29) |
| | Total | 48 (44) | 60 (48) | 54 (55) |
| Percentage at NC Level 2 or above | School | 80 (70) | 100 (76) | 90 (87) |
| | National | 79 (80) | 83 (81) | 86 (85) |

| - Teacher Assessments | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|-----------------------------------|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Number of pupils | Boys | 25 (21) | 30 (26) | 28 (29) |
| At NC Level 2 or above | Girls | 24 (27) | 26 (28) | 25 (28) |
| | Total | 49 (48) | 56 (54) | 53 (57) |
| Percentage at NC Level 2 or above | School | 82 (76) | 93 (86) | 88 (91) |
| | National | 82 (81) | 86 (85) | 87 (86) |

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

- **Attendance**

| | | | |
|---|--------------|---------------------------|-----|
| Percentage of half days (sessions) missed | | | % |
| through absence for the latest complete reporting year: | Authorised | School | 5.1 |
| | Absence | National comparative data | 5.7 |
| | Unauthorised | School | 1.0 |
| | Absence | National comparative data | 0.5 |

-

- **Exclusions**

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

- **Quality of teaching**

| | | |
|---|------------------------|----|
| Percentage of teaching observed which is: | | % |
| | Very good or better | 5 |
| | Satisfactory or better | 95 |
| | Less than satisfactory | 5 |

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

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

- **Attainment and progress**

1. Results of national tests and assessment indicate that overall standards when pupils leave school have improved since the previous inspection. In English and science attainment is now good and the high standards identified in mathematics have been maintained. Between 1996 and 1999 results of national tests and teacher assessments at the end of the key stage have been consistently above the national average. The National Curriculum test results in 1999 showed pupils' attainment to be well above the national average in writing when all of the pupils were successful in attaining the national target level and a significant number of pupils attained above this level. In reading, pupils' attainment was close to the national average for the proportion of pupils reaching the level expected for their age, and above for higher levels. In mathematics, pupils' attainment was above the national average, both for the proportion of pupils reaching the expected level for their age and higher levels. Taking the four years 1996 to 1999 there was no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls. However, boys did not perform as well as girls in writing. The school has adjusted the curriculum to include more use of non-fiction texts and writing for a wider range of purposes, and the 1999 results of statutory assessments indicated that boys achieved similar results to the girls. When compared to schools with pupils from similar backgrounds the school's results are very good. In 1999 results show that the school performed exceptionally well and was well above the average for similar schools in reading, writing and mathematics. Teacher assessment in science at the end of the key stage was also above the national average in 1999 and 60 per cent of pupils gained higher than the nationally expected level for this age group. The percentage of pupils attaining above the national average was high in all aspects of the science curriculum.
2. Analysis of the 1998 intake shows attainment on entry to the school was slightly below the average. Pupils scored particularly low marks on the assessment of their knowledge and understanding of the world. Most children have had some pre-school experience and their personal and social skills are average. Good teaching in the reception class has a positive effect on the pupils' rate of progress. By the time children are five their attainment is in line with the national expectation for children of their age in personal and social development, language and literacy, mathematics, their knowledge and understanding of the world and their creative and physical development. Most have already started to write the letters in their name unaided. Children make good progress in recognising letters and all understand that letters have corresponding sounds. They understand that pictures help to tell a story and enjoy looking at books and trying to read the story. The Numeracy Hour is having an impact on numeracy skills, and most children count to 10, recognise numbers and are beginning to do simple addition sums. Children understand how their needs have changed as they have grown. Creative and physical skills are satisfactory, but progress is restricted by a lack of opportunities for role-play or outdoor activities using equipment appropriate for their needs.
3. By the end of the key stage attainment is above the national average in reading and writing, and average in speaking and listening. On entry to school many pupils lack confidence in speaking and often have a limited vocabulary. Teachers plan many discussions and use questions effectively to ensure that pupils make good progress,

and most speak clearly and happily to each other and to adults by the end of the key stage. They listen closely to teachers and have acquired the skills to take turns in conversations. Good progress is made in reading and parents contribute to this by hearing their children read at home. Children use their knowledge of sounds to read new words. At the end of the key stage the majority have attained the level expected for their age, and higher-attaining pupils read with sufficient fluency to extract information from reference books. Teachers plan many opportunities for writing across the curriculum and this ensures that pupils make good progress in learning to write unaided. At the end of the key stage all are writing independently and write for a variety of different purposes. This is a marked improvement since the previous inspection. Short stories are written and higher-attaining pupils structure these well and include details of characters and events. Pupils' skills in literacy have a positive effect on attainment in other subjects; for example, in history, when children compare holidays in the past with the present, and in religious education, when prayers are written in sensitive language.

4. Pupils make good progress in mathematics and, by the end of the key stage, standards reached are above average. Teachers have successfully introduced the National Numeracy Project and this is having a positive impact on the rate of progress. Emphasis is placed on mental calculation, and pupils enjoy the practical activities included in lessons. At the end of the key stage pupils know numbers to 100 and do addition and subtraction sums using two- and three-digit numbers. Higher-attaining pupils multiply and divide numbers to 100. Good progress is made across all aspects of the curriculum and pupils know the names of shapes and also collect and analyse data. They use and apply their knowledge in other subjects; for example, in science, when results are recorded in graphs, and in geography pupils use co-ordinates to locate places on maps.
5. In science attainment by the end of the key stage is above national expectations. Pupils have a good grasp of many scientific concepts and understand how science relates to their everyday lives. They appreciate the difference between plants and animals and are beginning to identify the main parts of plants and animals. Teachers include opportunities for investigation and this ensures that lessons are interesting and contributes to the good progress made throughout the school. Through practical tasks pupils learn to group objects according to their characteristics, and higher-attaining pupils use scientific terminology when explaining their activities.
6. In information technology pupils' attainment is average at the end of the key stage. Pupils make satisfactory progress in learning how to use computers and in understanding the use of information technology in daily life. At the end of the key stage the majority use computers to copy their final writing in an attractive format, but attainment in other aspects of the curriculum is less secure. Computers are not used sufficiently across the curriculum to support learning work in other subjects. Pupils have limited opportunities to use information technology to develop the skills of modelling or controlling programmable vehicles.
7. In religious education, pupils make good progress. Standards have improved since the previous inspection, and at the end of the key stage attainment is above the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. In response to effective teaching, pupils make good progress in exploring and reflecting on their own feelings. Teachers arrange visits, and pupils have a good understanding of the main Christian festivals and artefacts to be found in churches. They extend this knowledge to other faiths and are

beginning to understand that there are other religions and ceremonies besides Christianity.

8. Across the school, pupils with special educational needs are supported effectively and teachers use assessment well to match tasks to their ability. They make good progress in relation to their prior attainment and to the learning targets set in their individual education plans.
9. In art, design and technology, history, geography, music and physical education pupils make satisfactory progress in developing skills and gaining knowledge during their time in the school. Teachers ensure that pupils develop skills of enquiry and problem-solving to enable them to take full advantage of the opportunities in the next stage of their education.
10. The school has improved assessment procedures since the previous inspection and now has a wealth of data available to track pupils' progress and to set individual and school targets linked to the National Curriculum levels. The good teaching and the improvement in planning and assessment indicate that the school is well placed to make further progress.
15. **Attitudes, behaviour and personal development**
11. Pupils' attitudes to learning and behaviour continue to be real strengths of the school.
12. Children under five have already settled happily to the routines of the classroom. Behaviour is very good and children are enthusiastic about their work and eager to talk about their activities. Children listen carefully to adults, concentrate well and persevere when necessary. When given the opportunity to select an activity they choose sensibly and use resources carefully. They work and play happily together, making good progress in all areas of learning.
13. In Years 1 and 2, pupils continue to be attentive and have good attitudes to learning. They respond well during the introductions to lessons and are eager to be involved in activities. When unsupervised they sustain their efforts. Instructions are followed carefully and pupils work hard to complete tasks. The previous inspection reported on some poor presentation. This has been resolved and pupils take pride in their finished work.
14. Pupils' behaviour in and around the school is very good. This confirms parents' positive views, and 97 per cent of parents who completed the inspection questionnaire were happy with the behaviour in the school. The school has never excluded any pupils. Movement around the school is orderly. Pupils move sensibly up the steps to the hall and also around the junior school playground to their own playground. Pupils behave well when they go out of school, such as in geography, when pupils walked in the local area and during the ensuing discussions recalled the main features of the locality. They value the resources in the school. For example, in a history lesson every child had a toy when they were investigating how toys have changed and they handled them very carefully.
15. Pupils' relationships both with adults and with each other are very good. There is mutual respect between teachers and pupils and this ensures a happy, secure atmosphere for

learning. Pupils work co-operatively, sharing resources without argument. In more hectic lessons, such as design and technology, and art, pupils help each other and happily exchange ideas. At the end of lessons pupils enjoy reviewing each other's work and are appreciative of the efforts of other pupils. No incidents of bullying were noted during the inspection and discussions with pupils show that they know it will not be tolerated.

16. The personal development of pupils is good. They take responsibility for a number of tasks around the school, including helping in the library and delivering the registers. Pupils have opportunities to show initiative by raising money for Barnardos, Help the Aged and the NSPCC. They take opportunities to contribute to the life of their community by singing in the local library, residential homes for the elderly, the hospital children's ward and the local hospice. Families and school together have given generously to send aid to the needy in places such as Bosnia.

21. **Attendance**

17. Pupil attendance levels are satisfactory. At 94 per cent they are in line with the national average, and this level of attendance has been maintained each year since the last inspection. So far this term, attendance has been good, with virtually no unexplained absence. Pupils arrive at school on time and they are quick to return to classrooms after break and lunchtimes, allowing for a prompt start to both the morning and afternoon sessions.

22.

22. **Quality of education provided**

22. **Teaching**

18. The overall quality of teaching is good. In 95 per cent of lessons teaching is satisfactory or better. There is good teaching in 55 per cent of lessons, and in five per cent of these lessons teaching was very good. No poor teaching was observed. Good teaching was seen in most subjects, but in mathematics and English, teaching was consistently good as detailed lesson plans and clear intended learning outcomes underpinned lessons. The unsatisfactory teaching was in one art and one physical education lesson when the pace of the lesson was slow and the task did not fully challenge the pupils. Although good teaching was seen in all year groups, teaching was particularly good for children under five taught in the reception class. In these lessons teaching was judged to be good in 73 per cent of lessons, and in 18 per cent of these it was very good.
19. The consistently good teaching for children under five ensures that children are provided with a firm foundation to their school life. Teaching to promote children's personal and social development is secure and the children have already settled happily into school. There is a strong emphasis on numeracy and literacy skills and this results in good progress so that children are ready to follow the National Curriculum at the age of five. Activities in physical and creative development are taught well, but the classroom organisation restricts the range of activities to fully develop these skills. Effective teaching provides children with new and exciting experiences that successfully promote their knowledge and understanding of the world. Teachers ensure a balance of directed and free-choice activities, and the good relationships ensure that a busy but orderly atmosphere is established in most lessons.

20. Teachers at Key Stage 1 effectively build on the skills and knowledge acquired in the early years. Teaching in English, mathematics, science and religious education is good and pupils respond positively and make good progress. Sound progress is maintained in all other subjects, where teaching is generally satisfactory.
21. Teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of all of the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. The teaching of mathematics and English is based on a thorough understanding of the national guidelines for these subjects. Teachers are familiar with the requirements of the agreed syllabus for religious education and combine this with discussion activities to successfully promote personal and social development. Knowledge of information technology is less secure and teachers do not always plan for information technology to be an integral part of lessons.
22. Teachers have high expectations of behaviour and attitudes to work. Effort and achievement are celebrated. In the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, teachers generally have high expectations of attainment, although occasionally extension activities are not always available to fully extend learning.
23. Teachers' planning has improved since the previous inspection and clear learning objectives are included in plans. English and mathematics lessons are more rigorous as they follow the structure recommended in the national guidelines. In other subjects lessons are not always as detailed or structured with sufficient care to ensure that there is enough time to achieve the set objective. Teachers are effective in building numeracy and literacy skills into other lessons, both as planned activities and spontaneously as the opportunity arises. Teachers plan carefully for the needs of the pupils in their classes with special educational needs. Tasks are set to match their needs and, when needed, additional adult support is used effectively to ensure that these pupils make good progress relative to their ability.
24. Teachers use a wide range of methods to make lessons interesting for pupils. Classroom organisation is good and teachers overcome some of the difficulties caused by a lack of access to water. Teachers include opportunities for pupils to work as a whole class and in groups, as well as to work individually or with a partner. In art, pupils work on group projects, and in design and technology pupils work together with a partner. All lessons are organised to ensure that pupils with special educational needs are fully integrated in the activities. Teachers include practical activities in mathematics and science to ensure that pupils develop the necessary skills of investigation and problem solving. The school is aware of the need to extend pupils' spoken vocabulary and teachers use questions effectively to develop confidence in expressing opinions and sharing ideas.
25. Management of pupils is consistently good throughout the school, and lessons are conducted in a purposeful orderly way. Teachers base their discipline on the very good relationships that are firmly established throughout the school. Discipline is firm and unobtrusive and this has a significant impact on the progress pupils make. When the class is working in small groups the teachers keep good overall control and check that pupils are all working at an appropriate level.
26. The previous inspection identified that pupils had insufficient time to complete work.

There was no evidence of this during the current inspection, and most lessons included a good, concluding discussion that effectively evaluated pupils' progress in the lesson. Most lessons are carried out at a brisk pace, but occasionally the introduction is too long and pupils find it difficult to sustain concentration. The weakness in the unsatisfactory lessons related to insufficient activities for the time and this led to repetitive tasks and a slow pace. Resources are generally used well to promote learning, although computers are underused in many subjects. Teachers organise visits and walks in the locality to make subjects such as history and geography more relevant experiences for the pupils. Adult support and parent volunteers make a very important contribution to pupils' learning.

27. The quality of assessment during lessons is good. The use of assessment to guide pupils as they work is a feature of the very good lessons, when teachers change their plans as they identify pupils' needs. Marking is satisfactory and, in Year 2, teachers are beginning to include comments to suggest improvements to pupils. Teachers keep ongoing records of any significant progress made, but the system is separate to teachers' planning and is not easily completed. In English and mathematics daily comments are added to planning sheets and this is a more manageable system. Teachers use this information to plan lessons that match the needs of pupils and this is usually effective in ensuring that pupils of all abilities make good progress.
28. The amount of work set for pupils to do at home is appropriate for their age. Arrangements for pupils to practise reading at home are good and this has a positive impact on the progress pupils make in reading.
33. **The curriculum and assessment**
29. The school has made good progress in addressing the key issues identified in the previous report. Teachers' planning for English, mathematics and science is now good, and there is useful guidance for the planning of all subjects. Short-term planning is now more firmly established and teachers usually have clear learning objectives for their pupils.
30. The curriculum for children under five is sufficiently broad and balanced and is relevant to their needs. Teachers' planning is based on the Desirable Learning Outcomes recommended for children under five². They provide a good range of activities, although there is a lack of opportunity to use large play equipment or to experience regular provision for imaginative play. The teachers work closely together to ensure that children have equal access to an effective programme that prepares them well for the National Curriculum.
31. The curriculum at Key Stage 1 is broad and balanced and prepares pupils well for the next stage of their education. It meets statutory requirements, covers all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education, and promotes pupils' intellectual, social and personal development well. English, mathematics and science are given due emphasis, and good arrangements are in place to ensure the daily teaching of

² [Desirable learning outcomes – these are goals for learning for children by the time they enter compulsory education at the age of five. They mainly refer to literacy \(speaking, listening, reading \(recognising their own names and common words, enjoyment of stories, books and pictures\) and writing, e.g. writing their names and recognising UPPER and lower case\), numeracy \(recognising the meaning of numbers, beginning to add and subtract small numbers, sorting and matching objects and numbers and recognising common shapes and patterns\) and personal and social skills \(showing confidence, self-respect, ability to work with other children and adults, concentrating, offering ideas, taking turns and sharing\).](#)

both literacy and numeracy. Pupils' literacy skills are enhanced in other subjects, where they write in different styles and for different purposes. Discussion in other subjects and in 'circle time' encourages the development of speaking and listening skills. For instance, in one history lesson seen the pupils were encouraged to discuss their ideas and this led to an improvement in the structure of their writing.

32. Policies are in place for all curriculum subjects and they are supported by appropriate schemes of work. There is appropriate provision for pupils' personal and social development, particularly through the school's religious education curriculum and 'circle time' work. Sex education and the dangers of drug misuse are covered as they arise, and in some subject areas such as science and religious education. The school has adopted the county policies for the teaching of sex education and the dangers of drug misuse.
33. There are limited extra-curricular activities. Pupils, however, enjoy the occasional activities provided; for example, when some of them sing as a choir. The school provides a good range of educational visits to parks, libraries, museums and other places of interest. Visitors to school not only include parents and people from the local community, but also visiting sports coaches, theatre groups, authors and orchestral groups. These, together with the educational visits, effectively enhance the curriculum as well as pupils' cultural and social development.
34. Curriculum planning is good overall. Long-term planning, which includes the key learning objectives for each subject, is appropriately linked to the school's schemes of work. Medium-term planning clearly identifies the work each class will cover during a half-term period. Teachers' short-term planning, especially in English, mathematics and science, refines the key learning objectives and adds detail to the activity ideas identified in the medium-term planning. In teachers' short-term planning for English, mathematics and science it is clear that the needs of all groups of pupils in the class have been considered. Teachers plan together in year groups very well to ensure that pupils in different classes in the same year group receive a similar curriculum.
35. All pupils have equal access to the curriculum. The school is effective in implementing the Code of Practice for pupils with special educational needs³. It identifies, assesses and monitors the work and progress of these pupils. Further monitoring of class provision is being planned by the co-ordinator for special educational needs. This will identify how class work is being matched to pupils' individual needs and how well extra support is covering pupils' individual targets. The school provides pupils with special educational needs with good levels of structured support, and individual education plans have mostly clear and specific targets. In some cases there is insufficient detail on how success is to be measured and then it is unclear how much progress pupils have made. The school is aware of the needs of higher-attaining pupils, but has not made a clear statement on provision for these pupils.
36. The school has a good system of assessment for children under five. Records from the children's nursery school are built upon and staff begin to observe and record children's behaviour and skills as they enter the reception classes. The school has

³ Code of Practice – [this gives practical advice to schools and local education authorities about their responsibilities and tasks to ensure that pupils who have special educational needs receive the most appropriate help to further their learning and personal development. This is a statutory duty under the 1993 Education Act.](#)

successfully implemented an assessment of children's skills when they join the school. The school uses this assessment to focus on the individual needs of the children and plan tasks to meet their needs. However, the school does not at present analyse this data early enough to gain a clear picture of the ability of the intake of children.

37. The school has an appropriate assessment policy and is developing good assessment procedures. These systems provide the school with information that is being used satisfactorily to inform curriculum planning and development. However, the value of the information being collected is not yet fully realised because the school does not analyse the assessment data in order to set targets for individuals and groups. Teachers evaluate their lessons and the performance of their pupils, and significant developments made by individual pupils are noted in the pupil's individual file. Significant pieces of work reflecting a pupil's progress and attainment are also kept. These are annotated and placed in pupils' individual files. This evidence provides a good picture of an individual's attainment and progress. Class records are kept for most subjects, showing which key objectives pupils have attained. These, when consistently and regularly completed, enable teachers to plan more precisely for the needs of individual pupils, classes and year groups as a whole.
38. Samples of work matched correctly to National Curriculum levels have been collected and are useful in helping teachers judge the levels at which pupils are working. The standard of marking is satisfactory and is supportive of pupils' efforts. Teachers supplement written marking of pupils' work with more personal spoken comments.

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

39. The school makes good provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all pupils. The high-quality provision reported in the previous inspection has been maintained.
40. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. The provision for collective worship meets statutory requirements. In some assemblies pupils are given time to reflect on issues that have been raised or prayers that have been said. In one assembly, on the theme of light, an atmosphere of wonder was created as a large candle and a diva lamp were lit. The pupils then had the chance to watch the lighted candles as they reflected on how to think of others. In some other assemblies too little time was given to personal reflection.
41. In religious education pupils reflect upon the values and beliefs of different religious faiths and the stories from them. Children under five have regular opportunities to appreciate the beauty of the natural world. Older pupils reflect upon what sort of world they would like ours to be. Pupils listen and respond to poetry and also try to put some of their thoughts in this form. In history pupils reflect through their personal writing on what life must have been like on board the Mayflower bound for North America. Pupils in science discover the world around them and look at plants and mini-beasts. In geography pupils are given the opportunity to reflect upon and express positive and negative feelings about their environment.
42. Provision for pupils' moral development is good. The school's behaviour policy and class rules positively contribute to pupils' understanding of moral principles that allow them to tell right from wrong. The work done in 'circle time' is a very important aspect of the school's provision for moral education. Starting in the reception class, children receive clear and consistent messages to help them to distinguish right from wrong. Throughout the school, pupils discuss moral issues about a range of situations. Pupils are taught to respect the school environment and care for resources responsibly. Positive signs in classrooms tell pupils what they can do at wet playtimes. Posters in the corridor, some of them done by the pupils, remind them not to push, to say 'Please' and 'Thank you' and to look after older people. Adults in school present good role models for pupils, and the very strong ethos of the school promotes the development of positive moral values.
43. The school's provision for pupils' social development is good. There are many opportunities for collaboration and working in groups; for example, in mathematics, when pupils play number games, or in physical education, when they work with a partner. Teachers praise pupils and effectively encourage self-esteem and positive social values. In 'circle time', emphasis is placed on working and playing co-operatively, on taking turns and listening to the contributions of others. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, are given appropriate responsibilities such as taking the register and being the class line leader. The youngest children in the reception class are expected to help in their classroom; for example, by sharing the responsibility for tidying away, and most do this well. Pupils in Year 2 have the opportunity to be a library monitor and all pupils are encouraged to find and change their own reading book. The school has also been trying out a system where one pupil helps another on the computer until they are familiar with a new program or skill. Pupils develop an understanding of their responsibility to others less fortunate

than themselves. In the reception class children reflect upon how they can help a new child in their class. Older pupils go into the community to sing harvest songs at a local residential home for the elderly. They also make similar visits to sing Christmas carols. The school supports a number of charities each year, and harvest produce is donated to the elderly. The relationships between pupils and teachers are good and encourage a positive social climate in the school.

44. The school's provision for pupils' cultural development is good. In religious education pupils learn about different aspects of Christianity and other world religions such as Buddhism and Hinduism. They visit churches of different denominations. Throughout the school, pupils celebrate festivals of other cultures, such as Diwali. The children under five dress up in a sari and decorate mehndi hands. Pupils visit places of cultural interest such as museums, including Hartlepool Historic Quay and the Timothy Hackworth Railway Museum. They also make regular visits to the local library and the Town Hall library. On some of these occasions they have benefited from working with professional authors. Each year the pupils have the opportunity to see live theatrical productions and puppet shows and also to experience live music provided through the Durham Music Service. In geography and history pupils study their own area, make local visits and find out about life in other countries and other times. The school is planning to set up a computer link to Florida in the United States. In their music lessons pupils are able to experience the music of other cultures through recordings and the use of different instruments. As a celebration at the end of term pupils in Year 2 performed a wonderful review of the songs of the century. This opportunity not only enabled the pupils to develop aspects of the curriculum that they had been taught, but also enhanced their social and cultural development.

49. **Support, guidance and pupils' welfare**

45. The school provides a good level of support, guidance and welfare for all its pupils. The high standard of care identified in the previous report has been maintained. The school's arrangements for young children when they start school are sensitive to their needs. Children visit with their parents before starting school and are invited to attend special events in the summer term. A useful booklet provides parents with essential information about procedures and meetings are also organised to inform parents about how to help their children at home. These procedures ensure that children settle quickly and happily into school.

46. Procedures for monitoring progress and personal development are good. Throughout the school, teachers listen patiently to their pupils and value their efforts. As a result pupils gain in confidence and are not frightened to join in discussions in lessons and ask teachers and other adults for help when they need it. Teachers know the strengths and weaknesses of each pupil well. There are adequate records for teachers to refer to showing what each pupil can do both academically and personally. Pupils' work is marked and, although there are few written comments on pupils' work, additional support is given verbally by teachers and this is entirely appropriate to the age of these pupils. The school has very good procedures to monitor and promote discipline and good behaviour. The school provides pupils with a range of weekly and annual incentives with awards for kindness, good behaviour, effort and personal achievement. Good behaviour, and particularly kindness towards others, is promoted throughout the school. Inappropriate behaviour, including bullying, is very rare and pupils know to tell

an adult in the school if they are upset in any way. Instances of inappropriate behaviour are monitored closely and if necessary an individual daily behaviour diary is maintained until such time as behaviour improves.

47. Arrangements for promoting regular attendance are good and awards are given for attendance. The school regards attendance as of paramount importance and it is included in the new home/school agreement.
48. The school has satisfactory child-protection arrangements. The headteacher has responsibility for this area and has undergone appropriate training, as have all other members of staff. Any concerns regarding pupils' well-being are quickly identified by a caring and vigilant staff and, where necessary, help from outside agencies is sought. However, the school's formal recording system is minimal. Through the content of lessons and assemblies and with the support of visiting specialists, such as the school nurse and the police liaison officer, pupils themselves receive guidance in areas relating to self-protection. These include road safety and 'stranger danger' as well as other elements of healthy living, such as 'healthy hearts'. In harmony with this, the school practices a healthy snack policy and provides pupils with a good-quality lunch with at least adequate portions for children at this stage in their development.
49. Regular site inspections are carried out and any concerns are quickly rectified. There are clear procedures for health and safety, fire, medicine and first aid. All staff have had training in first aid, and pupils receive appropriate care and attention should they become ill or injured at school. There is good supervision at all times, especially during break and lunchtimes, and an adult-to-pupil ratio of one to five is used on out-of-school visits.
50. Parents are justified in the confidence they place in the school caring for their children. This good provision for pupils' welfare ensures that pupils feel secure and happy and this makes a significant contribution to their academic and personal development.
55. **Partnership with parents and the community**
56. The school has a good partnership with its parents and the community and this is at least as good as it was at the time of the previous inspection. Although liaison and involvement of parents dwindled a few years ago, both parties have been successful in their efforts to redevelop this area. Parents are entirely happy with the work of the school. They particularly like the fact that their children feel happy and comfortable about coming to school and they appreciate the friendliness and approachability of the staff.
51. Parents are kept well informed about the life and events of the school through regular correspondence. They are also informed of new teaching strategies, including the National Literacy Hour and the Numeracy Project, through meetings and documentation. It is particularly useful to parents that the school informs them of current topics that their children are following, allowing parents to support their children's learning at home. Parents also have the opportunity to see their children at work on a number of open days. There are two formal opportunities for parents to discuss the progress of their children. Nevertheless, parents can and do approach teachers to discuss their child's progress throughout the year and are happy with this arrangement. The end-of-year written progress reports which the school provides for parents are of a good quality and

clearly inform parents of what their child can do in all subjects. They do not, however, set specific future targets for each pupil.

52. There is very good involvement of parents in their children's learning. Many parents share books, hear their children read regularly at home and make comments in their reading diaries. There is good support from parents for any fund-raising events. They respond positively to other requests for help, such as making costumes for school concerts and helping on visits. Parental help in school and in lessons is plentiful and of a high quality and is co-ordinated very well by the school to ensure that all classes benefit equally. Several parents who find it difficult to spend time helping in school do work at home to help the school; for example, repairing books.
53. The school has good links with the community. Local residents speak highly of the school, and two senior citizens provide voluntary help in school on a regular basis. The school has a good relationship with two local libraries, one of which is often used as a place to celebrate pupils' work and display it to the public. There are regular visits to these libraries by pupils to develop their library skills. The school arranges for visits from many local people including librarians, authors and artists. These activities enrich the curriculum and extend pupils' learning.

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

59. **Leadership and management**

- 59.
54. The management of the school is good overall; the headteacher provides strong and effective leadership. With the support of staff he has been responsible for establishing and maintaining the ethos of the school, which is one of its strengths, and has a clear commitment to raising standards. He has a good working knowledge of the school. The deputy headteacher works hard in a supporting role, though she has had insufficient opportunity to develop her management skills, particularly with regard to financial matters, as described in her job description.
55. Governors are supportive and have a good overview of the work of the school. They have appropriate committees to oversee areas such as finance, premises and personnel. Committees meet regularly and are well informed of the work of the school through the headteacher's regular reports. Governors are regular visitors to the school and have increased their involvement in monitoring the curriculum effectively through a recently introduced system in which individual governors are linked to specific subjects. This gives them a helpful insight into standards in their subject through observing lessons and liaison with subject co-ordinators. Governors ensure that all statutory requirements are met.
56. All staff are curriculum co-ordinators and fulfil their roles well. They are aware of the relative strengths and weaknesses within their subjects and collectively they provide clear leadership and support for colleagues. They are committed to developing their skills through staff training and regularly pass on their knowledge by leading staff training sessions. Curriculum documentation is regularly reviewed and updated.
57. Most issues from the previous inspection have been successfully addressed through an effective action plan that identified a specific date for the completion of each issue.

Standards have been raised in music and, in particular, in writing. Written guidance has been produced for English, mathematics and science. There is now a planning system in place in which lesson objectives are made explicit. The structure of lessons has been reviewed so that each lesson has a plenary in which pupils review what has been learned. Staff have worked together to improve the presentation and organisation of pupils' work. The school documentation has been improved since the previous inspection. There are now policies for all subjects and a long- and medium-term planning format; though further refinement is still needed to ensure that there is a common approach by all staff to assessment. At the time of the previous inspection there was no clear system for monitoring the curriculum and teaching. The school now has procedures in place and the implementation of these systems is still developing. In view of the combined skills of the staff and governors the school is judged to be well placed to improve further.

58. Monitoring of the school's work is satisfactory overall, though systems are not made explicit in written form. The headteacher has employed several strategies for monitoring teaching and the curriculum. For example, lessons have been observed both formally, with written feedback, and informally through classroom visits, and samples of pupils' work are scrutinised. Though the headteacher has extensive knowledge of what is happening in the school, the monitoring of teaching is not systematic, nor is it sufficiently well documented to provide meaningful information to guide any action to sustain or improve the quality of teaching. Data gathered from assessments and tests is not used to best advantage as a means of identifying targets for improvement.
59. The school development plan is a useful and comprehensive document, accessible in format and realistic in guiding the future development of the school. Appropriate educational priorities for the current year are identified by staff and these take account of national initiatives such as the introduction of the National Numeracy Project. They are clearly linked to the budget and staff development. The plan includes a useful position statement evaluating strengths and weaknesses in all subjects and aspects of the school, such as staffing. Developments for the current year are set out clearly, though the plan does not project beyond the year 2000. Intended action is made explicit and supported by realistic deadlines and budgetary implications. Though governors have not been involved in establishing future educational priorities for the school, they have been fully involved in strategic financial planning. Strategies for measuring improvement in each area are clearly set out and staff development time is set aside for the evaluation of developments. Literacy and numeracy are appropriately included as priorities for development.
60. The ethos of the school is very strong, purposeful and caring. Relationships are very good and there is a busy and purposeful atmosphere. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good, enabling them to make good progress. The school is committed to the promotion of equality of opportunity. The school has clear and appropriate aims, which are set out appropriately in the prospectus. These aims are fulfilled in practice and the school is concerned with developing literacy and numeracy as well as qualities such as inquisitiveness, self-discipline, self-control, self-confidence and enthusiasm for the world around us. The school's commitment to improving is seen in the rising trend in test results.

66. **Staffing, accommodation and learning resources**

61. There is a good match of suitably qualified teachers to the demands of the curriculum across the reception classes and at Key Stage 1. The teachers are all experienced in teaching this age group and they have a secure understanding and knowledge of the requirements of the National Curriculum and the agreed syllabus for religious education. Teachers for the under-fives have appropriate expertise to meet the needs of the youngest children in the school. Currently all classes have no more than 30 pupils to one fully qualified teacher, plus additional support staff in all classes. The match of support staff to the demands of the curriculum is good and they are well deployed. As a result, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, are supported well.
62. All members of staff receive additional and appropriate training to supplement their initial qualifications and expertise. Recent training has been particularly effective in enabling teachers to implement the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and, as a result, standards are already rising. Support staff are included in training and this has a positive effect on the help given to pupils of all abilities. There are good procedures to support newly qualified teachers, as there are for any newly appointed members of staff. There is a well-established system of teacher appraisal which meets statutory requirements and assists in the planning of appropriate professional development.
63. The school's accommodation is adequate for the effective teaching of the curriculum. Although there is plenty of space, there are some weaknesses in provision. It is clean and reasonably maintained, although some paint and plasterwork are in need of attention, especially in the basement classroom. There are six classrooms, all of a reasonable size for the current number of pupils. All are clean, bright and airy, except for the Year 2 basement classroom, which is rather dark and has no direct access to the main school building. Hence, pupils have to go around the outside of the building to get into the school hall, the dining hall and the library, and to gather resources for lessons. Even though this is managed well, some valuable learning time is lost. Since the last inspection, a water supply has been installed in two more classrooms, including the reception classroom, and this has enhanced opportunities in art. A recent development has been the creation of the school library in the central corridor through the school and, although a useful addition, it still provides no quiet and comfortable area for pupils to relax in and enjoy books. Outside, there are ample hard-surfaced and grassed areas for pupils to play in and to meet the needs of the physical education curriculum. However, there is no separate area in which pupils under five can play and gain in confidence without fear of older, more boisterous pupils.
64. The school has sufficient resources to support teaching and learning in all subjects. In religious education resources are good. Resources are mostly well kept and easily accessible. Funds have been used recently to purchase additional books and other items to support the new national literacy and numeracy strategies. There is, however, a shortage of good-quality non-fiction books in the library and a number of reading books are very old and in need of replacement. There is a good supply of religious artefacts to support the teaching of the major world faiths, and resources in history are well supplemented by teachers' own resources brought in from home. Equipment for information technology is adequate in quantity and quality. A large amount of money has been allocated to purchasing more information and communication technology equipment with the aim of being connected to the Internet. In physical education there is a shortage of large outdoor equipment for pupils under the age of five. However, indoor equipment is adequate and includes a 'parachute' that is used in a range of games and helps to develop pupils' co-ordination and teamwork.

70. **The efficiency of the school**

65. The efficiency of the school is good overall and has improved since the last inspection. The school's financial planning is good and the governors have been appropriately involved in the long-term strategic planning and preparation of the budget, together with good support from the local education authority. The priorities of the school are well documented in the school development plan, which shows how they are being costed and funded. The school keeps well within its budget, and plans prudently for eventualities such as an anticipated reduction in pupil numbers by maintaining a higher balance than is usual. The governors are committed to maintaining the high staffing ratio that the school currently enjoys. The benefits of this strategy are clearly seen in improving standards generally and the reduction in the number of pupils on the register for pupils with special educational needs, who benefit from additional adult help. In order to finance this over a three-year period there is a substantial carry-forward figure, which represents over 10 per cent of the total budget. This figure is well over the recommended figure of five per cent of the budget share. A large proportion of this money has been allocated for the imminent repair of the school roof, general repairs to an ageing building and decoration of classrooms.
66. Specific funds allocated for staff training are used appropriately to support such priority training as that in numeracy and literacy, and staff have the opportunity to attend other courses linked to the school's development plan. This has a positive impact on pupils' learning. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from additional adult support and resources.
67. The use of accommodation and resources is satisfactory. The use of the hall is carefully timetabled and spare rooms are used appropriately for the withdrawal of pupils for small group work. The library is used well for pupils selecting books to read but is under-used for research purposes. Resources are used well, although computers are not used sufficiently to support learning across the curriculum. There is a generous staffing ratio. Although teaching and support staff are generally deployed appropriately, there are a few occasions when support staff are not used efficiently; for example, when they attend music lessons but have no clear role. Time is not always used to best effect. For example, in the reception classes a considerable amount of time is lost each day in organising children for lunch. The school makes good use of voluntary and parental support to help pupils in their learning and good use is made of the museums and places of interest in the area. All of these activities have a good impact on pupils' learning and social development.
68. School administration and financial control are good. Clear daily routines and procedures are established and carried out effectively and efficiently. Careful running totals are kept of spending under each budget heading. At the time of the inspection the clerk had been in post only one day, and was undergoing induction from the headteacher. The few recommendations in the most recent auditor's report have been carried out and the school runs smoothly. Procedures and routines for ordering goods and processing invoices are in place and are carried out efficiently. Appropriate price quotations are sought before purchases are made.
69. The efficiency of the school has been maintained since the last inspection. The unit cost to educate pupils is about average for schools of this size. Pupils' attainment on

entry to the school is lower than average, though the standards achieved by the end of the key stage are above average. The overall quality of teaching is good and pupils have positive attitudes to their work. There is good provision for pupils' spiritual and social development and a caring ethos in the school. The school, therefore, provides good value for money and this has improved since the previous inspection

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

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

70. Children start school in the year of their fifth birthday. There are places for 60 children in the two reception classes. Each class is taught by a teacher and a qualified assistant supports both each morning. At the time of the inspection 48 of these children were under five. There is a wide range of ability on entry to the reception class, and assessments carried out as children start school show overall attainment to be slightly below average. Most children have had some pre-school experience and personal and social skills are satisfactory. The school has effective procedures to introduce children to school and this ensures that they settle happily to school routines. Progress in all areas of learning is good for children of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, and most achieve the desirable learning outcomes expected on entry to compulsory education at five years of age.

Personal and social development

71. Children have adapted well to the organisation in the classrooms and already show a good level of independence. They play and work alongside other children and share crayons and other resources sensibly. Teachers include opportunities to select activities, and children do this sensibly and work together co-operatively, even when unsupervised. They enjoy working with a partner and take turns; for example, when using the computer. They respect the resources in the classrooms and treat them carefully. The necessary skills of independence in putting on coats and organising their snacks are already established. Carefully-planned discussions and drama encourage children to develop an understanding of the needs of other children. For example, they discussed how to help a new child starting in their class and suggested that they could be kind, share toys and play with them. The teachers place a strong emphasis on the development of personal and social skills and, as a result of good teaching, all children are well prepared for entry to compulsory education at the age of five.

Language and literacy

72. On entry to the reception class, children's skills overall are below average for their age and the teachers give close attention to developing all aspects of literacy. Children of all abilities make good progress and the good teaching ensures that children achieve the standard expected nationally by the age of five. Most activities start with a discussion, and children are constantly being encouraged to extend their speaking and listening skills. Most listen carefully to instructions and to each other. Responses are often brief and accompanied with gestures, and all staff encourage children to speak clearly and to explain their ideas more fully. Children enjoy sharing stories with adults and each other and already have acquired early book skills. They appreciate that pictures help to tell the story and in a simple text predict the end of the story. Many have an early reading scheme book and know that print carries meaning. Higher-attaining pupils recognise some words and many identify the sounds and letters that they have been taught. The children have made good progress in letter formation and the majority can write unaided some letters in their name. A few write their surnames.

Mathematics

73. Teachers are following the guidelines for the National Numeracy Project and put strong emphasis on practical activities. Opening sessions include counting and sequencing tasks that provide effective learning opportunities. This good teaching has a significant

impact on the progress children make and the vast majority of children achieve the standard expected when they start compulsory education. Most recognise numbers and count correctly to 10. They understand 'more' and 'less' and are starting to do simple addition sums. Data about the colour of hair and eyes have been collected, and simple graphs have been completed to record the results. Children match patterns by colour, although in the lesson seen the children did not have the appropriate beads to ensure their success in this activity. Terms such as 'tallest' and 'shortest' are beginning to be used correctly. Children correctly name squares, circles and triangles.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

74. Analysis of the assessment carried out as children enter the reception class indicates that many have only a limited knowledge of events in the world around them. Teachers plan a range of activities linked to a central topic to extend this knowledge. During the inspection the theme was "Light and dark" and children discussed the difference between day and night and how this affects people's lives. Magnifying glasses are used to examine the detail on shells and children explain that creatures lived in the shells. They have planted seeds and know they need water and light to grow into plants. They begin to understand "past" and "present" when collecting items which a baby needs and compare them with their own needs. Photographs show that the children have discussed how the class teddy went to Durham and they have shared information about their own journeys to school. Children are beginning to increase their skills on the computer. Most understand how to control shapes as they move them around the screen to dress a teddy bear. Children with computers at home are already skilful in clicking on different objects. The quality of teaching is good in this area of learning and the children make good progress to extend their general knowledge of the world.

Physical development

75. Children of all abilities make satisfactory progress in developing physical skills, and attainment on entry to compulsory education is average. Through daily sessions of colouring, cutting and sticking children learn to grasp small equipment and use it correctly. Most take great care with their colouring and enjoy making shapes with clay. Children do not have easy access to outdoor play and there are only limited opportunities for them to develop their skills in running, climbing, pushing or pedalling themselves along on wheeled toys. The hall is used for movement activities and children respond well to music, making light and heavy movements. The large parachute is used effectively to develop skills of co-ordination as well as an appreciation of working together as a team. Overall the quality of teaching in this area is satisfactory.

81.

Creative development

76. Through a wide range of experiences in painting, collage and model-making, children develop their skills in expressing ideas in creative ways. They paint swirls and patterns in bright colours to represent fireworks. When colouring in their mehndi hands as part of their work on Diwali, children use small, detailed patterns and are very proud of their results. Action rhymes and songs are used regularly to add interest to learning. Pupils know several from memory, sing tunefully and include appropriate actions. Children explore touch and sound when examining the shell and enjoy listening to the sound of the sea. The present classroom organisation restricts the setting up a variety of role-play situations, and the house corner is only available for a short time and has to be shared between the two classes. This limits children's opportunities to explore relationships and communicate feelings. However, teachers are aware of this and try to include drama in lessons. Overall, teaching is satisfactory and children make sound progress to achieve the desirable learning outcome in this area of learning.
77. The large majority of children show a good response to learning situations and are happy in school. Behaviour is good and children sustain concentration for a long time considering the age of the youngest children.
78. The early years curriculum is planned carefully to provide a variety of activities linked to the six areas of learning appropriate to children of this age. This is based on the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies in the morning and other more practical activities in the afternoon. At present the children are taught as separate classes in the morning, and in the afternoon are grouped by age and activities organised on a rota basis. This creates some problems with the use of time as teachers try to plan activities that will limit disturbance to the other groups. For example, in a morning both classes finish early to accommodate the dinner arrangements, but this leaves one class with an amount of unplanned time that could have been used more effectively in the group tasks.
79. The quality of teaching is good. In the lessons seen teaching was good and better in 73 per cent, and in 18 per cent of these lessons it was very good. Teaching in all other lessons seen was satisfactory. Teachers work as a close team and effective use is made of support staff and parents, who regularly help in class. They have a secure understanding of the desirable learning outcomes and of how young children learn. There is an appropriate balance between free choice and directed activities. However, the choice is often limited to table activities, with insufficient attention given to building with larger bricks, sand and water play or using small vehicles on an imaginary road. Teachers make good use of assessment data to plan activities to match the differing abilities of the children. Records of progress are maintained diligently. In lessons teachers assess as they are working with children, and in lessons when it becomes apparent that children are achieving the set learning objective easily the teachers immediately raise the level of the task. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' attainment and behaviour and this establishes a clear understanding of what is expected, not only in the class but also throughout the school.

85.

English, mathematics and science Information technology and religious education

85. **English**

80. Taking the four years 1995 to 1999, the overall performance of pupils has fluctuated from year to year but generally been in line with or slightly above the national average, with an overall trend of improving standards. The 1998 National Curriculum test results indicate that the percentage of pupils reaching the expected level for their age was close to the national average in reading, both for those attaining the national target and for those above this level. In writing, the percentage of pupils attaining the national target level or above was below the national average. However, the percentage of pupils attaining the higher level (Level 3) was well above the national average. Compared with that in schools with a similar intake attainment was well above average. Similar results were obtained in reading in 1999. There was an increase in the number of pupils attaining higher than the national average and, compared with that in similar schools, attainment was well above average. There was a marked improvement in writing and all of the pupils reached the expected level for their age and a significant number attained above this level. Overall the results in writing were very high in comparison with both the national average and the average for similar schools. The present Year 2 has more pupils identified as having special educational needs and there are fewer pupils working at the higher levels. However, inspection evidence shows that attainment at the end of the key stage is above average in reading and writing, and skills in speaking and listening are satisfactory
81. Pupils make good progress throughout the key stage in extending their language and literacy skills. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress relative to their attainment as they are given extra adult support and teachers plan tasks to match their needs. Higher-attaining pupils also benefit from tasks that allow them to work at an appropriate level that leads to achieving levels above the national target by the end of the key stage. Good progress has been made since the last inspection, when attainment was judged to be satisfactory. The school has resolved the weakness in planning the teaching of writing skills and has now fully implemented the National Literacy Hour, and this has made a significant contribution to the improvement that has been made.
82. Skills in speaking and listening are satisfactory. Teachers include many opportunities in lessons for discussions and for pupils to explain their achievements at the end of lessons. This ensures that pupils make good progress and increase their confidence in expressing their opinions and speaking clearly. A few pupils have a narrow vocabulary, and teachers use stories effectively to introduce new words. Pupils listen carefully to their teachers and to each other and have a clear understanding of taking turns in conversations. At the end of the key stage the vast majority are confident talking to adults about their work and their experiences.
83. At the end of the key stage attainment in reading is above average and the majority of pupils attain the national target. Good progress is made in the reception class in understanding how a book is organised and pupils use pictures effectively to help them tell the story. Letter sounds and symbols are taught thoroughly and pupils quickly start to use them to read new words. At the end of the key stage pupils know the order of the alphabet and are beginning to use this knowledge when using simple dictionaries. They know the difference between fiction and non-fiction books. Higher-attaining pupils are confident using the contents and index sections of books to locate information. Pupils do not read widely and, although parents hear children read at home, this is usually the

school's reading scheme book. Teachers are trying to extend the range of reading by taking pupils to the local library and making better use of the school library. At present the school library has a limited range of non-fiction books and during the inspection pupils did not use it to develop their research skills.

84. The previous inspection judged writing to be satisfactory. Standards have now improved and pupils have opportunities to write for a range of purposes across the curriculum. Teachers plan literacy skills into other lessons and this has a positive effect on the progress made. For example, in Year 1 the focus of the Literacy Hour was linked to history and holidays in the past. Pupils were successfully taught how to write postcards and achieved some good results, including comments about bathing machines and 'Punch and Judy'. These skills are further developed in Year 2. Pupils write instructions for a range of activities and clearly understand the need to use numbers and to list tasks in the correct sequence. The school identified a weakness in story writing and introduced more opportunities to plan stories and practice in writing introductions and conclusions. This has had a significant impact in the high attainment in the national test results. Scrutiny of the books from the previous year indicates that by the end of the key stage pupils write short stories with an appropriate structure. Higher-attaining pupils included descriptions of events and characters and their standard was above the level expected for pupils of this age. Most pupils have a legible style of handwriting and they are introduced to joining up their writing in preparation for their transfer to the junior school. Spellings are taught regularly. The successful use of the guidelines in the National Literacy Strategy has led to pupils gaining confidence in their use of sounds and letter blends to spell new words.
85. Pupils' literacy skills are enhanced through their work in other subjects. In religious education pupils have written about their visit to the local church, and poetry about the sunset includes imaginative vocabulary. The pupils have written in detail about the visit to Durham Cathedral and as part of this work have written prayers for a school prayer tree in the hall. Their reading skills contribute to progress in other subjects as they read directions and, in Year 2, find out information from topic books.
86. Pupils enjoy the introduction to the Literacy Hour and are eager to respond to questions and be involved in the activities. At the end of these lessons pupils contribute well to the evaluations and appreciate the efforts of other pupils. When unsupervised in small groups they generally work well and complete the set tasks. Behaviour is very good and makes a positive contribution to the learning atmosphere that allows pupils to work undisturbed.
87. Overall, teaching is good and is never less than satisfactory. It has improved since the previous inspection and in the lessons seen it was good in 60 per cent and satisfactory in the rest. Teachers are confident teaching the Literacy Hour. During the inspection many pupils made good progress in the Literacy Hours as teachers had clear expectations about what they wanted pupils to learn in the lesson. This was a weakness at the time of the previous inspection and has been fully resolved. Another problem was the lack of evaluations at the end of lessons. This has now improved. Conclusions are a useful feature of all lessons and are used effectively to consolidate learning as well as to celebrate achievement. Teachers make good use of assessment in these sessions, clarify any identified problems and lead pupils on further if the task has been completed quickly. In response to the concern about varying expectations in writing and presentation the teachers now review samples of work to check on

standards in different classes. The implementation of the National Literacy Strategy has addressed the weakness in planning and teachers now plan in detail. This ensures that the requirements of the National Curriculum are fully met. Time is used well, and lessons start with a lively introduction when questions are used effectively to extend speaking and listening skills. Resources are prepared to match the differing abilities of the pupils. The quality of many of the reading scheme books the pupils are given to read at home is poor and these books need replacing. The school has plans to do this and wisely intends to link with the junior school to ensure continuity of learning. Information technology is used occasionally to copy finished work but is not used enough to draft and edit work. Adult and parent support is used well and their help for the group activities in the Literacy Hour has a significant impact on pupils' attainment. Teachers maintain good records of on-going progress as well as identifying progress linked to the National Curriculum. This information is transferred to the next class but as yet is not used sufficiently to set targets or to track individual progress. There is a lack of a system to record pupils' reading skills during group reading sessions and this leads to a lack of focus in this activity. As at the time of the previous inspection, relationships are very good, and effective organisation and management ensure that lessons are conducted in an orderly, working atmosphere.

88. The excellent school performances are a popular feature of the school calendar and give pupils good opportunities to develop their confidence when speaking and acting in front of an audience. Theatre visits are organised and drama groups also visit the school and work with groups of pupils. School book fairs and the book club are well supported by parents. All of these activities ensure that the subject makes a positive contribution to pupils' social and cultural development.

94.

Mathematics

89. When pupils leave school the overall standard of attainment in mathematics is above the national expectation and they have made good progress.
90. The results of the 1999 National Curriculum assessments for pupils in Year 2 were above the national average for the proportion of pupils achieving the expected Level 2 or above. The results also show that the proportion achieving the higher Level 3 was also above the national average. In comparison with those in similar schools nationally, the school's results were well above average. These results are consistent with those of the two years prior to 1999.
91. There is an appropriate emphasis on numeracy throughout the school. Teachers base lessons on the guidelines of the National Numeracy Strategy; for example, in the use of an introductory session to practise and reinforce mental strategies. This approach is beginning to have a positive impact on pupils' ability to solve problems in their head. Mathematics is used across the curriculum and this is helping to reinforce numeracy skills. For example, in geography pupils experience co-ordinate work in connection with map reading and also work on distances. In science, pupils produce charts and graphs of things such as eye colour and reinforce sorting skills when classifying animal and plant life. In history, pupils work on simple time-lines, which involves looking back at different numbers of years. Work on shape and measurement is reinforced through design and technology, art and information technology. In music, counting and clapping beats further reinforces pupils' number work.

92. By the time pupils leave the school they know and use numbers over 100. They add and subtract numbers involving tens and units, and some higher-attaining pupils multiply and divide numbers to 100. Pupils measure accurately in centimetres and other standard and non-standard units of measurement. They collect information, such as favourite foods, and present the information in various forms such as columns or block graphs. Occasionally computers are used to draw pie charts. Pupils know the names of some two- and three-dimensional shapes and can give some of the properties of these, such as corners, edges and faces. They know about right angles and find these in different shapes. In all areas of mathematics pupils carry out problem-solving and investigative work.
93. Progress in all the lessons observed was good. Good progress is seen when pupils are appropriately challenged, and when teachers set clear expectations and offer good support when pupils are working. In these lessons teachers motivate their class and push pupils' work along at an appropriate pace. In Year 1 pupils work on numbers to 20, finding out numbers that are one more or one less. These skills are extended in Year 2 when pupils use a number square to 100 to count in steps of 2 or 10, forwards and backwards from any given number. In Year 2, pupils look at the relationships between doubles, halves, odd and even numbers and the two-times table, while Year 1 pupils divide numbers to 20 into two sets. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress, especially when given extra support from a learning support teacher or assistant. In some lessons teachers did not provide additional work to extend the learning of higher-attaining pupils and this restricts their progress. Progress over time is good as pupils' learning builds upon past knowledge and skills. This is helped by a clear long-term view of what is to be learnt and teachers' knowledge of their pupils.
94. Pupils in lessons are mostly very attentive and concentrate well when required. They are very well behaved and co-operate well when working in groups. Most pupils have formed good relationships with each other and with their teachers and this increases their confidence in their work and their self-esteem. In some lessons pupils actively wanted to be questioned by the inspection team. They are keen to answer questions in class and often work with enthusiasm and enjoyment. Pupils' behaviour and attitudes in all lessons observed was very good. This is the result of generally high motivation levels, good teaching strategies and a school ethos that is strong and promotes such behaviour and attitudes. There is a small minority of pupils in some lessons who are slow to settle and can be a little disruptive. These pupils were usually controlled well by the teacher. When questioned most pupils respond thoughtfully and relate well to visitors in their class
95. The quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection and is now good. It was good in all the lessons observed. Teachers have clear learning objectives and good subject knowledge, and organise and manage pupils well. They link lessons to previous learning and give encouragement and praise to their pupils. This has a particularly strong influence on those pupils who lack confidence or have poor self-esteem. The previous inspection identified a weakness in providing sufficient time for evaluation. This has been resolved as lessons now include effective conclusions when teachers consolidate learning and check on pupils' understanding. Activities are well matched to the learning objectives of the lesson and to the abilities of the pupils. When support is available in the classroom it is used effectively and

helps to promote good progress, especially for those pupils with special educational needs. Teachers establish good relationships with their pupils, which helps pupils' self-confidence and the teachers' ability to plan more accurately for their needs. Teachers use the resources available to them well. Computers are not used enough to record data.

96. The co-ordinator offers good leadership and monitors the subject by looking at samples of pupils' work and teachers' planning. At present assessment data is not analysed to set targets for groups of pupils or individuals.

102.

Science

103. The end of Key Stage 1 teacher assessments in 1999 indicated that the proportion of pupils achieving Level 2 and above was well above the national average. The proportion of pupils reaching Level 3 was also above average. These standards are spread evenly across the science curriculum. Inspection judgement based on evidence from all year groups confirms these results. There has been an improvement in standards since the previous inspection, when attainment was judged to be in line with national expectation, although the number of pupils reaching Level 3 at that time was well above the national average.

103.

104. By the end of Key Stage 1 the majority of pupils have a broad knowledge and understanding of simple scientific processes. Pupils in Year 1 know that there are different sources of light and that torchlight can increase visibility. In Year 2 most pupils explain the characteristics that distinguish plants and animals. Throughout the school, pupils make a good start on experimental work; for example, by planting beans and observing their growth and becoming familiar with parts of a plant, recognising the roots, stem and leaves. Through practical activities they learn to categorise objects and recognise and describe properties of materials. Higher-attaining pupils use appropriate scientific vocabulary when responding to questions. Literacy skills are used well to record work in science; numeracy skills are used for a more limited range of purposes.

97. Pupils make good progress in the subject through increasing gains in knowledge and a widening range of scientific skills in experimental and investigative science. Their repertoire of skills such as predicting, hypothesising and recording is developing well. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to their prior attainment particularly when assisted well by support staff. For example, in a lesson when pupils investigated light, searching questions enabled the pupils' responses to become increasingly accurate. Even the youngest pupils in the school are encouraged to develop early scientific skills such as using magnifiers to study shells more closely and recording things that occur at night and during the day. These skills are built upon effectively as pupils grow older.

98. Pupils respond enthusiastically to their work. Most pupils have good attitudes to learning and particularly enjoy practical activities. They remember well the things they have learned in previous lessons and apply that knowledge in their practical work. Most pupils listen well and move from the carpet to group activities without fuss.

99. Overall, the quality of teaching is good. In the lessons seen half of the teaching was good and the rest was satisfactory. The teachers have secure subject knowledge and explain tasks appropriately through a suitable balance between instruction and activities.

Lesson plans contain appropriate learning objectives to further pupils' understanding and knowledge, and assessments of pupils' progress are made regularly. There is a good match between the pupils and the tasks they are given, although, just occasionally, colouring-in tasks take the place of more-challenging work. Staff generally have high expectations of behaviour and manage their classes very well. Information technology is not used enough as a method to record results.

100. The policy for science has been updated to incorporate the guidelines from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. It supports the teaching of the subject well, particularly by outlining when specific skills should be taught so that they develop in an appropriate sequence. A recent audit has been made to clearly identify areas for development in the subject and indicates that the requirements of the National Curriculum are fully met.

108.

Information technology

108.

101. There were few opportunities during the inspection to see pupils benefit from direct teaching in information technology. From a scrutiny of pupils' work, displays and discussions with staff and pupils, standards at the end of the key stage are judged to be generally in line with those expected for pupils of this age, and progress is satisfactory.

102. Pupils begin to become familiar with keyboard skills and to understand some of the uses of information technology. In Year 1 they learn to manipulate the mouse and to access the menu. They use the computers to process text and learn to create a simple graph to record data they have collected; for example, about the modes of transport to school or favourite pets. At the end of Year 2, with adult help, pupils present their writing in an attractive format, altering the size of text to suit different purposes. They illustrate their poems with a simple picture imported from another program. They are beginning to use a spell checker and correct their work appropriately, using the capital letter and delete facilities. Higher-attaining pupils work independently with minimal adult support. Most of the writing is, however, copied from other sources. The computer is used simply as a typewriter, rather than for composing on screen. Skills in modelling and controlling programmable vehicles are limited because pupils are given fewer opportunities to use these types of programs. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress, but there is insufficient opportunity for them to work on programs directly linked to the targets in their individual education plans.

103. By the end of Key Stage 1 the progress pupils have made is satisfactory. They are developing keyboard skills and learning how to control equipment with increasing confidence and understanding. Overall, however, they do not use computers frequently enough to make more than adequate progress. Progress throughout the school is less secure in the aspects of controlling, for example, programmable vehicles, or in modelling. Over time pupils widen their repertoire of basic skills and use them in a range of contexts. For example, in Year 1 pupils use a computer program to develop spelling and reading skills. They use a graphics program to produce pictures of a 'friend' in which variables such as arms and hairstyles are selected. Information technology is used in a limited way to support learning in other subjects; for example, in mathematics and geography when pupils make graphs to record their data. When pupils have regular access to computers they make sound progress in practising their skills and gaining familiarity with the capabilities of information technology. They make less progress in lessons where the teacher demonstrates processes but fails to provide time for pupils to

follow up what they have learned by themselves.

104. All pupils have access to at least two computers in their classroom. They show interest and enjoyment in using the equipment and are keen to develop their skills. They demonstrate good levels of concentration and work co-operatively together in pairs, often helping each other. They treat expensive items with respect.
105. The limited amount of teaching observed during the inspection was satisfactory and relevant to pupils' needs. During the inspection computers were switched on in most classes but not always in use, and there were few occasions when pupils were seen receiving direct help. Where teaching is good there is clear enthusiasm for and understanding of the subject, and demonstrations are clear and in small steps so that pupils can follow easily. Skilful questioning encourages pupils to participate by thinking hard about what they are saying. When it is clear that pupils have not understood a question, the teacher patiently and sensitively re-words it. Generally there is not enough monitoring of pupils' levels of competence or of the range of experiences they have had in information technology. Their access to computers in some classes is unsystematic and irregular and this hinders progress.
106. There is a comprehensive and detailed development plan for information technology. The school has recognised the need to extend pupils' opportunities in the subject and during the last year has made a successful bid for additional funding to invest in new resources. When these resources are fully implemented and supported with teacher training there is the potential to raise standards, which have not changed significantly since the last inspection. The subject is well led by a co-ordinator who has expertise in information technology and is aware of what needs to be done to develop the subject. A recently introduced assessment system is a useful way of tracking the progress made by pupils and ensuring that skills are taught sequentially and not repeated, which is currently sometimes the case.

114.

114. **Religious education**

107. As a result of the structure of the timetable, only one lesson was seen during the inspection. Evidence from the work on display, a scrutiny of pupils' work, talking to pupils and teachers and the lesson observed indicates that the good standards identified in the previous report have been maintained. Attainment at the end of the key stage exceeds the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils acquire the knowledge, understanding, skills and attitudes identified in the syllabus and their progress is good as they build on previous learning. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well in this subject and make good progress relative to their ability,
108. Pupils in Year 1 have studied the life of Buddha and write about how they think people should live the right kind of life. In Year 2, pupils reflect imaginatively, sometimes in poetry, on themes such as the Creation and angels. They make good progress in learning about other faiths and consider the nature of the Hindu god Ganesha. By the time pupils leave the school in Year 2, they have gained an understanding of Buddhism, Christianity and Hinduism. They know about festivals and ceremonies from the different religions, such as the Hindu celebration of Diwali and the Christian celebration of Christmas. They know about some of the artefacts connected with the major world religions that they study. This important experience

of seeing and handling objects is aided by the school's good range of resources. Pupils know stories from the Bible such as Noah's Ark and also about the life of Jesus. Visits to churches of different denominations and also their visit to Durham Cathedral enhance their knowledge of Christian traditions. Pupils know about some of the features and furniture of churches and about what happens in a church. They know about christening babies and some have had the opportunity of visiting a church to see an actual ceremony.

109. In the lessons observed the pupils behaved well and were mostly attentive. They were keen to join in discussion and listened well to the contributions of others. Work on display indicates that pupils give due attention to the final presentation of their work. Children in the reception class handled the artefacts with great respect.
110. There is insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement on the quality of teaching in this subject. In the one lesson seen, which was a short introductory discussion to set the scene for a new half-term's work, the teaching was satisfactory. The teacher showed appropriate knowledge and understanding of the subject and questioned the pupils well about their present knowledge. Good discipline and a good level of praise encouraged the pupils to respond. Teachers have made effective displays of pupils' work, and the prayer tree in the school hall provides an appropriate setting for whole-school acts of worship.
111. The subject makes an important contribution to pupils' speaking and listening skills, as discussion forms an important element of their work. Pupils' literacy skills are enhanced well as they are given opportunities to write in different styles. They write prayers and their thoughts about Christmas. The school places appropriate emphasis on reflective writing and thinking. Pupils give careful thought to what they would like their world to be like. The subject also makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development.

119.

119. **Other subjects or courses**

119.

Art

112. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in improving their artistic skills. This is similar to the standards identified in the previous inspection. A detailed scheme of work has been put in place to resolve a weakness identified in the previous report. The school has also improved access to water in most classrooms although this is still a difficulty for a few teachers.
113. By the time they leave school, pupils have improved the detail in their observational drawings. At Year 1, pupils use pastels to draw plants and they include all the main parts in appropriate proportion. Pupils in Year 2 extend these skills and give closer attention to the shape of trees and leaves in their pictures, and are developing their shading techniques. Pupils develop sound skills of mixing colours, although not all pupils in Year 2 have a clear understanding of primary colours. In Year 1 pupils experiment with shades of colours and know that adding white makes colours lighter and black makes colours darker. They mix colours to create appropriate shades for autumn leaves in the attractive displays around the school. In Year 2, pupils experiment with blowing inks on the paper to create colourful patterns. Pupils have used a variety of

techniques and media to print patterns. This has imaginatively been extended to a line drawing in Year 2 when pupils have made press print blocks and experimented with repeat patterns. A variety of materials have been used to make large collages, although some include repetitive tasks that restrict pupils' creativity. Textiles have been used to make square two-dimensional shapes linked to work in mathematics. Pupils have looked at illustrations in books as a focus for art, but there was little evidence of teachers using the work of famous artists as a stimulus for pupils' work

114. Pupils enjoy art and work well in small groups. They use the resources carefully and are willing to tidy away at the end of the lesson. The school has had an artist working with pupils, and the attractive large collage of the local area indicates that pupils have given considerable thought and effort to the final piece of work.
115. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, although some unsatisfactory teaching was seen during the inspection. Most lessons are organised effectively and teachers do not allow the problem with access to water to restrict the range of media used. The scheme of work includes reference to skills, but these are not always identified in lesson plans. In lessons when design and technology is taught at the same time, the objective of the art lesson lacks clarity, and artistic skills are not always taught effectively. The pace of the lesson is usually satisfactory and includes an opportunity to evaluate work, although sometimes the tasks are insufficiently challenging and the pace of the lesson is slow. Management of pupils is good and lessons are carried out in a busy and happy atmosphere. Effective links are made with other subjects, such as the clay divas made as part of religious education.

123.

Design and technology

116. Only two lessons of design and technology were observed during the inspection. Further evidence was gained from looking at pupils' work in portfolios and on display, and talking to teachers and pupils. The previous inspection found that standards were satisfactory for pupils' ages, and that most were making sound progress. This continues to be the case.
117. In Year 1 pupils make simple moving models such as clocks and design clothes for 'little pig' to wear at different times of the year. They also make their own model park with swings and slides, made from wood, construction straws, tape and card. This they do after they have visited a local playground and drawn their designs. Pupils further develop their skills and in Year 2 they explore the different parts that make a vehicle and use construction equipment to learn about wheels and axles. They extend this knowledge as they learn the skill of making and fastening wheels onto boxes. Pupils design and make animal shelters and can weigh out the ingredients during their food technology work. They use construction equipment to make various structures and some pupils are familiar with simple gear systems. Satisfactory progress is maintained and by the time pupils leave school they use different materials and tools to design and make appropriate items
118. In the few lessons seen the pupils behaved well. They listened attentively to the teacher and carried out instructions sensibly. Most pupils handle equipment carefully, but a minority can be silly when using construction equipment. They show good concentration on their tasks and co-operate well with each other when required.

119. There is insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement on the quality of teaching in this subject. Teaching in the lessons seen was satisfactory. Teachers manage pupils well and give good praise and encouragement. In the lessons seen other subjects were being taught at the same time and this restricted the specific input required to develop pupils' skills. Support staff and parent helpers are effectively used and give good advice to the pupils.

127.

Geography

120. Only two lessons of geography were observed during the inspection. Evidence was, therefore, gathered from the scrutiny of teachers' plans and pupils' work, and also discussion with teachers and pupils. At the time of the previous inspection attainment was judged to be in line with national expectation and pupils made sound progress. This standard has been maintained.

121. Pupils are developing an appropriate awareness of the place in which they live. They are beginning to understand the purpose of maps and can draw simple maps; for example, to depict their route to school. Pupils in Year 1 make observations of the different types of houses seen on a walk in the streets surrounding the school. They differentiate between bungalows and terraced and semi-detached houses, recognising differences in building materials and styles. Higher-attaining pupils place key landmarks such as the vet's, doctor's and dentist's surgeries in correct sequence on their maps. Pupils in Year 2 appreciate the effect of different weather patterns on humans. They discuss their feelings about clothes, food and activities that are associated with different types of weather. In Year 2, pupils know, by looking carefully at photographs, about the physical features of a coastal region, identifying physical features such as sand dunes and headlands. By the end of the key stage they gain an insight into an overseas locality through their study of St Lucia.

122. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. Pupils increase their knowledge and understanding of geography through a variety of practical activities and visits that enable them to gain first-hand experience of the area in which they live. The basic skills of reading and drawing maps develop as pupils pass through the school, and the vocabulary necessary for the study of geography increases over time. Pupils' ability to record features pictorially and graphically increases adequately as they grow older. Pupils' learning does not always build on what has gone before as effectively as it might. There are times when pupils in both Years 1 and 2 pursue the same topics and learn the same skills; for example, when pupils in Year 2 walk round local streets recording the same features and landmarks that they saw when in Year 1. When this occurs the progress made is limited.

123. The response of the pupils is good. They behave sensibly when on walks outside the school premises and recall with enthusiasm what they have seen and learned. They listen attentively to their teacher and the contributions of other pupils, and respond immediately to reminders not to call out. They use the subject-specific vocabulary they have learned when responding to questions. When they are not fully engaged in the lesson they are more restless and a small number of pupils talk out of turn.

124. The quality of teaching in the lessons observed was satisfactory. Both were prepared well and featured an appropriate introduction and range of activities. Teachers have high expectations of behaviour and firm class control. A shortcoming in teaching occurs

when there is insufficient precision in planning the timing for each part of the lesson. This results in too much time spent on one part of the lesson at the expense of another. In both lessons teachers gave clear explanations and led productive class discussions. In the best teaching pupils are encouraged to develop skills of enquiry. For example, in Year 2 they learn to 'read' photographs of coastal regions, identifying key features by studying the contents carefully. When they plan an imaginary visit to St Lucia they are required to use their skills to consider the route, what they will need when they get there and how they might feel.

125. Literacy is used well to support work in geography, and in Year 1 the survey of modes of transport to school makes good use of numeracy and information technology to support the subject. Good use is made of local places of interest as a focus for learning and this is particularly effective when links are made between subjects; for example, when pupils visited Kilhope Wheel to learn about aspects of history, geography and science. The subject makes an important contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils.

133.

History

126. Evidence from looking at pupils' work, talking to pupils and teachers and the observation of a limited number of lessons, indicates that attainment in history is appropriate to pupils' ages. Boys and girls and pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress. This indicates similar progress to that identified in the previous inspection.

127. By the time pupils leave the school they know about different time periods in history. Pupils imagine what it was like to live in the Second World War and write about their wishes as if they were living at the time. They talk about the similarities and differences between a Victorian and a present-day seaside holiday. They show their knowledge of Victorian holidays when they write an imaginary postcard from a seaside resort, and when finding out about Guy Fawkes they write as if they were a newspaper reporter. This and other forms of writing enhance pupils' literacy skills. They are given opportunities to write in different styles, which importantly include reflection and thinking about what it must have been like to be a person in different times. Most Year 2 pupils know that Victorian times were about 100 years ago.

128. Satisfactory progress is made and pupils become increasingly confident at using sources of information. In Year 1, pupils compare drawings of old and new everyday items and put them in a time order. They sequence on a time line their life so far, which is illustrated by using their photographs, drawings and writing. By Year 2, pupils use old photographs, illustrations of paintings and information from books. In Year 2, pupils consider the conflict between the Iceni and Romans and know about Queen Boudicca. In Year 1, pupils make up questions that they would like to ask about an old toy ship. Historical knowledge is increased in Year 2 and pupils have learnt about the voyage of the Mayflower and write reflectively of what life must have been like on board during the voyage to America. As pupils in Year 2 were about to leave the school they performed an outstanding review of the songs of the century. This not only involved their musical talents but also added to their historical work in an entertaining and meaningful way.

129. In the lessons seen, pupils' behaviour was never less than good and

sometimes very good. Pupils enjoyed their discussion work. They listened well to the teacher and to one another, and worked with a good level of concentration. In one lesson seen the pupils were so engrossed in their work that they did not want to stop at the end of the lesson.

130. There is insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement on the quality of teaching in this subject. In the two lessons seen during the inspection the teaching was good. The teachers had a clear idea of what they wanted the pupils to achieve and provided appropriate activities. Pupils were questioned well to lead on their thinking and encourage them to give more detailed answers. In Year 1, pupils had collected their own toys and the teacher used these well to start a new topic on toys of the past. The pupils responded positively to this and began to make good progress as their thoughts were directed towards thinking what the toys of their parents or grandparents might have been like, compared to the ones that they had brought in. In Year 2, pupils' progress was helped by the continued input of the teacher as she helped them to look for important detail in photographs.

138.

Music

131. Following a criticism in the previous report, the development of the curriculum has been adapted to provide more opportunities for pupils to appraise and compose their own music. Most pupils are now making satisfactory progress throughout the school. Teachers sensitively include pupils with special educational needs in all activities and this ensures that they also make sound progress relative to their ability.

132. By the end of the key stage pupils have learnt a range of songs and hymns which they usually sing in tune. They listen carefully to recorded music during whole-school assemblies. In Year 1, pupils clap in time to music, play percussion instruments and maintain the rhythm and pace of the music. Most understand 'quiet' and 'loud' and play accordingly. They are beginning to know the names of some instruments, but in the lesson seen did not have the opportunity to select an instrument to correspond to a given sound. When listening to sounds they relate to their experiences and feelings they engender. In Year 2, pupils extend their knowledge of sounds and eventually identify 'high' and 'low', although a few found this difficult. Higher-attaining pupils are beginning to understand that instruments can be tuned and play notes at different pitches. Pupils recognise beats in phrases and enjoy clapping the beats to their names. They understand that sounds can be represented by pictures and symbols and have made up names to include four beats and represented the beats with musical notes.

133. All pupils enjoy thoroughly their music lessons. Behaviour is good and pupils handle instruments with care and work well together. They were particularly interested in the large tuned instrument in Year 2 and very eager to play the different notes.

134. Music is taught by class teachers in Year 1 and the subject co-ordinator, who is a music specialist, takes classes in Year 2. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory. Lessons include an appropriate balance of listening and playing. Most include a lively introduction, but occasionally this takes up too much time and leaves insufficient time for other activities. At the end of lessons effective conclusions consolidate learning and celebrate achievement. Effective discipline is maintained and relationships with pupils are very good. Teachers make good use of the music scheme to identify the skills to be taught. They give generously of their time to organise groups of pupils to sing for the

local hospice and the elderly at Christmas. The excellent 'Music through the Century' performed by the school leavers ensures that the subject makes a positive contribution to pupils' cultural development as they learn songs from the past as well as the present. These concerts also promote pupils' social skills as they perform confidently in front of an audience. Parents appreciate these special occasions in the school year.

Physical education

142.

135. Standards since the previous inspection remain the same and the school has addressed the issue of assessment by devising a simple method of recording when skills have been attained. Pupils' attainment is typical for their ages and they make sound progress. Pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in these lessons and make satisfactory progress relative to their ability.

136. By the end of the key stage pupils work at different speeds and levels, walking, jogging or skipping around the hall, weaving in and out of each other. They demonstrate good poise and control as they interpret music creatively with their bodies, varying their height and speed and the quality of movement; for example, when they emulate the movements of a pendulum or the moving parts of a machine. They create their own sequences of movements, using swaying and swinging motions in time with the music. Higher-attaining pupils add refinement to their movements; for example, by stretching and pointing their toes. They find a variety of ways in which to travel over apparatus, though not all show enough control in landing.

137. Progress by the end of the key stage is satisfactory. In dance they are developing an ability to interpret music and make and hold shapes, and their movement shows increasing control and co-ordination. As they grow older the majority of pupils focus increasingly on improving their performance. Good progress is made in lessons when pupils are encouraged to refine their movements; for example, by adopting a starting and finishing position. In most lessons pupils improve their movement through rehearsal and consolidation. They increase their repertoire of skills through practice; for example, throwing beanbags increasingly higher before catching them with one or two hands.

138. Throughout the school, pupils behave well, obtaining the maximum learning in doing so. They apply themselves diligently to the activity, concentrating hard. They respond willingly to instructions, and even when activities lack challenge they maintain these good attitudes. Most are confident at demonstrating their movements to the rest of the class and watch attentively as others do so.

139. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. In the best lessons teachers use well-chosen pieces of music to stimulate pupils and give clear and precise instructions. They provide a good range of activities to challenge pupils of all abilities and provide opportunities for pupils to contribute their own ideas. Most lessons have a brisk pace that maintains the pupils' concentration. Demonstrations by pupils are effectively used to emphasise teaching points. Lessons always appropriately commence with a warm-up session. When teaching is less than satisfactory the pace is too slow and too much time is spent in repeating movements that have already been mastered, rather than developing and refining them. As in other subjects, teachers have high expectations of behaviour and this ensures lessons are carried out in an orderly and enjoyable atmosphere.

147. **PART C: INSPECTION DATA**

147. **Summary of inspection evidence**

140. This inspection was carried out by a team of four inspectors, including a lay inspector, and took place over a period of four days in the week beginning 1st November 1999. The main evidence considered by the inspection team for the report was gathered from:
- .42 lessons or parts of lessons covering the children under the age of five in reception class and all classes at Key Stage 1, including pupils identified as having special educational needs;
 - .aspects of acts of worship and a range of other activities;
 - .listening to three pupils read from each class, and others throughout the school, and checking pre-reading and reading skills of the children under the age of five in the reception class;
 - .the Literacy Hour for all classes;
 - .a range of previous and current samples of pupils' work from each year group;
 - .discussions with pupils about their work;
 - .discussions with the headteacher, staff, governors, parents and the link teacher with the secondary school;
 - .a scrutiny of a full range of documentation, including the school development plan, policy documents, schemes of work and other associated school documentation;
 - .an examination of attendance records, budget statements, teachers' planning, records of pupils' attainments and reports to parents;
 - .a meeting held by the registered inspector and attended by seven parents shortly before the inspection. The team also considered the responses that parents made in 82 questionnaires.

- **DATA AND INDICATORS**

- **Pupil data**

| | Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent) | Number of pupils with statements of SEN | Number of pupils on school's register of SEN | Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals |
|---------|---|---|--|---|
| YR – Y2 | 178 | 6 | 25 | 51 |

- **Teachers and classes**

- **Qualified teachers (YR – Y2)**

| | |
|--|-------|
| Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent): | 7.80 |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher: | 22.82 |

- **Education support staff (YR – Y2)**

| | |
|--|------|
| Total number of education support staff: | 4 |
| Total aggregate hours worked each week: | 94 |
| Average class size: | 29.7 |

- **Financial data**

| | |
|--|----------|
| Financial year: | 1998/99 |
| | £ |
| Total Income | 285,794 |
| Total Expenditure | 285,794 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 1,570.30 |
| Balance brought forward from previous year | 26,930 |
| Balance carried forward to next year | 18,795 |

· **PARENTAL SURVEY**

Number of questionnaires sent out: 178
 Number of questionnaires returned: 82

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 | 52 | 46 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren) | 56 | 42 | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| The school handles complaints from parents well | 38 | 46 | 5 | 1 | 0 |
| The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught | 48 | 50 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress | 55 | 45 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work | 58 | 42 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons | 45 | 47 | 6 | 2 | 0 |
| I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home | 42 | 52 | 4 | 2 | 0 |
| The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren) | 60 | 39 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| The school achieves high standards of good behaviour | 58 | 41 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| My child(ren) like(s) school | 74 | 25 | 1 | 0 | 0 |

· **Other issues raised by parents**

Parents are very happy with the education the school provides and it is held in high esteem in the community.

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