

INSPECTION REPORT

AYCLIFFE VILLAGE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Aycliffe Village, Newton Aycliffe

LEA area: Durham

Unique reference number: 114101

Headteacher: Mr E R Mitchell

Reporting inspector: Mrs P J Allison
21420

Dates of inspection: 31 January – 4 February 2000

Inspection number: 188527

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 4 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Aycliffe Village
Newton Aycliffe
County Durham

Postcode: DL5 6JL

Telephone number: 01325 300227

Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs G Lines

Date of previous inspection: 1 July 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Paula Allison	Registered inspector	Mathematics Information technology Geography History Physical education Under fives	What sort of school is it? Pupils' results and achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
Alan Sanders	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Jennifer Holmes	Team inspector	English Science Art Design and technology Music Religious education Special educational needs Equal opportunities	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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The Registrar
Inspection Quality Division
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This is a smaller than average primary school with 130 pupils on roll. A popular school, it has increased in size significantly in the last few years. It is situated in Aycliffe Village, but takes pupils from a wide area, including Newton Aycliffe and Darlington. This gives a wide range of socio-economic circumstances, but generally they are about average. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is broadly average. Almost all pupils are of white ethnic origin and there are similar numbers of boys and girls. There is a wide range of attainment on entry, but overall it is broadly in line with what might be expected of children of this age. However, many children have limited pre-school educational experience, and some enter school with poorly developed skills. There is a higher than average percentage of pupils with special educational needs, mainly pupils with learning difficulties.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an effective school, providing a good standard of education and good value for money. Pupils make good progress and achieve well. Pupils' attitudes to school are very good. They are motivated by a committed team of teachers, who have high expectations of what their pupils can achieve and provide good quality teaching. The curriculum is wide ranging, meets the needs of all pupils and makes particularly good provision for pupils' personal development. The school is well led and managed, has a sense of purpose and is well supported by parents.

What the school does well

- Pupils' achievements in English, mathematics and science are good.
- The quality of teaching is consistently good, and over a third of the teaching is very good.
- Pupils' attitudes are very good; they enjoy school, behave responsibly, work hard and respect others.
- The curriculum is broad and, whilst catering well for literacy and numeracy, also provides pupils with a wide range of worthwhile experiences in other subjects.
- Pupils are well cared for and provision for their personal development is very good.
- The leadership of the school is very good; there is a strong sense of purpose and high expectations.
- Links with parents are positive; parents support the school well.

What could be improved

- Standards in information technology are not high enough.
- Learning resources, particularly computers, are inadequate.

The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The high standards of the last inspection in July 1996 have been maintained, and in many areas, further improvements have been made, enhancing the quality of the education provided. Standards in Key Stage 1, and in science throughout the school have improved. Standards in English and mathematics in Key Stage 2 are not currently as high, but all pupils achieve well. Improvements have been made in the quality of writing and in the presentation of pupils' work. All the security issues from the last inspection have been effectively addressed. Standards in information technology have not improved. Although teachers are now sufficiently confident in their skills and a satisfactory curriculum is in place, the limited access pupils have to computers means that these developments have yet to have an impact on pupils' progress. There is a strong commitment to improvement in the school. High targets are set, and currently the school is on course to meet them.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	A	E	D	D
mathematics	A	D	D	D
science	A	D	B	B

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

By the age of five, most pupils attain in line with what is expected for their age. At seven years of age, standards in English and mathematics are above average, when compared to all schools, and when compared to similar schools. Currently the standards attained by eleven year olds in English and mathematics are below average, but the presence of a large percentage of pupils with special educational needs in particularly small year groups has had a significant impact on results in the last two years. The work pupils were doing during the inspection indicates that all pupils make good progress and achieve well in terms of their earlier attainment. The oldest pupils in school are achieving average standards and other year groups achieve above this. The school has set challenging targets for English and mathematics and is on course to meet them.

High standards in science are achieved throughout the school. Pupils do not have sufficient opportunity to develop skills in information technology, and standards in this subject are below what they should be.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils are interested in their work, they try hard and are proud of their achievements. They have positive attitudes to school and enjoy being there.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is good. In lessons pupils respond well to the high expectations of their teachers and a purposeful ethos is created. Pupils are polite and friendly.
Personal development and relationships	The personal development of pupils is very good. Older pupils particularly are mature and responsible. Relationships are good and there is a high level of respect for others.
Attendance	Attendance is satisfactory.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Good	Good

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

The school has a dedicated team of teachers who work well together and provide a consistently good quality of teaching. They are enthusiastic and have high expectations. This motivates pupils and challenges them to achieve highly. The good quality of teaching is recognised by parents, and has a major impact on the progress pupils make. The teaching of English, including literacy skills, is good. Reading is well taught, and teachers have effectively improved their methods of teaching writing in order to raise standards in this area. Teaching in mathematics, including numeracy skills, is often very good. The current emphasis on developing mental strategies is particularly effective. Teachers are skilled at meeting the needs of all the pupils in their classes.

(During the inspection, 100% of teaching was satisfactory or better; 79% was good or better; 36% was very good.)

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is broad and offers pupils a wide range of relevant opportunities and experiences. The curriculum for the under fives does not always challenge children sufficiently.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The provision for pupils with special educational needs is well organised and meets their needs effectively.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for pupils' personal development is very good. Clear values permeate the school and are promoted well by all adults. A positive approach to behaviour management has resulted in pupils taking more responsibility for their actions. Recent initiatives, such as 'Investing in Children' have provided pupils with the opportunity to develop a mature understanding of social responsibility.
How well the school cares for its pupils	This is a caring community where individuals matter. Teachers know their pupils well. They effectively monitor and support their personal development and academic progress.
How well the school works in partnership with parents	Parents are very supportive of the school and are closely involved with their children's learning. Links between home and school are good.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The school is well led and managed. The headteacher provides clear educational direction for the work of the school. There is a commitment by all members of staff to high standards and the achievement of all pupils.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors have a strong commitment to the school and a good understanding of its work and the challenges it faces. They are closely involved with decision-making and are becoming more involved with strategic planning.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has effective procedures for analysing its performance. It has a clear idea of its strengths and weaknesses and takes effective action to bring about improvement.
The strategic use of resources	Financial planning is good. Spending decisions relate to priorities for improvement. The school applies well the principles of best value, such as making comparisons and consulting on decisions being made. However, investment in learning resources has been a low priority for some years and this has resulted in inadequacies, which are having a negative effect on the quality of the curriculum and the standards achieved in some areas.
Adequacy of staffing, accommodation and learning resources	The increased numbers of pupils in school is putting a strain on staffing and accommodation. The situation is currently well managed and is kept constantly under review by staff and governors. Learning resources however, are inadequate. In particular, the lack of sufficient computers has an impact on pupils' achievements in this area, and the unsatisfactory quality of resources for the under fives affects the range of the curriculum being offered.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school has high expectations of children • The teaching is good • Children make good progress and achieve high standards • The school helps pupils to become mature and responsible • Children are well cared for and they like school • Staff are approachable and responsive to parents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of homework given to children; a few parents want less homework and a few parents want more. • The range of activities outside lessons. • A few parents in their response to the questionnaires seemed to have concerns about the leadership and management of the school; this was not the case in the Parents' Meeting where the view was that the school well led and managed. • Some parents have a concern about the rise in the number of children in school.

45% of questionnaires sent out were returned; 38 parents attended the Parents' Meeting

- The inspection team fully endorses parents' positive comments.
- The amount of homework given is similar to that of other primary schools, is in line with government guidelines and is judged to be appropriate.
- The school offers a range of activities outside lessons, focusing on sport and music and is similar to that offered in other small schools.
- The inspection team judges the school to be very well led and managed.

- The increase in numbers of children in school is putting a strain on staffing and accommodation, but this is currently well managed. Governors have taken steps to reduce the Admission Number, so the situation should ease over the next few years.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

- 1 Throughout the school all pupils achieve well. The school has high expectations of its pupils, and pupils respond well to this. They put a lot of effort into their work and make good progress. This achievement is not always reflected in the school's results, as the small cohorts and high percentage of pupils with special educational needs can sometimes distort the actual figures.
- 2 Attainment on entry to the school is generally broadly in line with what might be expected, but there is a wide range. Many children have limited pre-school educational experience, and the results of assessments as children enter school indicate that some children have poorly developed skills, for example speaking and listening and personal and social. In the reception class, children make good progress in most areas of learning, and most particularly in social and personal development and language and literacy. Some children do not achieve as well as they could in some areas because of limitations in the curriculum. However, most children are on course to attain expected standards by the time they enter Year 1.
- 3 At the end of Key Stage 1, standards in English and mathematics are above the national average, and are higher than those in similar schools. Results indicate consistently high standards over the last few years. At the end of Key Stage 2, standards in English and mathematics are currently below average, and below the average of similar schools. However, the presence of a high percentage of pupils with special educational needs in some particularly small cohorts has had a significant impact on results in the last two years. Currently Year 6 pupils are attaining in line with expectations, and pupils in the other years of the key stage are working at higher than average levels.
- 4 Throughout the school, pupils achieve well. Higher attaining pupils are sufficiently challenged and they achieve high standards. This is indicated in the school's results by the number of pupils who achieve at higher than the expected levels in both key stages. Pupils with special educational needs are well catered for in the school, and they make good progress towards the targets set for them in their individual education plans. All of them achieve higher levels than might be expected, when taking into account their prior attainment. The attainment of boys and girls is similar, except in reading where boys do not achieve as well as girls. This has been recognised by the school and steps have been taken to address this.
- 5 Standards have improved since the last inspection. For example, developments in the teaching of literacy and numeracy have brought about improvements in standards in writing and in mathematics. Although these trends cannot be reliably gauged from the schools' results, because of the small cohorts, the school's own data on the progress of individual pupils provides sufficient evidence of improvement. The school sets challenging targets, carefully based on the prior attainment of pupils, and is on course to meet them.
- 6 High standards of work in literacy and numeracy were seen during the inspection. Pupils achieve particularly highly in reading. They are taught well and are

effectively supported by their parents. Pupils soon become fluent and accurate readers, and by Key Stage 2 are able to use these skills in other subjects, for example in assimilating and using information. Pupils' skills in writing are not as high as in reading, but the teachers have addressed this and standards are improving. Pupils write in different forms and accurately use sentence structures and punctuation marks to organise their writing. They effectively use their writing skills to record their work in other subjects. Pupils gain confident numeracy skills. In Key Stage 1 they develop a good understanding of number and learn to use different operations when solving problems. By Key Stage 2 pupils have gained a secure understanding of place value and have developed effective methods of computation. They use these skills in other subjects, for example in measuring in science. The recent emphasis on problem solving and developing mental strategies has had a positive impact on pupils' confidence with number throughout the school.

- 7 Standards in science are high. Teachers teach the subject well and pupils respond positively and achieve above average standards throughout the school. Teacher assessment indicates that standards are lower than this in Key Stage 1, but this is not borne out by inspection evidence. Teachers in Key Stage 1 are skilled at making accurate assessments of pupils' achievements during the year. However, they are very cautious when making assessments at the end of the key stage and, with insufficient experience in moderating levels, this results in teacher assessments being consistently below test results. Inspection evidence shows pupils to be gaining a good knowledge and understanding across all aspects of science. For example in Key Stage 1 pupils understand how diet affects health, and in Key Stage 2 pupils explain the effect of the movement of the Earth around the sun. The school has recently placed an emphasis on developing pupils' skills in experimental and investigative science, particularly in Key Stage 1 where it was perceived to be a weakness. This has had a positive effect on pupils' confidence in this area. In Key Stage 1, pupils carry out investigations, record their findings and draw conclusions. In Key Stage 2, pupils make predictions and take accurate measurements as they carry out experiments.
- 8 Standards in information technology are below expectations in both key stages. Standards were found to be low in the last inspection and have not improved since. Although there is now a satisfactory curriculum in place and teachers cover most aspects of the subject, pupils do not have enough regular access to computers to develop their skills and become confident and independent. For example, pupils in Key Stage 1 have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of how computers can be used for word processing, but they do not gain sufficient confidence to use them for this purpose independently. By Key Stage 2, skills in information technology are weak and pupils struggle to apply them without the support of the teacher.
- 9 Attainment in religious education is in line with the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils in Key Stage 1 have a good knowledge of Christian stories and traditions; they consider thoughtfully events in their own lives and their feelings in relation to simple moral codes. By Key Stage 2 pupils have a deepening understanding of other faiths and how religion affects the lives of people.
- 10 The breadth of the curriculum provided by the school ensures that pupils have a worthwhile experience over a range of subjects. The attainment of pupils is at

least in line with the expectations of the National Curriculum in all subjects. The particularly good standards achieved in history and geography are due to the quality of the teaching and the enthusiasm of pupils. A range of knowledge is gained, but also a good understanding, for example of motives of people in the past, the effect of location on people's lives. Some good work was also seen during the inspection in art, design and technology and music.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

- 11 Since the last inspection the school has continued to achieve high standards in pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. Pupils' behaviour is good; their attitudes are very good. From an early age they clearly enjoy coming to school, and as they progress through the school so their enthusiasm for all aspects of school life develops. This has a positive impact on their learning. Parents acknowledge the impact the school has on developing positive attitudes in their children, and they consider the behaviour in school to be good.
- 12 Children often enter the school with weak personal and social skills. This is borne out by the results of assessments made as children enter school. Some find it difficult to relate to others, and can lack confidence in the school environment. The good provision in the reception class ensures that children make good progress, and by the time they enter Year 1 most pupils are confident and make effective relationships with others. By the time pupils reach Key Stage 2 they are mature and responsible and demonstrate very good attitudes to all aspects of school life.
- 13 From the time they enter the school, pupils are encouraged to have very good attitudes towards school and their work. This is borne out through formal and informal discussions with pupils and lesson observations. Pupils are interested in all aspects of the curriculum and respond positively to the many opportunities that the school provides. The attitudes of pupils with special educational needs are also very good, both in lessons and when they receive specialist support. These very positive attitudes make a good contribution to pupils' learning and the progress they make during their time in school. Pupils enjoy their lessons and show a keenness to learn. For example, in a Year 2 design and technology lesson they were deeply involved and concerned that they would not have time to finish the task set before playtime. Pupils worked enthusiastically, often requiring minimum supervision.
- 14 Behaviour around the school, in the dining hall and in the playground is good. Lunchtime is a positive social occasion. Pupils are polite and well mannered at the lunch table and keen to talk to visitors in an articulate manner. Pupils have a very good understanding of expected behaviour and school rules. For example, when they are in the playground all ages mix well and relate to each other. Older pupils without hesitation assist younger ones if they fall and injure themselves. Most pupils behave very well in lessons and they are very courteous to adults. Any potentially disruptive behaviour is dealt with promptly by the teachers. Pupils behave well in assemblies and show a genuine understanding of what is being said to them. For example, a reception pupil without hesitation related the main points of the story from Genesis about Abraham and his son. There was no sign of bullying or aggressive behaviour in the playground during the inspection. The school in conjunction with the pupils ensure that should bullying occur it is dealt

with effectively. There have been three exclusions from school during the last academic year; on each occasion parents and carers were fully and effectively involved.

- 15 Relationships between pupils and between pupils and adults are very good. The smaller number on the school roll ensures that all staff know the pupils very well and pupils are treated in a very mature manner. Pupils collaborate well when working in groups, and increasingly learn to respect and listen to each other's views. Pupils work effectively; for example during a physical education lesson they would assist each other if one were finding the exercise difficult. Throughout the school pupils work well on individual tasks with ever increasing concentration.
- 16 Pupils are very keen to take responsibility and show initiative. For example, they will set out resources for assembly and clear away. At break times, pupils run the 'Tuck Shop' without supervision and in a very professional manner. Throughout the school pupils hold fund-raising events, collect tokens to enable them to donate sums of money to the school and to charities. The school and its resources are well looked after and respected by all pupils. For example, during playtime pupils ensured that any litter was placed in the receptacle provided.
- 17 Attendance levels are satisfactory and broadly in line with national averages. Pupils arrive at school punctually and lessons commence on time. Pupils' attendance and punctuality make a positive contribution to the quality of learning in the school.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

- 18 The quality of teaching in the school is consistently good and often very good. It is recognised by parents and is a major factor in the school's success, having a strong impact on pupils' achievement. Standards have improved since the last inspection. Teachers are dedicated, hard working and enthusiastic. This motivates pupils to work hard and achieve well.
- 19 During the inspection the quality of teaching in lessons was always at least satisfactory. In over three-quarters of lessons the teaching was good or better and in over a third of lessons it was very good. Teaching in the under fives is often good. In Key Stage 1 it is usually good and very good at the end of the key stage. In Key Stage 2 the teaching is never less than good and is often very good.
- 20 The reception teacher provides very well for the personal and social development of the under fives. She knows the children well and has a good understanding of their needs. Children grow in confidence and become secure in the relationships built up within the class. There is good teaching of basic skills, such as phonics and counting. These are well integrated into other activities, the teacher making the most of every opportunity. For example, in reading a story the teacher emphasised the rhyming words and encouraged children to join in with words they felt would fit. In doing this children were practising and developing their skills, whilst still being involved in the story. However, in other sessions there is sometimes insufficient challenge for children. The pace of lessons can be slow and expectations not high enough. There are often not enough opportunities for children to use their initiative and to be independent.

- 21 One of the main strengths in the teaching in school is the high expectations teachers have of their pupils. They challenge pupils and inspire them to put in a lot of effort. For example, in a geography lesson in the Year 3/4 class the teacher targeted her questioning so that pupils of all attainment levels were involved. Pupils had to think and were able to develop their ideas.
- 22 Teachers use methods which promote learning, for example strategies for developing mental proficiency in numeracy. Different organisational methods are used effectively. A mixture of teacher exposition and discussion, group work and individual tasks make lessons interesting and keep pupils involved. Although making very effective use of whole class teaching, most teachers make equally good use of focused group teaching. They have trained their classes well to work independently whilst they teach in these small groups. This is one of the reasons why the literacy and numeracy strategies are working successfully and is again a result of the teachers' high expectations of their pupils.
- 23 Time is well used. There is usually a good pace to lessons; teachers seem to fit a lot into what is often a limited period. This is particularly noticeable in subjects such as history and design and technology, which do not have a high allocation of time; teachers make the best use of what is available. Pupils are motivated by the pace of lessons and they work hard to complete the tasks they are given to do. Teachers also make the best use they can of the limited adult support available to them. Support assistants and volunteer parents are well briefed, and they all make a valuable contribution to the quality of teaching. The support for pupils with special educational needs, whether in the form of out-of-class support for individuals or of in-class team teaching, is of a particularly high quality and contributes well to the progress these pupils make.
- 24 Learning resources are limited but this does not detract from the quality of teaching as teachers use what is available very well. The quality of worksheets and other materials is very good. However, computers are not used sufficiently to support pupils' learning. Many of the computers in school are dated and not easy to use, but teachers are not in the habit of planning for pupils to use them on a daily basis and pupils do not have the opportunity to develop their skills. Teachers use homework well to support the work in class.
- 25 Teachers plan well. Lessons are carefully focused. Learning objectives are clear and this provides an effective framework for lessons. Teachers know what they want pupils to learn, they plan the work with this in mind and remain focused throughout the lesson. This results in pupils remaining focused and being able to develop skills and understanding in structured way. For example, in a mathematics lesson in the Year 3/4 class the teacher started by reminding pupils of what they had learnt previously about non-standards measures and then moved onto standard measures for area. The lesson was clearly focused and by the end of the lesson pupils had made good progress in developing their knowledge and understanding, demonstrated by their being able to relate what they had learnt to a real life situation.
- 26 Teachers are skilled at planning for different attainment levels within their classes. This is particularly effective when teachers are working with mixed age classes as well as coping with a wide range of attainment levels. Higher attainers are challenged by work at their level. Lower attaining pupils and pupils with special

educational needs are well supported by their teachers, despite their having only limited extra adult support during lessons. Teachers know their pupils well and can adapt the work they are providing to meet the needs of individuals. This is most successful when the grouping of pupils is flexible. For example, in a Year 2 numeracy lesson the teacher provided work for the class and set up a supported group. Pupils were able to join and leave this group as they or the teacher felt they needed to. This resulted in pupils making very good progress in acquiring and consolidating skills in a supported context.

- 27 Teachers manage pupils very well. They set high standards for behaviour and pupils respond well to this. Teachers have a consistent, positive approach to managing behaviour, so the behaviour of a few does not disturb the others. Classes have a purposeful ethos for working and this is reflected in the high levels of concentration of pupils and the quality of their work.
- 28 Teachers have approached the introduction of the literacy and numeracy strategies positively, and demonstrate that they are technically competent in teaching the basic skills in numeracy and literacy. These lessons are particularly well planned and executed, and pupils gain skills effectively. For example, in Key Stage 1 phonics are taught very well and this is having a positive effect on standards in reading and spelling. Teachers' subject knowledge and understanding overall is good, and they are now well supported by schemes of work and planning documents. The weakness in teacher confidence in information technology highlighted in the last inspection has been addressed.
- 29 Teachers assess their pupils on a regular basis, and use the information to help plan work. The secure knowledge teachers have of their pupils and their strengths and weaknesses helps them to focus tasks appropriately and to know when individuals need support and encouragement. The very good relationships which exist in the school and in each classroom means that pupils are supported, are able to grow in confidence and overcome difficulties. This is one of the main reasons why pupils with special educational needs achieve so well.

HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?

- 30 Overall the curriculum provided by the school is good. Since the last inspection the school has successfully introduced the Literacy and Numeracy Strategies without affecting unduly the quality of the breadth and balance of the curriculum. The weakness in planning for information technology highlighted in the last inspection has been addressed, although it has yet to have an impact on standards in school.
- 31 The curriculum for the under fives meets most of the needs of the youngest pupils, but there are some weaknesses in planning. Although the teacher is aware of the needs of the under fives, her planning does not always take these needs into account. Not all areas of learning are sufficiently resourced, for example there is no provision for outdoor play, and this has an impact on the range of what is offered.
- 32 The school provides a broad curriculum that meets statutory requirements. All National Curriculum subjects are included and the school meets the requirements of the Locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education. The governors' policy on

sex education is implemented sensitively. Together with drugs awareness, it is included in a carefully planned programme of health education that is taught as part of the science curriculum.

- 33 The curriculum reflects the school's aims to raise standards, and makes a valuable contribution to pupils' intellectual, physical and social development. Personal and social issues are raised across all subjects, and consideration for others is given a high priority. The Investing in Children Initiative allows pupils a voice to influence improvement through change, and emphasis is placed on the necessity for full consultation before proposals are adopted. This caring ethos permeates the whole school and results in a safe and happy environment in which to learn. All pupils are properly prepared for the next stage of their education, and links with the local secondary school are good.
- 34 The pupils' curriculum is enhanced by school visits to areas such as Whitley Bay as part of a beach study, and to Hartlepool Power Station for a science day. Cultural and outdoor centres are included, and pupils have visited theatres, and sea and bird life centres. Visiting theatre groups widen pupils' experiences still further, and visits from the police, fire and health services ensure that pupils are aware of possible danger and of any appropriate health issues.
- 35 The school has rightly targeted the raising of standards in English and mathematics and has allocated extra time to them. Although this has led to less time for other subjects, the school has ensured that worthwhile experiences and opportunities are maintained in every subject. The daily hour devoted to each of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy has been introduced successfully since the previous inspection, and is having a positive effect on pupils' learning and progress within lessons.
- 36 The school recognises the importance of full curricular access for all pupils and ensures equality of opportunity in all areas of learning and social activity. Provision for pupils with a wide range of special educational needs is good. It embraces the principles and practices of the Code of Practice, and there are thorough arrangements for identifying and assessing pupils with special educational needs. Provision is through a combination of withdrawal for individual and group help with a learning support teacher and special support assistants, and through appropriately planned work by class teachers. Individual education plans are detailed, and contain appropriate learning targets. These plans are reviewed regularly by all staff, who work as an effective team in planning provision and monitoring pupils' progress. There are good links with support services, reviews are held regularly and parents and pupils are kept informed of progress. Detailed records are maintained and annual reviews are well organised.
- 37 Opportunities beyond statutory requirements are provided which broaden pupils' experiences and are in line with other similar small schools. There are extra curricular activities in sport and music, and the school takes part in sporting fixtures with other schools, and in local athletic festivals. Instrumental tuition is offered in flute, cello, and violin. Some pupils have joined the recently established recorder groups, and a choir is formed for specific purposes such as school drama and the village carol service.
- 38 Overall the provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good and is a strength of the school. It reflects the aims of the school which are carried out in daily practice, and which contribute to the well being of pupils and to their learning.

- 39 Pupils are helped to reflect on matters about themselves during assembly times and in religious education lessons. Acts of collective worship, which are broadly Christian in character, are dignified occasions and pupils act accordingly. They consider the meaning of trust through examples from Old Testament bible stories, and focus on how this relates to friendships and to their own lives. In lessons pupils are encouraged to empathise with the feelings of others and to recognise and respect different values and beliefs. The recent service in Durham Cathedral to celebrate the millennium provided a truly spiritual experience for some of the older pupils.
- 40 Throughout the school, pupils' views are valued and respected, and provision for their moral development is very good. There are clear values and expectations that are promoted through the life of the school and provide pupils with a firm framework within which to regulate their own behaviour. The commitment of the headteacher to promoting a positive approach to behaviour, and the constant fostering of this by all adults in the school, encourages pupils to behave responsibly.
- 41 Through the Investing in Children forum pupils are given opportunities to extend their social and personal understanding across a range of issues to do with the rights of the individual, and the needs of a well ordered community. The group has focused recently on safety at playtimes, improving lunchtime experiences, and extending means by which all pupils can communicate their concerns and worries more easily. In this way the school effectively promotes positive attitudes to working, playing and co-operating with others. Citizenship is developed through a number of school projects, one of which is the schools' involvement in the National Eco-school Initiative. Pupils are encouraged to consider environmental issues both locally and in the wider community. Along with many other tasks, pupils have undertaken a litter-pick, planted bulbs on the village green and helped to build a dry stone wall round the church. Pupils participate in raising funds for a number of charities with many of the concerns initiated by the pupils themselves.
- 42 The Pathways to Adult Life is another initiative that the school includes in its wider curriculum. Links with business and the community are being established and pupils in Years 5 and 6 now use personal planning books to organise their work. These were devised in co-operation with other primary schools and the local secondary school. Future plans include the production of a newspaper, designed to introduce older pupils to the world of work.
- 43 Opportunities are provided for pupils to appreciate their own cultures and traditions, and those of other cultures. Pupils' experiences are enriched by visits to places of interest and to religious buildings. There are displays relating to African art and design and to Sikh religious traditions. The school has sufficient resources to ensure effective provision in these areas. The curriculum is enhanced by visits from drama and music groups. Use is made of stories from different cultures, and the beliefs of different faiths are studied in all classes.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

- 44 Since the last inspection the school continues to be a very caring community. All staff know the pupils well and have very good relationships with them. These relationships enhance the success the school achieves in all elements of this aspect of school life. Parents have a high regard for the way in which the school cares for their children and know that they would be involved at an early stage if there were any concerns about their welfare.
- 45 Very good procedures are in place for child protection. A detailed policy closely follows the Local Education Authority's guidelines. Members of staff are aware of the named person, who has received appropriate training. Regular updates and procedures to follow are communicated to all staff and they are aware of their duties if they feel a child is at risk.
- 46 The school makes good provision to ensure the health and safety of its pupils and staff. A clear policy following the Local Education Authority's guidelines is in place and its recommendations are seen to be put into practice on a day to day basis. For example, teachers are on duty in the morning as pupils begin to arrive and supervise them to the coach at home time. The lunchtime break is well supervised and accidents or illness are dealt with appropriately. Pupils of all ages move around inside the building in a sensible and orderly manner. The school's policy, systems and equipment are monitored regularly by the Governors. Appropriate and prompt action is taken to follow up any recommendations, as well as any concerns the school has. For example, since the last inspection security fencing is now in place. The school does all it reasonably can to ensure that it is a safe and secure environment for its pupils and staff.
- 47 Teachers have good procedures for the assessment of pupils' achievements, particularly in the core subjects. Although these are accurate and form a secure base for future planning, end of key stage assessments are less secure, particularly at Key Stage 1, where teacher assessments are consistently below test results. Insufficient moderation takes place and teachers are not secure about levels of attainment in this context.
- 48 Assessments are made in the reception year and the information is used to help with planning for the needs of individuals and groups of children. Regular assessments are made throughout the school and information is used to help with curriculum planning. Performance data is carefully kept and analysed in order to track the progress of groups of pupils and individuals. This information is effectively used to plan the curriculum and monitor performance. The progress of girls and boys, pupils with special educational needs and higher attainers is monitored carefully to ensure these groups are making appropriate progress. The school is clear about what action to take in order to improve standards.
- 49 Assessment procedures for pupils with special educational needs are good. Pupils are effectively identified, their needs are analysed and their progress in carefully monitored. The school works well with outside agencies and parents are involved at all stages. Statutory requirements are met.
- 50 Pupils' behaviour is very good. There is a school policy on discipline, which is understood and respected by all. No incidents of bullying or misbehaviour were seen during the week of the inspection and all pupils spoken to were clear about what they must do if someone frightened or hurt them. Exclusions, when they are necessary, follow procedures and parents are fully involved.
- 51 Pupils' attendance is satisfactory, and all unexplained absences are followed up. This supports the high level of care the school provides for its pupils. The school

encourages attendance by ensuring that pupils enjoy coming to school. The interesting lessons, good teaching, very good relationships and very caring ethos have a positive impact on pupils' attendance. Increasing opportunities for pupils to exercise initiative and take more responsibility for their own learning is encouraged.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

- 52 Since the last inspection the school has continued to build on the good relationship with parents that were evident at the last inspection. This has a positive impact on many aspects of school life. Parents have a positive view of the school and an increasing number provide valuable help in class. The support provided by the Parent Teachers Association of the school is good and the sustained work put in by parents and friends to fund raising events contributes to many additional resources for the school.
- 53 The information provided by the school to parents is good. The school provides regular informative letters about events and activities. Most parents acknowledged in the questionnaire that they are happy with the information they receive about their children's progress. Pupils' annual reports are informative and give clear guidance for pupil's further development. The prospectus and governors' annual reports are good. Most parents who responded to the questionnaire feel comfortable approaching the school with questions or concerns and consider that any matters raised are handled well. The school involves parents well in the assessment process for pupils with special educational needs. They are notified at an early stage of any concerns and invited to school to discuss their child's progress.
- 54 Most parents have signed the Home / School agreement. They understand the importance of assisting their children at home with reading or specific school projects. Their contribution to children's learning at home is very positive and the school values the comments made by parents for example in the reading diaries. In the questionnaire and at the parents' meeting, parents considered that they have a good partnership with the school and expressed satisfaction with virtually all areas of its life and work. They particularly valued the way in which they felt they could approach the headteacher and other teachers and receive a positive response. The inspection findings confirm the positive views expressed by parents about the school.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

- 55 The good standards in leadership and management highlighted in the last inspection have been maintained, despite a change in headteacher. The school is very well led. The headteacher provides clear educational direction for the work of the school and effectively promotes high standards in everything. This is often by example as he effectively takes on a teaching responsibility and sets the tone for the work of the school in assemblies.
- 56 There are clear aims of high achievement for all reflected in the work of the school. This is a shared commitment and permeates all aspects of school life, for example in relationships and behaviour. The school effectively monitors its performance by analysing data and tracking standards being achieved. Challenging targets are set

and effective action taken in order to meet them. Staff and governors monitor and review progress regularly. Teachers in particular evaluate their work and are keen to develop and improve. They are well supported in this by the headteacher. The performance of teachers is regularly reviewed and targets are set for the future. Overall, there is a clear sense of purpose in the school, which has a strong impact on pupils' attitudes and achievements.

- 57 The school is managed well. Staff with management responsibilities contribute effectively to the running of the school. Co-ordinators work hard and are keen to promote high standards in their subjects. They have produced sound policies and guidelines and have a clear idea of what they want to develop. Although well aware of standards being achieved, particularly in core subjects, they are not fully aware of the teaching and learning taking place in other classes and are thus not in a secure position to be able to support it. A system of monitoring by co-ordinators is being developed but is in its early stages. The headteacher has responsibility for special educational needs provision and he fulfils this role effectively.
- 58 Governors have a strong commitment to the school. They have a good knowledge and understanding of its work and the challenges teachers face, for example in implementing the literacy strategy in mixed age classes. They are kept well informed about the work of the school and are closely involved in decision making. For example, governors are in full knowledge of the facts and problems involved with the increase in school numbers and they make decisions based on this. They are beginning to be more involved in strategic planning in the long term, through taking part in school review procedures. They fulfil their statutory responsibilities.
- 59 Financial planning is good. Spending decisions are linked closely to priorities for improvement, for example the deployment of a part-time teacher to ensure that the needs of the pupils in Key Stage 1 were met in the context of the rise in class sizes. The school works naturally to the principles of best value, for example in challenging themselves to justify the use of resources, making comparisons between themselves and other schools, and most particularly in consulting widely before major decisions are made.
- 60 However, as a result of limitations in budget, and a priority being placed on retaining appropriate staffing, spending on learning resources has not been a high priority in recent years. This has led to the situation where learning resources generally are barely satisfactory, and in some areas, such as in information technology and in provision for the under fives, they are inadequate. This has an impact on the quality of the curriculum and the standards pupils achieve.
- 61 There is effective financial control and administration. The recommendations of the last audit report have been acted upon. Systems are well established and the school runs efficiently. Where it is available and appropriate to a small school, new technology is used effectively.
- 62 The level of staffing is adequate overall, but the increased number of pupils in school has resulted in large classes. Effective deployment of a part-time teacher to ensure small groups in Key Stage 1 for most of the week, and the deployment of the headteacher for the same reason, alleviates the situation in Key Stage 1. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 2 prevents the situation from having a detrimental effect on pupils' progress. However, no support is provided by the

school for pupils with special educational needs, for the under fives or for the large classes in Key Stage 2.

- 63 The accommodation overall is adequate, but increased numbers are putting a strain on it. This is beginning to have an impact on the curriculum, for example in pupils' limited access to library provision, and on the quality of learning; for example poor quality furniture in some classes makes it difficult for pupils to move around efficiently. The accommodation is well looked after. The environment is clean and well organised and this enhances the overall sense of purpose apparent in the school.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

64 The school should now:

- (1) Improve standards in information technology by:
 - ensuring that all pupils have access to computers on a regular basis (*paragraphs 8 and 116*)
 - planning for the use of information technology in the daily work of all classes (*paragraphs 24 and 119*)

- (2) Plan for an improvement in the amount and quality of learning resources in school, focusing particularly in the first instance on:
 - provision for pupils to have regular access to suitable computers (*paragraphs 8, 24 and 60*)
 - enhancing the curriculum for the under fives (*paragraphs 2, 31, 60, 67 and 69*)

65 Other issues which should be considered by the school:

- investing in adult support for pupils with special educational needs, the under fives and pupils in large classes (*paragraph 62*)
- developing teachers' end of key stage assessment skills, by developing a programme of moderation (*paragraphs 7 and 47*)
- improving provision for the under fives by providing more opportunities for children to take the initiative and develop their independence (*paragraphs 2, 20 and 70*)
- developing effective teaching methods to help improve pupils' spelling skills (*paragraph 76*)
- ensuring that pupils have access to library provision and can develop their information retrieval skills (*paragraphs 63 and 82*)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

28

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

20

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	36%	43%	21%	0	0	0

The table gives the percentage of teaching observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR– Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	0	130
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	14

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	33

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	7
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	3

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.4
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	5	8	13

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	3	5	5
	Girls	8	8	8
	Total	11	13	13
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	85 (88)	100 (100)	100 (100)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	3	3	3
	Girls	6	6	6
	Total	9	9	9
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	69 (92)	69 (100)	69 (94)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	6	4	10

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	3	4	5
	Girls	3	2	4
	Total	6	6	9
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	60 (50)	60 (57)	90 (64)
	National	70 (65)	69 (58)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	3	3	3
	Girls	3	2	2
	Total	6	5	5
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	60 (71)	50 (86)	50 (93)
	National	68 (n/a)	69 (n/a)	75 (n/a)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	
Indian	
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	
White	111
Any other minority ethnic group	

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage		
Black – African heritage		
Black – other		
Indian		
Pakistani		
Bangladeshi		
Chinese		
White	3	
Other minority ethnic groups		

This table gives the number of exclusions of pupils of compulsory school age, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	5.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.6
Average class size	28.8

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	42

Financial information

Financial year	98/99
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	£
Total income	174,890
Total expenditure	175,130
Expenditure per pupil	1,578
Balance brought forward from previous year	2,972
Balance carried forward to next year	2,732

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	130
Number of questionnaires returned	59

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	56	35	5	2	2
My child is making good progress in school.	37	58	3	2	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	32	54	5	5	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	25	53	20	2	0
The teaching is good.	42	53	2	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	34	49	13	2	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	63	27	3	5	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	49	49	0	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	39	42	15	2	2
The school is well led and managed.	34	42	17	7	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	32	64	2	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	10	39	27	5	19

Summary of parents' and carers' responses

- Positive response - the school has high expectations of children; the teaching is good; children make good progress and achieve highly; the school helps pupils to become mature and responsible; children are well cared for and they like school; staff are approachable and responsive to parents
- Some concerns – amount of homework; range of activities outside lessons; the quality of the leadership and management

Other issues raised by parents

- Concern about the increase in the numbers of children in school and the impact on size of classes

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE

- 66 Children enter the reception class at the beginning of the school year in which they will be five. At the time of the inspection there were twenty children in the reception class, three-quarters of whom were not yet five. Children come from a wide area and have a range of pre-school educational experiences. Local children attend the pre-school playgroup held at the village hall next to the school, and some may attend nurseries in Darlington. However, many children have limited pre-school educational experience, and some enter school with poorly developed skills. This is confirmed by the results of assessments made as children enter school. Weaknesses can be in personal and social development and in language and physical skills. Children make good progress through the reception year and most enter Year 1 with attainment in line with what is expected of children of this age across all areas of learning. This was a similar picture at the time of the last inspection.
- 67 Most children are well on the way to achieving the expected levels in language and literacy by the age of five. Basic skills are taught well, and children make a good start with, for example, recognising letters and sounds. They enjoy books and listening to stories and respond well in these situations. Although initially many lack confidence and speech is limited, they gain confidence in the supportive environment, and begin to talk about things that interest them. Most listen attentively and follow instructions. They take part in role play. Many are starting to read and are well supported in this by their parents, as they regularly take books home to read. The range of books provided for children is not as wide as it could be and this sometimes has an effect on how interested children are in the books they read. There is only a limited range of Big Books for the teacher to share with children and this has an impact on the involvement with text that children can have. Phonics are effectively taught and most children are learning to associate sounds with patterns in rhymes. For example, they can think of words which sound the same as a given one. Although fine motor skills are weak, and many have problems in forming letters correctly, these skills are satisfactorily taught and practised.
- 68 Children make good progress in mathematics and most are on course to reach the expected level by the age of five. A practical approach ensures that children gain a good understanding of mathematical language. For example, they learn to use 'fast' and 'slow' in the context of taking part in and observing races. They recognise and use numbers; they count confidently to ten and some count further than this. The teacher targets children well in this kind of activity. For example, in dismantling the number line, some children are asked to identify particular numbers, whilst others are given the more complex problem of identifying 'the number before . . .' This provides a level of challenge for the higher attainers, which is often missing from the tasks they are given to do during activities sessions.
- 69 Progress in physical development is satisfactory. Most children move confidently, although some lack control and co-ordination. They are increasingly aware of others as they run in different directions. The reception classroom has insufficient space for large apparatus and there is no easy access to an outdoor area, so

there is little opportunity for children to gain confidence in using larger apparatus and to move freely on a regular basis. Physical education lessons are well planned and give children access to space, but this does not fully meet the needs of the under fives.

- 70 Children enter the reception class with a wide range of knowledge and understanding of the world in which they live. Some confidently talk about the places they have been to and events in their lives. Others have more limited experiences. Conversations with the teacher across a range of subjects enable children to gain confidence and take an interest in what is happening around them. A satisfactory range of activities is planned, for example work with structural apparatus, sand and water. But sometimes these activities are too directed and do not take account of the need for young children to observe and ask questions. The range of available resources can also limit activities. Skills such as cutting are well taught and children use these skills competently. Children gain some confidence with computers, but do not have sufficient opportunity to develop independence in using them.
- 71 Provision for children's creative development is sometimes limited by activities being too directed and by the limited range of resources available. Thus children do not always have the opportunity to explore and experiment with a wide range of tools and materials. However, they do gain skills and confidence in such activities as drawing, painting and modelling, and achieve expected levels in these areas. For example they mix colours for painting and draw imaginatively things which are fast and slow.
- 72 Provision for children's personal and social development is good. Children enter the reception class with varying levels of skill in this area. Some find it difficult to relate to others and some lack confidence and independence. The teacher's care and concern for the children and the secure environment she creates encourages children to settle and they soon grow in confidence. Currently the teacher is working on social relationships and encouraging co-operation and, although there are still some children who find it difficult to get on with others at times, others are becoming much more sensitive to the feelings of others and learning skills such as sharing and taking turns. Most respond well to the expectations of the school in terms of behaviour and are developing an understanding of what is wrong and why.

ENGLISH

- 73 In the 1999 National Tests the performance of the pupils in reading and writing at the end of Key Stage 1, was above average both nationally, and when compared with similar schools. This compares favourably with results achieved by pupils since the previous inspection in 1996. However, although one hundred percent of pupils achieved the benchmark Level 2 in writing, no pupils achieved the above average grade of Level 3. Teacher assessments for speaking and listening indicated that pupils' performance in these areas was well below average. Teacher assessments were consistently below actual test results. However, during the inspection it was obvious that teachers know the capabilities of their pupils well and are able to plan appropriately. During the past four years girls have scored

more highly than boys have in reading, although the boys' results have remained similar to the national average.

- 74 The results of the 1999 National Tests in English at the end of Key Stage 2, indicated that the pupils' performance was below the national average, and below that achieved by similar schools. Although this was a disappointing result it did show an improvement on the previous year. The fluctuating results of the past four years have been influenced by the higher than average number of pupils with special needs in these small year groups, making comparative data unreliable. However, the pupils with special needs make good progress in reaching their own individual targets. Over the previous four years girls have out-performed boys in English activities. Key Stage 2 teacher assessments in 1999 were in line with actual test results.
- 75 Since the previous inspection in 1996 the school has introduced the National Literacy Strategy which is having a positive effect on pupils' learning. The school has identified writing as an area for development, and additional time has, quite rightly, been allocated to this. The data produced during the inspection indicates that this additional time is used effectively, and the quality of pupils' descriptive writing is improving.
- 76 During the inspection, attainments in English at the end of Key Stage 1 were judged to be above the national average. Attainments are similar to the national average in speaking and listening, and above the national average in reading and writing. This reflects the results of the school's 1999 National Tests in reading and writing, but is above the teacher assessed results for speaking and listening at the end of Key Stage 1. At the end of Key Stage 2 attainments during the inspection indicate that pupils are in line with the national average. Pupils are achieving average results in speaking and listening, and above average results in reading. Although improving, pupils' attainment in writing at the end of this key stage is below average. The ability to spell words correctly is weak throughout the school. Teachers have recognised this, and schemes are in place to address this difficulty. Pupils in both key stages are enthusiastic readers. They read widely for enjoyment, and their achievements are above the national average.
- 77 The overall attainment in English at Key Stage 1 has improved since the previous inspection. This is an improvement on the results in the 1996 tests. The school has addressed the need to improve handwriting, which was identified during the previous inspection, and achievement in this area is now in line with national expectations. Monitoring, and day to day assessment of pupils' progress, have improved, and issues such as poor spelling continue to be addressed. Additional time is being devoted to improve the quality of pupils' writing. Although this is reducing time for other subjects it is proving effective, and should have a positive effect on pupils' achievements in all subjects. The National Literacy Strategy, setting out a daily hour-long programme covering all aspects of the English Curriculum, has been implemented successfully and is having a positive effect on learning and progress.
- 78 Progress in all aspects of English accelerates at the end of Key Stage 1 as a result of very good teaching, and good progress is maintained in Key Stage 2. The progress of pupils with special educational needs in reaching their individual targets in English is good. This is the result of effectively planned learning, together with good quality support provided by a specially trained teacher, and

special support assistants. Individual education plans clearly state learning targets, such as the number of high frequency words or letter sounds to be learnt. Any underachievement by boys is carefully monitored, and the school is committed to eliminate any gender difference in attainment and progress.

- 79 Pupils' literacy skills allow them to learn appropriately in all subjects. Their good reading skills ensure that they can assimilate information effectively. However, their more limited writing ability, especially in Key Stage 2, slows down their recording of information, and the overall results often do not do justice to their knowledge. Subject related vocabulary is introduced consistently by teachers and pupils' spoken language is often good, but spelling remains generally weak.
- 80 Teaching is good overall in both key stages. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and use it well to reinforce learning, especially during direct whole class teaching. Planning is good and reflects the requirements of the National Literacy Hour. It is appropriately based on pupils' previous knowledge, and ensures that learning is carefully built up step by step. The very good teaching is characterised by carefully planned tasks which match ability accurately, and yet challenge pupils, through extended activities, to strive to achieve more. In the best lessons pace is brisk and pupils' attention is maintained throughout the lesson. Methods of monitoring, assessing and marking in these lessons ensure that pupils know how to improve their standards and understand the purpose of future targets. In general, resources are well prepared, but teachers make limited use of information technology to enhance pupils work. Because teachers have high expectations and manage pupils effectively progress is good.
- 81 The subject is co-ordinated well. Provision is monitored through teachers' medium term plans and through samples of pupils' work. Teaching and learning is well monitored by the headteacher. There is a useful system of monitoring pupils' progress which is pasted into the back of pupils workbooks. It is simple, and ensures that information is readily available. Careful analysis is undertaken to assess the data gathered from all test results and to set individual targets for all pupils. This process has a positive impact on pupils' progress.
- 82 Resources are adequate, although there are a limited number of large print books, and there are no stands on which to support them. This limits the quality of the shared text, word and sentence work, because in many instances pupils are unable to follow the text with the teacher. Some of the books in the lower part of the school are in need of replacement. Pupils' library skills are weak, and this is aggravated by the limited access available to the school library. Pupils' experiences are enhanced by visits to theatres and through the involvement with interactive visiting theatre groups.

MATHEMATICS

- 83 1999 results show standards at the end of Key Stage 1 to be very high. All pupils achieved the expected level and a high percentage achieved above this. Standards were well above the national average and the average for similar schools. The results of teacher assessment seem to indicate lower standards than this, particularly in terms of pupils' ability to use and apply mathematics. Key Stage 2 results show standards at this stage to be below the national average and

below the average for similar schools. However, a high percentage of pupils with special educational needs in a particularly small cohort distorts results significantly. Overall standards in the school are good and have improved since the last inspection.

- 84 Inspection evidence shows pupils in Key Stage 1 to be working at levels above what might be expected. Year 2 pupils have a good grasp of addition facts to ten and use them to help them find easy ways of adding three numbers. They show a secure understanding of place value; for example they know how many sets of ten there are in a given number. Many are confident in using mental strategies for adding and subtracting given two digit numbers. They have worked with 2-D and 3-D shapes, and can name them and identify their properties.
- 85 Year 6 pupils are attaining in line with what might be expected. They use the four operations confidently and in different formats. Most have a clear understanding of place value and use this in ordering sets of numbers to at least a 1000. Many can apply this to decimals to two places. They find the perimeters of shapes and have used bar lines and graphs in data handling.
- 86 Pupils make good progress through the school and achieve well. The high percentage of pupils achieving above average levels in 1999 in both key stages indicates that higher attainers are achieving well. The facts that no pupils achieved at less than average levels in Key Stage 1, and that the special educational needs pupils achieved just below what might be expected in Key Stage 2, indicate good achievement by lower attaining pupils. Inspection evidence indicates a high level of achievement through the school. For example, in Year 1 pupils gain skills in counting in twos and apply this to counting out coins. Year 3 and 4 pupils developed a good understanding of measuring area by counting squares and applied this to real situations.
- 87 Pupils are taught well in mathematics. The energy and enthusiasm with which the teachers approach the subject and deliver their lessons has a major impact on the amount of effort pupils put into their work and on how well they achieve. For example, in the introductory mental work part of numeracy lessons, teachers work at a fast pace and target questions at individual pupils. This keeps all pupils involved and ensures that they concentrate well. Teachers plan effectively and are clear in their learning objectives.
- 88 Teachers know their pupils well and can adapt the work they are presenting to the different attainment levels in their classes. For example, the Year 5/6 teacher introduced decimals to the whole class but then skilfully provided the lower attainers with work at their level, and later provided the higher attainers with more challenging tasks which made demands on them. This resulted in all pupils making good progress as they developed their knowledge and understanding and built on their previous learning. Pupils with special educational needs, although rarely receiving extra adult support, are well catered for by teachers. Higher attainers are well challenged. Teachers' knowledge of pupils enables them to make accurate assessments of their achievements on a day to day basis. As result of this they are flexible in their groupings and meet the needs of individuals well. More formal assessments are made on a regular basis and records kept of pupils' progress. End of Key Stage assessments are less secure, particularly in Key Stage 1; teacher assessments are consistently below that of the results of statutory tests. Teachers are cautious and have done very little moderating, within

the school or with other schools. This can give a misleading under-representation of the school's standards.

- 89 The recent emphasis on developing mental mathematics, linked with the introduction of the Numeracy Strategy, has resulted in a marked improvement in the development of pupils' skills with number. This is demonstrated in pupils' confident mental facility and in their ability to use mathematics in problem solving situations. Teachers have introduced the Numeracy Strategy confidently; the careful planning and the emphasis on whole class teaching have had a positive impact on standards achieved. Pupils use their skills in numeracy across the curriculum. For example, in science they measure and use tables to record their investigations. In history, Year 2 pupils are able to count back in years and say how long ago an event happened.
- 90 Standards in mathematics are monitored carefully and the progress of individuals and groups of pupils is carefully analysed. This provides information upon which to base curriculum planning. For example, a weakness was perceived in using and applying mathematics, so an emphasis was placed on problem-solving and this resulted in pupils becoming more confident in using mathematics. Good use is made of what are often limited resources. Teachers make their own quality cards and worksheets and these have an impact on pupils' interest and motivation. Although some use is made of information technology, such as in handling data and practising tables, this is not sufficient to support the subject effectively.

SCIENCE

- 91 Attainment during the inspection is judged to be good at the end of both key stages, and pupils are working at levels above the national average. This is a considerable improvement on the Key Stage 1 teacher-assessed results in 1999. These indicated that overall standards of attainment were well below the national average, and very low when compared to those of similar schools. However, in the study of life and living processes the percentage of pupils teachers assessed to be reaching expected standards met the national average, whilst those achieving a higher standard was very high. The results of the National Tests in 1999 for pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 indicated that attainment in science was above the national average, and above the attainment of pupils in similar schools. This reflects the picture seen during the inspection. However, teacher assessments in this key stage were well below actual results.
- 92 At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils understand that some foods are healthier than others, and that we need a balanced diet. Pupils can divide foods into basic groups and begin to plan a healthy meal. They record their findings on a block graph and draw conclusions from their results. Pupils learn how to use their senses in a focused way during an investigation into the flavours of crisps. Some of the higher attaining pupils in Year 2 suggest ways of overcoming the effects of tasting one flavour after another, and understand how to conduct a fair test.
- 93 These investigative skills are further developed in Key Stage 2. Pupils in Year 3 experiment with shadows and understand that they are made when an opaque material blocks a beam of light. In Year 6 pupils study space and the effects created by the earth's movement around the sun. They understand that the axial tilt of the earth lengthens and shortens the hours of light, and this differs depending upon the position of the earth relative to the sun. Pupils of all ages are

developing the use of appropriate scientific vocabulary, and effectively linking their knowledge and understanding of the subject to topics such as, the refraction of light and the sound proofing properties of some materials.

- 94 The quality of teaching in the lessons observed is very good. Teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge and communicate real enthusiasm for the topics taught. Teachers obviously know their pupils' capabilities well and continually assess and monitor their learning. Planning is detailed and takes account of previous learning. However moderation of end of key stage assessments is limited to sharing expectations with other colleagues in school, and there have been no opportunities to compare pupils level of work with those of other schools. Teachers' expectations are high, and together with the good pace of learning, result in pupils being thoroughly challenged to think for themselves in order to extend their learning.
- 95 The school has recently improved the quality of experimental and investigative science, especially in Key Stage 1 where there was perceived to be a weakness. With some careful planning and organisation pupils in Key Stage 1 alternate between lessons which build knowledge and understanding and those that develop investigative skills. This ensures that the science curriculum is fully covered and gives pupils the necessary skills to enable them to make good progress.
- 96 Pupils, including those who have special educational needs, make good progress at both key stages. This is an improvement since the previous inspection which found that progress overall was satisfactory. Increasingly at Key Stage 1 pupils' learning is based on investigation and pupils are involved in prediction, observation and recording. Their knowledge and understanding is developing, and this good progress is continued in Key Stage 2. Girls and boys make comparable progress, and pupils with special needs are well supported and their progress is good.
- 97 At both key stages pupils are enthusiastic, sustain concentration well and collaborate sensibly with others. They behave well in lessons and display obvious enjoyment in their work and take pride in their achievements. When presented with challenging work, many respond positively and learn quickly to take responsibility for their own learning and show initiative.
- 98 The co-ordination of the subject is good. There is clear direction for science and detailed strategies are in place to eliminate any perceived weakness in provision. Planning is regularly monitored by the co-ordinator through teachers' planning and pupils' work. The science guidelines have been up-dated with the help of county staff, and the co-ordinator has produced activities to support learning in the classrooms. Resources are adequate, but purchases have to be made from time to time to cover any special activities. The school grounds provide a useful resource and are used extensively to extend learning experiences.

ART

- 99 Because of the planned pattern of work in art during the inspection, it was possible to observe only one art lesson, which was in Key Stage 2. This observation, together with a scrutiny of retained previous work, indicates that attainment at the end of both key stages is similar to national expectations for pupils of these ages. The school has maintained the standards identified in the previous inspection.

- 100 Retained work in Key Stage 1, and scrutiny of the school's guidelines for art, demonstrate that pupils experience a wide range of art activities over time. Evidence shows that pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. In Reception, pupils have opportunities to mix their own colours when painting, and use a variety of media and small tools. In Year 1 pupils experiment with the techniques involved in weaving, and complete projects using paper and card. Pupils in Year 2 explore the use of different materials and interpret their planned designs for plant and animal pictures through the technique of collage.
- 101 In Key Stage 2 pupils, including those with special educational needs, develop the basic skills learnt in Key Stage 1, and make satisfactory progress overall. In the observed lesson pupils made very good progress. They made simple printing blocks in preparation for pressing their designs on previously tie-dyed material. Their work links with a study of African art, and effectively heightens the pupils' awareness of colour and design in textiles from another culture. Older pupils have copied the styles of artists such as Vincent van Gogh and Pablo Picasso, and produced some effective pictures in paint and pastel. In connection with a history topic, pupils have created Tudor portraits using collage techniques, and have produced some good results. Pupils make good use of sketchbooks for design and experimentation.
- 102 Pupils enjoy their art activities and are well motivated especially in Key Stage 2. Their response in the observed lesson was good. Pupils were fully absorbed in their work and tackled it with care and attention to detail.
- 103 There was insufficient evidence to judge teaching at the end of Key Stage 1, and very few examples of pupils' individual work were displayed. However, the teaching observed in Key Stage 2 was very good. Displayed work in this key stage suggests that teachers have good subject knowledge, and provide a sufficient variety of materials to ensure that pupils' art experiences are good. They make insufficient use of information technology, for example in designing and experimenting with shape and colour on screen.
- 104 The co-ordinator shares good practice and provides support for colleagues. She has produced comprehensive art guidelines, which give good direction to teachers. The school welcomes visits from local artists to work with the pupils whenever possible. A wall hanging in wool and textile was completed with the help of a visiting artist as part of the town's anniversary celebrations, and a painted playground surface is a project at the planning stage. Participation in local competitions is encouraged, and pupils are presently designing a cover for the children's menu at the local hospital. Displays in Key Stage 2 are colourful and enhance the environment and celebrate pupils' achievements.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

- 105 Because of the school's planned pattern of working, only two design and technology lessons were observed during the inspection. Other evidence was inspected including displayed work, photographs and teachers' planning. This evidence is consistent with attainment that matches the national expectations at the end of both key stages. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in both key stages.

- 106 At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils design and cut out paper patterns for 'Joseph's multi-coloured coat.' They follow instructions with care and create designs selecting from a variety of materials. They clarify their knowledge through discussion, and gather design ideas from fabric samples. Pupils use tools correctly and develop skills such as cutting and joining. At the end of Key Stage 2 pupils design and make slippers to wear. They make prototypes from paper before using fabric, and discuss problems such as size, and seam allowance to ensure a correct fit. Pupils appraise their work, consider whether the slippers are fit for their purpose and propose improvements. Pupils contemplate appearance, function and reliability before designing and making boxes. They disassemble packets to see how they are put together and test their finished boxes for sturdiness.
- 107 The evidence of completed work indicates that pupils have responded well to lessons at both key stages. In the observed lessons pupils concentrated on tasks and developed their ideas successfully. In Key Stage 2 pupils worked well together in friendship pairs. They quickly organised materials, and made alternative suggestions when they faced problems.
- 108 The teaching that was observed was good. Teachers understand the need to instruct pupils in the processes involved in making, which starts with the design and concludes with the evaluation. For example, original box designs indicate that pupils have developed ideas well, and brought them to effective conclusions. Tasks are well matched to pupils' needs and interests.
- 109 The subject is well co-ordinated. Plans for lessons draw widely from the National Curriculum Programmes of Study, and guidelines support teachers' work. These will be reviewed and brought into line with the requirements of the government's new curriculum guidelines when they are published. The school welcomes adults from the engineering field into school to work alongside pupils, relating lesson tasks to the real world of work. Projects undertaken at these times have included bridge and greenhouse designs, interpreted through models and tested for strength. Although time has been reduced for the study of design technology, the school has never the less ensured that worthwhile experiences and opportunities have been maintained.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

- 110 Only a few lessons of these subjects were observed during the inspection, but from these lessons and from the scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' planning, it is clear that the school provides a worthwhile experience in both subjects, and pupils achieve good standards.
- 111 In history, Year 2 pupils learnt about the life of Louis Braille and they demonstrated a good level of achievement during the lesson. They have a keen interest in the lives of people in the past and can talk about the contributions made by such people to their own times. They make comparisons between aspects of life in the past and with their own lives, for example clothes and conditions of life. They ask questions and use sources of information, for example a video recording and pictures.

- 112 In Year 6, pupils were studying the Tudors and in particular the life of Queen Elizabeth. They demonstrated a good level of knowledge and understanding about the past. For example, they talked about life in Tudor times and the way of life of people at different levels of society. They have skills in historical enquiry. For example, they use sources and ask relevant questions, but are also becoming aware of needing to check the validity of sources and give reasons for different ways in which the past is represented and interpreted.
- 113 In geography, Year 3 and 4 pupils were following their topic of life in a village in Kenya. They showed a keen interest and a depth of geographical understanding. They compare places in terms of physical and human features. They are aware of how people's lives are affected by where they live, for example in how they build their houses.
- 114 In the lessons seen, the teaching was consistently good and in the geography lesson it was very good. Teachers are enthusiastic and demonstrate a good level of subject knowledge and understanding. This motivates pupils and they are interested and keen to learn. A good level of questioning keeps pupils involved and encourages them to work hard and develop their understanding. They use resources well, although the school resources are sometimes limited. Visits are used well to enhance the curriculum and these are well supported by parents.
- 115 The co-ordinators are good teachers themselves and have a positive influence on their subjects and how they are taught in the school. They are both keen to ensure that the limited time allocated to these areas is well used by focused planning and teaching so that pupils have positive experiences.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

- 116 Standards in information technology are below the expectations of the National Curriculum, and pupils do not achieve well enough. Standards have not improved since the last inspection. Pupils in both key stages gain knowledge and understanding across most aspects of the subject, but they do not have the opportunity to develop the skills they need in order to be able to use computers usefully and independently. Although the issues of teacher confidence and planning of the curriculum from the last inspection have been addressed, this development has yet to have an impact on standards. The main weakness is in the limited access pupils have to suitable computers.
- 117 Pupils gain a satisfactory knowledge and understanding, but do not gain sufficient confidence to use computers purposefully across the curriculum. For example, Year 2 pupils have a good understanding of how their actions control what happens on screen, for example they have had the experience of creating a picture and can describe what they did. They know how to use a computer for creating text and can describe how to use keys such 'delete' and 'shift'. Some are beginning to sort information. However, they do not have the confidence to handle the equipment and software independently and do not regard computers as a normal part of their learning.
- 118 By Year 6, pupils have had experience of word processing and of saving their work. They can use clip art to make posters. However, they are not confident in using computers to communicate ideas, for example by combining text, pictures

and sound. They are beginning to use spreadsheets and have had some experience of other forms of data-handling, but are not confident with control technology and have only limited opportunity to access information from computers. In neither key stage do pupils achieve expected standards.

- 119 A satisfactory curriculum is in place, and teachers plan well in the long term to ensure that pupils experience most aspects of information technology. For example, at the time of the inspection Year 2 pupils were beginning data handling, whilst Year 5 and 6 pupils were learning about spreadsheets. This includes planning for the teaching of skills to whole classes and groups of pupils. Appropriate software is sometimes used to support basic skills learning, for example to help pupils learn spellings or tables. However, teachers rarely plan for computers to be used on a regular basis in the everyday work of the class, for example for word processing, and so pupils do not have enough opportunity to practise their skills and develop confidence and independence.
- 120 The school has made efforts to update the computers they have, and parents have contributed generously towards this, through the Parents' Association. However the number of computers is inadequate for the increased numbers of pupils in school, which means that classes have to share by allocating time. This does not help pupils to have the regular access they need, nor is it easy for them to regard computers as a natural part of the classroom environment. Several of the computers in use are dated and are not easy to use. Pupils therefore cannot use suitable software and teachers find it difficult to help them become independent on these machines. The school has a good development plan, and staff have a clear idea of how the subject will develop when funding becomes available.
- 121 Teacher confidence, which was seen as a weakness in the last inspection, is no longer an issue. Teachers are confident in the use of computers; they use them regularly in their own work. They have had training in the use of information technology in the curriculum and more is planned for the future. The co-ordinator has worked hard on trying to promote the subject in school, and has a clear idea of future developments.

MUSIC

- 122 Standards are in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages and are similar to those at the time of the last inspection. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. Pupils' attainment in performing, composing, listening and appraising is satisfactory.
- 123 At the end of Key Stage 1 pupils demonstrate a good sense of rhythm. They listen carefully to rhythmic patterns, and by accurately tapping them they punctuate the lines of a recorded song. They use percussion instruments to illustrate different animals, and develop the rhythms of animal names into a composition. They rehearse their work with others and share it through performance. Pupils are taught to appraise the work of others, and to adapt their own compositions to take account of suggested ideas.
- 124 In Key Stage 2 pupils' ability to retain a sense of rhythm is further developed by the use of action songs, and their composition of developing feelings and sounds

of a sports day is recorded in prose. At the end of Key Stage 2 pupils follow written notation, and use a range of tuned and untuned instruments in their performance. They appraise and improve their own recorded performance. Pupils in both key stages know the words and melodies of a wide range of songs. They sing together with enthusiasm and obvious enjoyment in lessons. In assemblies their singing is tuneful, and is often accompanied by the headteacher on either guitar or keyboard.

- 125 Throughout the school pupils respond well to music, they concentrate and handle instruments with care. During lessons they collaborate and are eager to produce good results. Pupils enjoy their music making, and many in Key Stage 2 join recorder groups and perform during assemblies. The curriculum is enhanced for a number of pupils who choose to take advantage of the instrumental tuition provided for violin, flute and cello. Pupils enjoy the entry music to assemblies provided by these pupils on the days when they receive their instruction.
- 126 All the teaching observed was good. Teachers have varied subject knowledge and skills, and take their ideas from a commercial scheme, which they use effectively to compensate for any lack of expertise and confidence. Lessons are carefully planned, and teachers use good management skills to provide a balance between teacher-directed activity and pupil participation. Teachers clearly demonstrate their enthusiasm for music, and this has a positive effect on pupils' attitudes. This has been fostered by the headteacher who has effectively encouraged music in the school and who leads by example in teaching the older pupils. The range of resources is sufficient to adequately support teaching and learning, and visiting musicians enhance pupils' experiences.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

- 127 It was only possible during the inspection to observe a limited amount of physical education. However, judging from the school's policy documents and teachers' planning, a satisfactory curriculum is in place and pupils appear to be working at the levels which might be expected of them.
- 128 The youngest children in the reception class move confidently, using different directions. They are beginning to develop control and think about the movements they make. The oldest pupils in Year 6 move imaginatively as a response to music. They work in pairs and groups to practise and refine their movements.
- 129 Teachers plan effectively to include safety elements and time for pupils to evaluate their work. Pupils enjoy physical activity and take part sensibly and responsibly. Although an appropriate range of activities and experiences are planned, there is an emphasis on swimming and this takes up a substantial amount of time, particularly at certain times of the year. This situation is not sufficiently monitored to ensure that it is making the best use of available time. The school encourages team games and extra-curricular activities such as netball and football enhance the curriculum.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

- 130 At the end of both key stages, pupils' attainment in religious education matches the levels expected in the Locally Agreed Syllabus. The school has maintained the standards identified in the previous inspection.
- 131 Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress at Key Stage 1 and in the lesson observed during the inspection. By the end of the key stage they can consider their own lives and feelings in relation to simple moral codes. Through stories in the Bible pupils draw on their own experiences to deepen their understanding. In Year 1 pupils consider feelings of injustice as they listen to the Old Testament story of the wrongful accusation and imprisonment of Joseph. In assemblies, along with all other pupils in the school, they examine the meaning of trust and temptation in the context of different Bible stories.
- 132 Pupils, including those with special needs, continue to make satisfactory progress at Key Stage 2. They deepen their understanding of faith through furthering their study of Christianity and broadening their knowledge of other world religions. They gain confidence and fully contribute in discussions. In Years 3 and 4 they contemplated how Moses must have felt as he cared for his people through very difficult times. At the end of Key Stage 2 the older pupils study the Sikh faith, and relate the ideas contained within the Mool Mantra to everyday Sikh living. They begin to appreciate the fears of others, and the need for understanding. The development of pupils' moral and social values is a feature of the learning throughout the school, and opportunities are made to foster these in all lessons.
- 133 Pupils adopt good attitudes to their learning, they listen attentively to stories and respond thoughtfully. They show respect and tolerance for the opinions of others, and share their ideas and experiences eagerly.
- 134 The quality of teaching observed was satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and good in Key Stage 2. All lessons are well prepared and teachers have good knowledge of the subject. Planning is good, and includes clear learning targets. The best teaching occurs in lessons which develop pupils' thinking, and are carefully balanced between information gathering, discussion to clarify pupils' own thoughts, and appropriate tasks well matched to pupils' differing attainments. Good use is made of resources such as a video programme to intensify pupils' interest and understanding, and artefacts to extend pupils' first hand experiences.
- 135 The co-ordinator, who has only recently been appointed, has made a good start in reviewing provision. She has monitored teachers' medium term planning and collecting evidence of pupils' work to ensure that the Locally Agreed Syllabus is being followed. Although resources are satisfactory and in good condition, the co-ordinator has identified some shortfall in Jewish artefacts. The school celebrates Christian and other religious festivals, and visits are made to the local church and recently to Durham Cathedral to celebrate the millennium.