

INSPECTION REPORT

Coquet Park First School

Whitley Bay

LEA area : North Tyneside LEA

Unique Reference Number : 108590

Headteacher : Mr M. Lovell

Reporting inspector : Mrs A. Soper
OIN 18148

Dates of inspection : 7th – 11th February 2000

Inspection number: 188652

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

© Crown Copyright 2000

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

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 – 9
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Coquet Avenue Whitley Bay Tyne and Wear
Postcode:	NE26 1EF
Telephone number:	0191 200 8708
Fax number:	0191 200 8798
Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs M. Jackson
Date of previous inspection:	3 rd June 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject Responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mrs A. Soper	Registered inspector	English	What sort of school is it?
		Science	How high are standards?
		Art	How well are pupils taught?
		Geography	
		Physical education	
		Special educational needs	
		English as and additional language	
Mrs B. McIntosh	Lay inspector	Equal opportunities	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
			How well does the school care for its pupils?
			How good does the school work in partnership with parents?
Mr R. Evans	Team inspector	Mathematics	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
		Information technology	How well is the school led and managed?
		Religious education	
		Design and technology	
		History	
		Music	
		Under fives	

The inspection contractor was:

Pennine Inspection Services
 6 Bridle Dene
 Shelf
 Halifax
 HX3 7NR
 01274 602139

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

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

REPORT CONTENTS

Page

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

6 – 9

Information about the school
How good the school is
What the school does well
What could be improved
How the school has improved since the last inspection
Standards
Pupils' attitudes and values
Teaching and learning
Other aspects of the school
How well the school is led and managed
Parents' and carers' views of the school

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

10 – 12

The school's results and achievements
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

12 – 14

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

14 – 16

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

16 – 17

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

17

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

18 – 19

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

19 – 20

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

21 – 24

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

25 – 40

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Coquet Park First School is situated in Whitley Bay, in Tyne and Wear. The school is about the same size as other primary schools. There are six classes altogether, including a nursery class, which admits children from the age of three. There are 182 pupils on roll, with 51 children who attend the nursery part-time. Most pupils are from white, European families. Twelve pupils are from Bangladeshi families and have English as an additional language, which is higher than most schools. Seven pupils are at an early stage of language acquisition. The school has identified 23 pupils as having special educational needs, with two pupils having a Statement of Special Educational Need. This is just below the national average. Most of the pupils come from outside the school's catchment area. Socio-economic circumstances are good and pupils' attainment on entry to the school is above average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Coquet Park is an effective school. It successfully promotes high standards of achievement and care for its pupils. Teaching and the quality of learning are good. The nursery provides a very good foundation for children, providing good experiences in all areas of learning. The headteacher, staff and governors, many of whom are new to the school, share a commitment to continued improvement. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- ◆ Standards achieved in English, mathematics, science and information technology are good and above average by the time pupils are 7 and 9. Standards in history are good by the time pupils are 9.
- ◆ Pupils have positive attitudes and very good relationships, which makes a strong contribution to the good progress they make in lessons. They behave very well.
- ◆ The quality of teaching is good.
- ◆ Provision in the nursery is very good, enabling children to make good progress in all areas of learning.
- ◆ There are very good extra-curricular activities, which enhance pupils' learning.
- ◆ The new headteacher, staff and governors have identified clear priorities for improvement and share a common commitment to improving the quality of education.
- ◆ There is a very good partnership with parents, who fully support the school.

What could be improved

- ◆ Standards of handwriting and presentation are less than satisfactory in most classes.
- ◆ In Key Stages 1 and 2, procedures for marking and assessing pupils' achievement are inconsistent and there is insufficient use made of assessment to inform planning.
- ◆ Reports to parents show insufficient information about their children's progress.
- ◆ Some skills are not systematically developed in some subjects.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in June, 1996. Since then, there have been many staffing changes in the school, including the very recent appointment of the headteacher. The school has effectively improved provision in information technology. Standards in science have improved. Suitable opportunities are being provided for teachers to develop their areas of responsibility. The school is developing appropriate systems for monitoring and evaluating consistency and continuity of the curriculum, as well as the quality of teaching. An appropriate school development plan has been devised in consultation with staff and governors. Most recently the school has begun to establish procedures for monitoring pupils' progress and to use the outcomes of assessment to inform and benefit practice across the school. The school is now well placed to continue to improve, supported by the headteacher's clear sense of direction and the commitment of the staff and the governing body.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 7 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
Reading	A*	A*	A	B
Writing	A*	A	A	B
Mathematics	A*	B	B	C

Key	
very high	A*
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
Well below average	E

The table shows that in the 1999 National Curriculum tests, pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 was well above average in reading and writing and above average in mathematics, compared with schools nationally. In comparison with similar schools, pupils' performance was above average in reading and writing and average in mathematics. The overall trend over the last three years has been one of higher than average attainment in all three subjects, with the highest performance overall seen in 1997. Scrutiny of the school's results over the last three years shows that, although there has been a slight variation in results, this reflects the prior attainment of pupils who undertook the tests and does not indicate a falling trend in standards. Pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are good and support their learning in all subjects.

Evidence from the current inspection indicates that attainment in reading is well above average, reflecting the results in 1999. Attainment in writing is above average. Throughout the school, pupils have good speaking and listening skills. Pupils' attainment in mathematics and science is good and above average. This reflects an improvement in standards since 1999. The school has set appropriate future targets for pupils and good progress is being made towards meeting these targets.

The strong emphasis on raising standards in information technology has ensured that pupils' attainment is good and above standards expected nationally. In religious education, pupils' knowledge and understanding is appropriate for their ages by the time they are 7 and 9. Standards achieved in all other subjects of the National Curriculum are satisfactory and in line

with those expected nationally.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes of the school	Good. Pupils have positive attitudes and are eager to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good behaviour.
Personal development and relationships	Good personal development and very good relationships. Pupils are friendly and polite.
Attendance	Good. Pupils are keen to come to school.

In their personal development, pupils willingly take responsibility for tasks and show initiative, such as when undertaking independent research and supporting different charities.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5 - 7 years	aged 7 - 9 years
Lesson 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 strengths outweigh any weaknesses.

The quality of teaching is good. During the inspection, 60 per cent of lessons seen was good or better, 99 per cent was satisfactory or better and only one lesson was unsatisfactory. Teaching in the nursery was often very good, with many activities providing stimulating learning experiences for the children. The skills of literacy and numeracy are taught well in the school, resulting in the very good standards achieved in reading and good standards in writing and speaking and listening. The one area of weakness is the insufficient emphasis that is placed on handwriting and standards of presentation in most classes. In mathematics, there is less evidence of good progress in handling data. The needs of pupils who have English as an additional language are met well. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory overall. The quality of learning is good. Pupils and teachers have good relationships, behaviour is very good and there is a positive climate for learning.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good overall. Very good extra-curricular provision.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good for children under five. Satisfactory elsewhere in the school.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. There is good support from the visiting teacher who works frequently with these pupils.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and	Good. The school effectively promotes pupils' personal education, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

cultural development	
----------------------	--

How well the school cares for its pupils	Good overall. Very good procedures for promoting and monitoring good attendance. Insufficient use of assessment to inform planning.
--	---

The school works well in partnership with parents. There are good links and parents have a very good impact on the work of the school. Procedures for child protection are good, though the designated member of staff has not received training. Procedures for promoting and monitoring good behaviour are good.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory. The headteacher has been in post for only a few weeks and has clear educational vision for the school. There is good support from senior staff.
How well the appropriate authority fulfils its responsibilities	Satisfactory. Statutory requirements are met. Many governors have only recently been appointed but show a commitment to supporting the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Clear and accurate evaluation.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The school makes effective use of resources.

The headteacher and governors have a clear vision for the school and have already identified aspects of the school to be developed, which coincide with the findings of the inspection.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Good standards are achieved and there are high expectations of pupils. ◆ The school is well led and managed. ◆ Their children like school. ◆ The teaching is good. ◆ Behaviour is good. ◆ Staff are approachable and the school works closely with parents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Information about children's progress. ◆ The range of activities outside lessons.

Inspectors agree with parents' positive views. Good standards are achieved in most subjects, though, in some work, some teachers' expectations do not always reflect good understanding of pupils' prior attainment. The information provided to parents provides appropriate details about their children's achievements but insufficiently informs parents about their progress. There is a very good range of extra-curricular activities.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. In the 1999 National Curriculum assessments, pupils' results at the end of Key Stage 1 were very good and well above the national average in reading and writing and above in mathematics. Compared with similar schools, their performance was above average in reading and writing and average in mathematics. Pupils have consistently attained higher than average standards over the last three years in all three subjects. A slight variation has been seen during the last three years, with reading performance being very high in comparison with the national average in 1997 and 1998. Performance in writing and mathematics was also very high in comparison with the national average in 1997. The slight variation in results reflects pupils' prior attainment and the proportion of pupils with special educational needs who undertook the tests each year.

2. Evidence from the inspection shows that pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is well above average in reading, reflecting the 1999 National Curriculum results. By the end of Year 4, pupils read fluently, accurately and expressively, maintaining these high standards. The content of pupils' writing is good and above average by the end of Key Stage 1, reflecting 1999 comparisons with pupils in similar schools. Standards of handwriting and presentation are insufficiently good in relation to standards expected for pupils aged 7. By the end of Year 4, there is good achievement in writing. Pupils write for a wide range of purposes, using good vocabulary and show good understanding of different styles of writing. Nevertheless, the quality of handwriting and presentation remains varied and insufficiently reflects pupils' capabilities.

3. By the end of Key Stage 1, attainment in mathematics is good and above average, compared with the national average. These good standards are maintained in Key Stage 2, where pupils' achievement is good and above average by the end of Year 4.

4. Pupils attain good standards in science by the end of Key Stage 1 and by the end of Year 4. In the 1999 teacher assessments, Key Stage 1 pupils' performance was broadly average in most aspects of the subject. Their attainment in the aspect dealing with life and living processes was well below average. There has been a good improvement in standards, supported by the good quality of the teaching and improved planning, that ensures appropriate balance is provided. Evidence from the inspection shows that pupils have a good understanding of life and living processes.

5. Standards in information technology have greatly improved since the last inspection. By the end of Key Stage 1 and Year 4, pupils achieve high standards that are above average. There has been a rapid rate of progress for the younger pupils, whilst older pupils continue to achieve well. The subject benefits greatly from the headteacher's effective guidance and regular teaching in all classes.

6. The quality of work seen in history indicates that pupils achieve satisfactory standards by the end of Key Stage 1 and good standards by the end of Year 4, where the teachers' good subject knowledge has a strong impact on pupils' learning. Pupils have good knowledge and understanding of the past, as seen in their writing and during discussions.

7. In art, design and technology, geography, music and physical education, pupils achieve

satisfactory standards in relation to those expected nationally. Pupils have sound understanding of designing and making, often showing good imagination in their designs for patterns, such as those for Viking helmets. Sometimes, they have insufficient opportunity to plan, measure and design independently in design and technology. In music, over time, pupils make sound progress in improvisation, understanding of musical concepts and performance skills. Singing in class and in assembly is of good quality, tuneful and in pitch. Progress in listening to and appraising music is less satisfactory. Pupils have limited opportunity to experience this area. In geography, Year 2 pupils show sound understanding of mapping skills, though older pupils in Key Stage 2 are unfamiliar with the use of grid references and the index to help them in their study of maps. Sometimes, when using worksheets, some pupils make limited progress, due to the lack of appropriate reading materials. In physical education, pupils achieve appropriate standards for their ages. They often show good imagination in dance, where they interpret music and themes effectively. A few pupils, who are members of the gymnastics club, achieve well, attaining above average standards.

8. In religious education, pupils have a good understanding of Christianity. Standards cannot be judged against the requirements of an agreed local syllabus, as this has not yet been adopted. This limits some experiences for pupils in learning about the diversity of religious traditions found in today's society.

9. Children begin nursery from the age of three and make good progress. By the time they leave the nursery, most have surpassed the desirable learning outcomes for their age and are ready to begin National Curriculum programmes of study. Their prior attainment is good and above average by the time they start school.

10. Pupils with English as a second language make good progress, supported effectively by class teachers and the visiting specialist, who plan work carefully for these pupils. They develop appropriate communication skills, both in their speech and in their writing.

11. High standards are maintained in literacy and numeracy, mathematics, science and information technology in Key Stage 1. Whilst satisfactory standards are achieved by most pupils in most other subjects at Key Stage 1, there are some instances where pupils' achievement is adversely affected by the lack of suitable support. This includes intervention from the teacher to support those with special educational needs in literacy. At other times, this reflected inappropriate formats or content of some teacher-devised worksheets. In these instances, pupils with special educational needs made limited progress. In a few lessons seen, there was insufficient challenge provided for pupils with differing prior attainment. This restricted the extent to which those with higher prior attainment could progress. The quality of planning varies and overall makes insufficient use of assessment to inform planning and teaching for all pupils.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

12. The school effectively promotes and encourages the very good behaviour which is a strength of the school. Pupils show positive attitudes to school and their work, which has a beneficial effect on pupils' attainment and the quality of learning. Parents believe that their children enjoy school and behaviour is good. Inspection findings support their views. There is a happy, welcoming atmosphere in the nursery, with good interaction between parents and teachers. The children are eager to come in and start their activities. The level of attendance is good in the school and pupils arrive punctually. Pupils show a keen interest in their work and apply themselves well to their learning. They are confident and express their views

clearly. In lessons, all pupils are keen to talk about their work and interests and contribute to discussions with enthusiasm. They readily accept suggestions for improvements to their work and are able to select, use and return relevant resources. Pupils co-operate well in group and class activities. Work and ideas brought from home are valued and used in the classroom. This was seen during a history lesson, for example, where pupils eagerly shared their information about Joseph Lister. The school provides a very good range of extra-curricular activities which many pupils attend on a regular basis.

13. Pupils' behaviour is very good in and around school. When moving around the building, all pupils are orderly and sensible. At break and lunchtimes they follow routines well. Their behaviour on the playground areas is good. They have a good awareness of others. Relationships throughout the school are very positive. Pupils are friendly, well mannered and polite. Visitors are made welcome and pupils are happy to enter into conversation with them. There is no evidence of bullying, although the school has suitable procedures to deal with any incidents should they occur.

14. Provision for personal development is good and pupils willingly take on increasing responsibility as they move through the school. Older pupils enjoy the additional responsibilities that they are given to assist in the daily routines of the school. They enjoy looking after the younger children at lunchtimes, escorting them to the dining room and sitting with them for lunch. As the children become older, they successfully improve their personal and social skills, becoming confident learners. Pupils are adept at carrying out independent research work, such as in an information technology lesson where pupils successfully used the CD-ROM to research bone formations.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

15. During the inspection, most teaching was good or better. Almost all other lessons were satisfactory. The school has had a considerable change in staff since the last inspection, with three new teachers being appointed in the last year. Almost all teachers have limited teaching experience and the quality of their teaching is a credit to their commitment and their success in maintaining good standards of attainment in the core subjects. The few remaining, experienced teachers provide good support for their new colleagues, as does the very recently appointed headteacher.

16. The quality of teaching in the nursery is consistently good. The experienced teacher has established a caring environment, with many stimulating activities in the early areas of learning. Her knowledge of child development is very good and high standards are set within the daily activities. The teacher's background qualifications, which include training in special educational needs, early years and art, enhance the quality of education provided. Parents are fully justified in their praise of the nursery provision. Children are sensitively introduced to a wide range of early learning experiences and are supported well by the nursery nurse and other assistants. They are all valued and are skilfully encouraged to develop good personal and social skills. The youngest children quickly settle to routines and show enthusiasm for learning. Children make good progress in all areas of learning. Their literacy and numeracy skills are well developed by the time they start school.

17. The skills of literacy are generally taught well. Good opportunities are provided in most work for pupils' speaking and listening skills. Introductions to lessons usually include questions, explanations and demonstrations. Pupils' suggestions are carefully considered and they are encouraged to share their ideas. They make good progress, developing confidence and increasing fluency during class or group discussions. Pupils' reading skills are well

developed through the many reading tasks provided in the literacy hour and in other subjects across the curriculum. Regular opportunities to visit and use the school library, the information technology suite and to take books home, enhance pupils' achievement. Pupils make good progress in reading, being encouraged to read for many purposes. They develop effective and efficient skills in reading for information. Whilst most aspects of writing are taught effectively, presentation and handwriting are insufficiently targeted in some classes and there is insufficient impact on pupils' learning in this area. Many pupils make limited progress in handwriting and presentation.

18. Numeracy skills are taught well across the curriculum and pupils make good progress. For example, in design and technology, linked to the history topic, pupils in Year 3 are expected to carry out precise measurements when making a Viking helmet. In art, pupils learn how to enlarge a piece of work, using a grid. In English, they identify and count syllables in a word, whilst in physical education, Year 4 pupils successfully demonstrate half and quarter turns. The good programme for information technology ensures pupils' numeracy skills are reinforced, for example, through setting up a database and entering data. Investigations in science, such as the Year 3 task of mixing materials to investigate change, support pupils' practical understanding of ways in which to undertake experiments, as well as their use of precise measurements. The teaching of the skills of literacy and numeracy has a positive impact on pupils' good attainment and progress.

19. Teaching in science is good overall, though a few lessons contained limited challenge for pupils with higher prior attainment. Pupils make good progress in investigating and in undertaking experiments. They develop good knowledge and understanding of life and living processes, as seen during investigations with plants and studies of the human body. In the only unsatisfactory lesson observed planning insufficiently considered pupils' differing prior attainment and recording tasks were inappropriate for pupils with special educational needs in literacy.

20. The good teaching of information technology has impacted greatly on pupils' attainment in this subject. The headteacher effectively teaches all classes and simultaneously provides additional guidance for those teachers who have less secure subject knowledge. Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 have improved considerably since the last inspection. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress.

21. History is taught well. Planning is detailed and teachers skilfully build upon prior work, showing good subject knowledge and understanding. The good discussions about the past effectively enhance pupils' literacy skills and their understanding of such concepts as cause and effect. Pupils are encouraged to undertake research, which they do with enthusiasm, often in their spare time. Issues such as the social conditions in the past, contribute well to pupils' moral and social development. Pupils make good progress in their understanding of the past, the use of sources of information and in their research skills.

22. Physical education is taught well, making good use of time and resources. Lessons are well planned and taught, with suitable focus placed on safety and health. Pupils are encouraged to improve their work and suitable challenge is provided.

23. The teaching of religious education is good overall. Questions are used effectively to promote pupils' thinking about life. The stories of the Bible are taught sympathetically and teachers encourage pupils to reflect on concepts, such as caring for others. The lack of an agreed syllabus for religious education limits the extent to which teachers provide opportunities for pupils to learn about the diversity of cultures in modern day life. Similarly, this has a limited

impact on pupils' understanding of different faiths.

24. Teaching in other subjects is satisfactory overall, though there were some instances of good teaching seen. Geography teaching was seen in two classes, with one lesson being good and the other satisfactory. The difference in quality reflected the extent to which teachers planned and taught pupils with differing prior attainment. In design and technology and art, planning was satisfactory, but some objectives were insufficiently stressed. Music is taught satisfactorily overall, though in some instances, in singing, the music is pitched too low for pupils, which restricts progress.

25. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory overall. Where they have regular individual adult support, their progress is good. Similarly, in those classes where teachers make effective use of assessment and information provided in pupils' individual education plans, pupils make good progress. In some lessons in some classes, pupils' needs are insufficiently met through the provision of appropriately matched reading materials.

26. Pupils with English as an additional language are supported well by the visiting teacher who teaches small groups both inside and outside the classroom. They make good progress. The visiting teacher and class teachers plan work together to ensure that good provision is made for these pupils in their daily lessons.

27. The quality of the teaching has a good impact on pupils' learning in most subjects. The school is at an early stage of refining schemes of work for foundation subjects and developing appropriate consistency in the use of assessment to inform planning. Systems for monitoring and evaluating teaching have recently been established and all staff show a commitment to further raising the quality of education and standards achieved by pupils. The enthusiasm of staff and the new headteacher is evident and good plans are in place to effect further improvement.

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

28. The school provides a curriculum that is broad and balanced and meets statutory requirements. All subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education are taught. The allocation of time to each subject is in accordance with national guidelines. Within individual subjects, components are satisfactorily balanced, except in mathematics where there is insufficient teaching of data handling below Year 4. In religious education, pupils have limited opportunity to learn about world faiths other than Christianity. The introduction since September 1999 of class teaching of information and communication technology has impacted strongly on pupils' progress. This is occurring not only in technology, but also in other subjects, especially English, science and history.

29. There is very good provision for children under five, particularly in the nursery. The organisation of a broad range of learning experiences and the balance between direct teaching and activities is very carefully planned by the nursery staff. All aspects of early years' learning are covered. An important feature of the children's learning is the encouragement of independent choice as they decide what they want to do. Most children under five begin the reception class having achieved the desirable learning outcomes for their age. The curriculum provided in the class makes a smooth transition into the National Curriculum programmes of study and the literacy and numeracy strategies are effectively introduced.

30. There are mostly satisfactory and some good policies and schemes of work in place for all subjects. The good ones include those for information and communication technology, music and history. Where there is no scheme of work, the lack of an overview of the subject affects planning, particularly in the development of pupils' skills. The school development plan suitably contains review dates for each subject, providing an opportunity to improve consistency in curricular planning. Teaching is usually focussed on a topic or theme. Whilst this produces good links across the curriculum, there is no overall curriculum plan to show the coherent development in pupils' learning. Teachers' planning is satisfactory in the short term. The lack of consistent assessment procedures means that their planning in the longer term is not sufficiently built on knowledge of what pupils know and can do. The exception is in the nursery, where daily written assessments strongly influence planning.

31. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are effectively in place and teachers follow the guidelines well. They structure their lessons to ensure that the balance of direct teaching and pupils' activities maintain high levels of application and motivation in the pupils. Good features are the guided reading programme and pupils' extended writing across the curriculum, for example, in history and religious education. The school implemented the numeracy hour on a trial basis before its official adoption. The strategy is already showing good results in improved planning and pupils' improved accuracy and rapidity in mental arithmetic. In both literacy and numeracy, teachers carefully plan activities that are usually appropriate to pupils' differing prior attainment.

32. Central to the school's ethos is the provision of equal opportunities for all pupils to learn and make progress. All pupils have equal access to the curriculum and pupils with special educational needs or English as an additional language receive good, individual, specialist support to aid their learning. Health education is an important component of science teaching and learning. Good displays around the school indicate pupils' interest in healthy living. Through the physical education, games and swimming activities, the school contributes to the development of pupils' physical fitness. Education in the use and misuse of drugs forms part of this programme and is supported by outside agencies, such as medical staff and the police.

33. The governors' policy for sex education is that pupils' questions should be answered directly and honestly, as they arise. Information on all functions of the human body is available in the topic library. There is no direct teaching of sex education.

34. The very good provision of extra-curricular activities strongly enhances the curriculum. At present, activities include choir practice, a sewing group, art, science, two computer clubs, highland dancing, gymnastics, football, cricket, drama and violin teaching. Links with the community make a satisfactory contribution to pupils' education. Recently the choir participated in a "Millennium Event" and at Christmas, pupils sang in an old people's home. There are satisfactory links with other local schools. Subject co-ordinators attend local meetings and there is appropriate transfer of information to the middle schools in the area.

35. There is good provision for the development of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness. A sound policy statement sets out the school's aims and how they can be provided through the curriculum and other activities. The daily collective worship now fully complies with statutory requirements. Assemblies are well prepared and led. A reverent and receptive atmosphere is established, pupils are fully involved in questions and discussion and the themes are often based on Bible stories. At the end of assemblies, pupils readily join in short prayers. Sometimes lessons conclude with an impromptu prayer by a pupil. Religious education lessons provide a good input into pupils' spiritual and moral development. They discuss principles of right living, relating these to Christian teaching.

36. The very good behaviour in class and around the school indicates that pupils have a well-developed sense of right and wrong. This is strongly reinforced in assemblies and in lessons, by class teachers, who in their very good relationships, provide influential role models for the pupils. Pupils' social skills are apparent in their ready collaboration during group work, where they share ideas and materials freely. Good social relationships are fostered in the organisation of frequent visits and excursions to places of environmental, historic and cultural interest. These commence in the nursery and involve all classes. Year 4 has a valuable week's residential course in the Lake District.

37. Visitors to school who raise pupils' awareness of the wider community have included representatives of the police, fire service and a parent who is also a dental nurse. The wide range of extra-curricular activities also contributes strongly to the pupils' social and cultural development. Pupils gain a good knowledge of their local heritage through visits and visitors and looking at old photographs of the area. The choir rehearses Northumbrian songs. Through the curriculum, pupils learn about the cultures of other times and places. For example, pupils' study of their Indian topic has been enhanced by a talk from a lady from the sub-continent.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

38. The school is successful in providing good care to ensure pupils' welfare and safety. Pupils are happy to come to school and cope effectively and confidently with school life. Teachers clearly know their pupils very well and plan lessons accordingly. Relationships throughout the school are good. Pupils support each other well during lessons and in their play. Children under five in the reception class and nursery establish effective relationships with other children and adults. They are well supported by staff and older children in school.

39. Pupils' behaviour is very good. Teachers and other staff maintain good discipline in a calm, effective way. There are effective procedures for promoting good behaviour and eliminating any oppressive behaviour. Throughout the school, pupils work well with their teachers, responding positively to praise and encouragement. Incidents of poor behaviour are rare. Pupils' attendance is good and absences are effectively monitored. There are very good procedures for promoting good attendance. Pupils taking extended holidays to the homeland of their parents are monitored and supported on their return.

40. All staff, including midday supervisors, provide good supervision and carry out their duties in a caring way. Comprehensive welfare procedures are in place. The governing body is fully involved in monitoring aspects of health and safety. There are appropriate procedures in place for carrying out risk assessments around school. Child protection procedures are in place and all staff are aware of the requirements. The designated person with responsibility for child protection has not received any recent training. Health education and some aspects of drugs awareness are addressed in several curriculum areas. The school works hard to ensure a safe environment for its pupils and staff.

41. Assessment procedures are satisfactory overall. Individual teachers have developed their own procedures, but there is no consistent approach to monitoring academic progress. Portfolios of work are kept for each pupil, but levels achieved are noted only for those pupils undertaking National Curriculum assessments. The headteacher has recently developed very useful individual assessment profiles in the core subjects. Information is suitably being

collected from pupils' achievements in standardised and national tests, to enable the school to track the progress of pupils over time.

42. There are very good systems for the assessment of children's attainments when they start in the nursery. Members of staff meticulously assess and record children's progress throughout the time they spend there. The information is used well to plan for the children's needs. In the reception class, the children are assessed during the first half term. This information is suitably used to provide a baseline for pupils' attainment on entry to full-time education. Elsewhere in the school, the use of assessment to inform planning is not yet fully in place and sometimes reflects the provision of insufficiently well matched work for pupils with differing prior attainment. Marking is not always effective. Teachers do not always provide sufficient guidance on how pupils might improve their work. There are no formal procedures for monitoring pupils' personal development. Annual reports to parents provide suitable information to parents about their children's achievements, but have little information about their progress. The school is most successful in valuing pupils' achievements and raising their self-esteem. Throughout the school, support staff and volunteers are used very effectively. This has a significant impact on pupils' learning.

43. There are clear and effective procedures for the early identification of pupils with special educational needs and the school's arrangements meet the requirements of the Code of Practice. The provision is satisfactory and most pupils make appropriate progress. Each of the pupils on the register has a suitable individual education plan, though, at present, class teachers are not sufficiently involved in devising these plans. Non-teaching staff give good support to these pupils. The provision benefits from close liaison with the literacy support teacher, the speech therapist and the "I Can" programme for language development.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

44. Parents' views indicate strong support for the school. The responses from parents at the parents' meeting and in their answers to the questionnaire, showed appreciation of the work undertaken by the school. Parents are happy with the standards achieved and feel their children are making good progress. Inspectors agree with parents' positive views.

45. The school gives some clear and useful information to parents and encourages them to become involved in their children's work. The prospectus and newsletters are presented well. Parents can arrange to talk informally to staff at any time. There are suitable, formal opportunities for them to meet with teachers to discuss pupils' progress and targets for future improvement. The majority of parents attend open evenings. The written reports to parents are satisfactory. They contain clear information on work covered and pupils' attainment in the subject areas. Information on their attitudes to work and personal development is good but there is insufficient detail about how their child is progressing. The school works closely with parents of children with special educational needs. Appropriately, parents are promptly notified about any concerns. They attend reviews and are kept well informed of the child's progress. A carefully planned induction programme ensures that each family is well prepared for their child to start nursery. Parents are fully involved in their child's entry profiles. The school has provided appropriate information about the literacy hour and guided reading.

46. The Ethnic Support Service provides good links between the school and the Bangladeshi community. It helps in communicating with parents whose first language is not English. Bilingual booklets are available to help them understand how their children learn and to encourage support at home.

47. The school has done much to establish effective relationships with parents, to involve them in their children's learning. Parental involvement has a significant impact on both the pupils' learning and the work of the school. Many parents help regularly in school and many more are willing to help during educational visits. They are effectively deployed in the classrooms, providing a positive contribution to the standards achieved. Some parents give support by supervising children at the swimming pool each week. The Parents' Support Group is very effective and raises considerable funds for the school. Parents are happy to support their children when work is sent home. Many parents listen to their children read and make regular comments in the reading record books. They are interested in school and support the home-school agreement. The school seeks parents' views informally and listens to their views and suggestions.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

48. The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. The school is emerging from a transitional stage. The headteacher, formerly the deputy headteacher, has been confirmed as head only since January 2000. The chair of governors has been in post for some years but the majority of her colleagues are new. Most of the teachers have been in post for less than two years. The school sees the induction of new members of staff as a corporate responsibility and teachers new to the school receive good support from other members of staff, particularly senior management. In the case of newly qualified teachers, the school also appropriately draws on induction courses provided by the local education authority.

49. The headteacher and governors see this new situation as an opportunity to move the school forward, building upon its considerable past achievements. The headteacher has a clear vision for the school's progress and has already identified aspects of the school to be developed, which coincide with the findings of the inspection. These prioritise improving marking and formalising assessment procedures; improving pupils' presentation of their work; introducing performance management and staff development procedures.

50. The headteacher has initiated sound systems to monitor and evaluate performance. These include the gathering of test results from various sources in each year, to assess the effectiveness of the implementation of the literacy and numeracy strategies. With baseline assessment in reception, he intends to analyse the data closely, to set targets for groups and, where necessary, for individual pupils. Subject leadership and monitoring has begun but is not yet fully developed. Some monitoring of teaching and planning has taken place but this is not systematic.

51. The school strives to realise its aims to enable each child to develop his or her full potential, in an atmosphere which values the individual and offers equal opportunities to all. In producing an ethos of mutual respect, concern and achievement the school is working well towards overtaking these goals.

52. The previous report stated that the school was well managed and organised. In its identification of targets, maintenance of high standards of teaching, pupils' attainment and behaviour, the new management of the school is well placed to maintain these standards. The headteacher is very well supported by a senior teacher, who has had long service in the school, providing stability in the changed situation.

53. The chair of governors gives good support, meeting regularly with the headteacher to discuss development strategies and the school's performance. The governing body is an enthusiastic supporter of the school. Those with specific tasks such as responsibility for special educational needs, literacy and numeracy, consult with subject co-ordinators and have observed work in classes. Others support the school regularly as parent helpers.

54. The governors meet regularly as a body and are subdivided into appropriate committees. They have helped to formulate the school development plan. The plan covers all aspects of school administration, staffing structure, premises, curriculum and assessment. There is good detail of necessary action, responsibilities, costing and success criteria. Though designated a three year plan, the targets are forecast to be overtaken by July 2000. Given the major changes in the school's personnel, this may require revision.

55. Over the past few years, a major task of the governing body and in particular, its finance committee, has been to reduce a considerable deficit budget. This was caused by

circumstances beyond the school's control. This situation is now resolved and the school is poised to extend its curriculum resources and support as well as staff development.

56. The school's financial situation and budgeting are closely scrutinised by the governing body. The headteacher produces a financial report for each meeting. Day-to-day financial control is efficiently computerised. The recent auditor's report praised the school for its financial management. The two recommended minor adjustments to procedures were immediately implemented.

57. There are no systems of appraisal in place and performance management of staff is in its infancy. Specific grants for staff development have been appropriately utilised: all staff have attended a good number of courses. Similarly, grants for special educational needs have been appropriately used towards supplying support for those pupils. During the inspection, students were being trained in the nursery. The school is a potential provider of effective Initial Teacher Training. The headteacher was instrumental in gaining funding for and setting up the Information Centre, which is now a major curricular feature of technological development in the school.

58. There are sufficient teachers with a range of qualifications to teach early years and subjects of the National Curriculum. There is good provision of support staff. Housed in the original buildings of a hundred years ago, the accommodation is adequate, with an extra resource room and the Information Centre enhancing the provision. The premises are carefully cleaned and maintained by a conscientious caretaker and cleaning staff. Playground space is adequate but uneven. There is no school field on site. The provision of resources for learning is good for information and communication technology and satisfactory in other areas of the curriculum. Constraints on expenditure have limited the renewal of resources and acquisition of new books, equipment and materials. The school makes effective and efficient use of its available resources and provides good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

In order to further raise standards and the quality of education, the headteacher, governors and staff should:

◆ address the unsatisfactory standards of handwriting and presentation, by:

- *ensuring appropriate time is allocated to teaching handwriting;*
- *emphasising high expectations of standards in all classes;*

(paragraphs 3, 17, 18, 73, 74, 78 and 86)

◆ continue to improve the use of assessment at Key Stages 1 and 2 to inform planning, by:

- *agreeing consistent methods for assessing pupils;*
- *determining the criteria for assessment;*
- *establishing consistent formats for recording attainment and progress;*

(paragraphs 22, 19, 27, 30, 42, 75, 78, 87, 95 and 129)

◆ improve the existing quality of information for parents by including more information about pupils' progress;

(paragraphs 42 and 45)

- ◆ ensure that skills are systematically developed in all subjects by:
 - *continuing to provide regular opportunities for co-ordinators to monitor and evaluate work in classes, to support continuity in planning.*

(paragraphs 42, 43, 50 and 75)

In addition to the key issues above, the school should include the following less important areas for improvement. These are indicated in paragraphs 40 and 57:

- ◆ training for the member of staff with responsibility for child protection.
- ◆ continue with existing, appropriate plans to establish a system of teacher appraisal.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	57
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	70

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	7	27	22	1	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

	No of pupils
Number of pupils on the school's roll	182
Number of pupils eligible for free school meals	12

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y4
Number of pupils with Statements of Special Educational Need	0	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	4	23

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	12

Pupils mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	8
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	3

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.8
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	17	16	33

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 or above	Boys	12	13	13
	Girls	15	16	16
	Total	27	29	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	82 (97)	88 (100)	88 (91)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teacher Assessments		Reading	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 or above	Boys	13	13	13
	Girls	15	16	16
	Total	28	29	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	85 (97)	88 (97)	88 (97)
	National	82 (81)	87 (85)	87 (86)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	12
Chinese	0
White	120
Any other minority ethnic group	0

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	0	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y4

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	6.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.6
Average class size	31.2

Education support staff: YR –Y4

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	80

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Qualified teachers and classes: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	43

Number of pupils per FTE adult	17
--------------------------------	----

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	98/99
----------------	-------

	£
Total income	270,986
Total expenditure	259,544
Expenditure per pupil	1,381
Balance brought forward from previous year	- 40,693
Balance carried forward to next year	- 29,251

Results of the survey of parents' and carers'

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out:	150
Number of questionnaires returned:	64

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to Agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school	78	20	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school	73	25	2	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good	61	39	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home	47	31	3	2	17
The teaching is good	70	28	2	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on	62	30	8	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem	87	11	0	2	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best	72	26	2	0	0
The school works closely with parents	67	26	5	2	0
The school is well led and managed	77	21	2	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible	70	25	2	0	3
The school provides as interesting range of activities outside lessons	58	23	6	0	13

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

59. The nursery class provides part-time education for 51 children, aged three and four. Twenty-six attend the morning session and 25 are present in the afternoon. There are very good arrangements to familiarise children entering the nursery with their new environment and teachers. Open days, close liaison with parents and good introductory information all help children to settle easily into the class. Similarly, there are good arrangements as they transfer into the reception class. The early years' staff work as a close-knit team, providing a warmly welcoming and happy environment for the children. At the beginning of both daily sessions in the nursery, the children come in eagerly, ready and anxious to get on with their tasks. Teachers find time to speak to individual pupils and parents. There is considerable parental involvement in the class. They sign a rota, indicating when they are available to help. The teacher assigns them to a particular group activity and provides detailed guidelines on what the children will be doing and ways in which parents can help.

60. Children's attainment on entry to the nursery is above average. The good quality of the teaching, the well-organised curriculum and excellent range of activities make a strong impact on the children's subsequent learning. By the time they reach the reception class, the vast majority has surpassed the desirable learning outcomes for children under five. All the adults make continuous assessments of individual children's performances in their group work. This also contributes very significantly to teachers' planning and awareness of the children's attainment and progress. The emphasis on assessment enables children requiring special educational support to be identified at an early stage. Parents are keenly appreciative of the high quality of education provided in the early years. The high standards of teaching and learning noted in the previous report have been well maintained.

61. From their first days in the nursery, children learn that they are part of a community, but are valued individuals within it. They have their own personal symbol and stamp with which to identify their work. At registration, they indicate their presence by collecting their symbol from their coat-peg and placing it in a pocket that bears their name. They choose an activity group and again place their symbol on a planning board. This promotes a good introduction to independent choice in learning. Each group comprises a limited number and children understand that they may have to wait before they can start their option. The good toilet and washing routines emphasise habits of cleanliness and personal hygiene. Visits play an important part in the development of children's social awareness, as well as their knowledge and understanding of the world. They visit the local library and a farm, in addition to other parts of the school. Teachers foster children's self-esteem by displaying their work and offering praise for achievement. Children make very good progress in their personal skills and social relationships. Children in reception also have a range of visits, including the toy collection at the Museum of Childhood. They also visit "Bede's World" in Jarrow and a farm.

62. When they first enter the nursery, many children have a good awareness of stories and books. This initial knowledge is developed well through a daily storybook session, where book features, such as the cover, pictures and print are reinforced. Vocabulary, dialogue and story details are also emphasised and children are encouraged to answer questions and tell some of the story in their own words. They are thoroughly absorbed in the teacher's expressive reading of "Barty's Scarf". Their behaviour is very responsive. They interact well with each other, do not call out but wait to be asked to speak. Teachers support the development of reading skills through clear labelling of children's names, activity areas and resource materials around the

room. Writing activities are based on familiar words, such as the children's names. They trace, copy or write letters and words. Most recognise their names and some read letters and simple words easily. This progress is maintained in the reception class as children develop their writing skills. They correctly write and read short words, recognise initial letters of words and make lists of rhyming words. Some successfully copy words and insert them into sentences. Speaking and listening skills develop well through role-play, for example, in the hospital corner.

63. Children make good progress in counting and in number and shape recognition. Some, sticking shapes to form an orange caterpillar, correctly count up to four shapes, legs and antennae. Others correctly match numbers with pictures of objects. They recognise and describe a circle and triangle. Particular emphasis is placed on number symbols 3 and 4, through stories and their ages. Other activities include matching and sorting by colour and size. Reception children build well on work done in the nursery. They count orally to 40 and beyond and recognise simple number patterns. They write single digit numbers correctly and sort sets of coins. They discuss "more and less" easily. The teacher organises the work and manages the lessons well.

64. There is very good provision for children's knowledge and understanding of the world. Apart from organised visits, there is a range of resources for children in the nursery to explore and discover. For example, children use large magnets to attract paper clips which they have hidden in the sand pit. They explain what they are doing and correctly use vocabulary such as magnet and pick up. Other children identify objects that float or sink in the water tray. Children are adept at using the computer keyboard and mouse, correctly copying words from flash cards to activate the screen character. They draw a route that the "Billy Goats Gruff" take to cross the bridge. Outdoors, they build a bridge from large blocks and use it successfully to act out the story, carrying masks which they have made. Children under five in the reception class develop their knowledge and understanding through their work in the subjects of the National Curriculum, usually based on a half-termly theme, such as "Dwellings". They design and make interesting houses from "junk" materials and paint them.

65. The children sing nursery rhymes, action and number songs with enthusiasm. They shake percussion instruments in time to taped music, starting and stopping at the appropriate time. They develop colour recognition as they paint their "colour books" and create patterns by using templates and perforated material. Different groups enthusiastically act out "The Billy Goats Gruff" in turn, the other groups forming an audience. They use a variety of construction materials to build. Displays of work by reception children show development of patterns involving shapes. They enthusiastically join in song practices with Key Stage 1 pupils.

66. Outside, pupils and adults use the parachute to create a good variety of rippling and billowing movements. There is good language development when children describe their feelings as they go under the parachute. In outdoor play, children ride a variety of wheeled toys and vehicles, using space sensibly to avoid bumps. They climb on a frame using safety mats. There is no soft landing area. Planning indicates a good range of activities involving moving to music, learning ball skills and developing agility. Children are taught to handle scissors, pencils and paintbrushes correctly and are developing good manipulative control. In all activities, teachers are aware of and ensure children's safety. In physical education, reception class children use space effectively to explore different body shapes and learn to balance and rest.

67. The very good start to children's education provided by the nursery, ensures that children still under five in the reception class are ready to move into the National Curriculum programmes of study. Baseline assessment takes place during the first half term of the

reception year. This year's results indicate that two thirds of the children achieved at least average scores, whilst half the class have above average prior attainment. In the reception class, the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are already established. There is good liaison and passing on of information between the nursery and reception classes. The recent appointment of the nursery teacher as early years' co-ordinator consolidates this process.

ENGLISH

68. In 1999, in the National Curriculum assessments at the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' performance in reading and writing was well above average in relation to the national average.

In comparison with similar schools, pupils' performance was above average. Their attainment has been consistently above average in both aspects of the subject, in relation to the national average, over the last two years. In 1997, pupils' performance was higher still and very high in relation to the national average.

69. Standards seen at the time of the last inspection in 1996 were good and above the national average in all aspects of English at the end of Key Stage 1 and by the end of Year 4. Evidence from the current inspection indicates that standards in reading are well above average by the time pupils are 7 and 9, supported by the strong emphasis placed on literacy in the curriculum. Speaking and listening skills are good and above average by the end of Key Stage 1 and by the time pupils are 9. Pupils' writing is good and above average by the end of Key Stage 1 and by the end of Year 4.

70. The standards in reading seen at the end of Key Stage 1 reflect the results of the 1999 National Curriculum assessments and indicate an improvement since the last inspection. The school continues to provide a very effective start to literacy in the nursery, where children begin to read and write and to develop good speaking and listening skills from an early stage. This is carefully built upon in each class in the school, supported most recently by the introduction of the literacy hour. Enjoyment of literature is promoted well in many literacy hours. The strong focus on reading is considerably supported by parents' involvement in reading with their children at home.

71. From the early stages, pupils develop good speaking and listening skills. They listen intently, such as when being told stories in English, history and religious education. They respond well to the many opportunities provided for them to take part in class discussions. For example, pupils in Year 1 talked clearly about the story, "Can't You Sleep, Little Bear?" Similarly, pupils in Year 2 talked sensibly about their study of the human skeleton in a science lesson and were eager to share their knowledge and understanding with others. In a Year 4 literacy hour, pupils responded very well during discussions about poetry, sharing the teacher's obvious enthusiasm for the subject. They talked confidently and fluently about archaic language, similes, alliteration and metaphors and keenly discussed their preferences. The good quality of relationships and behaviour contribute considerably to pupils' good progress in their speaking and listening skills.

72. In reading, pupils in Key Stage 1 develop good recognition of familiar words and can anticipate those with which they are unfamiliar. They make good use of the illustrations and their developing knowledge of letter patterns to gain meaning. In Year 1, for example, pupils identify rhyming words used in a story during their guided reading time in the literacy hour. By the end of Year 2, pupils can competently identify compound words. They read with accuracy and increasing expression and show interest in different authors. At Key Stage 2, Year 3 pupils show interest in the story of "Theseus and the Minotaur", studying the author's style and, in particular, the use of adjectives. They showed good understanding of the story and of the techniques used to maintain the reader's interest. The very good progress made in reading was exemplified by the high quality of work seen in the Year 4 class, where pupils read fluently

and expressively to inspectors. They demonstrated a love of literature, offering many choices of authors as their preferences. They understand the use of figurative language and idioms and can easily give examples of effective vocabulary and phrases. Pupils have a strong interest that is skilfully enhanced by the very good teaching in this class.

73. The content of pupils' writing is good, showing increasingly more complex sentences that are appropriately punctuated. Younger pupils in Key Stage 1 make sensible attempts to spell unfamiliar words and most of their sentences are structured appropriately. By Year 2, most pupils can plan and write a story with an appropriate setting. They develop their stories well, beginning to use dialogue and using an increasing range of vocabulary. A significant number of pupils in the key stage form letters incorrectly and show insufficient awareness of space between words. In some cases, some pupils use pencils that are too short, others are blunt and some pupils hold their pencils awkwardly. Some others have difficulty in placing letters correctly on lines. In Key Stage 1, insufficient attention is given to teaching presentation skills and to correcting handwriting.

74. In Key Stage 2, most pupils in Year 3 have yet to join their handwriting, though the presentation of work is slightly improved. Writing demonstrated by the teacher is printed, which does not support pupils' progress. By Year 4, pupils write extended sentences, such as in their good descriptions of a windy night. They use a wide range of vocabulary, such as "blustery, vicious and ferocious" to describe the wind and their descriptions are very effective. Nevertheless, the quality of presentation varies, with some pupils missing pages in their books, some omitting simple punctuation, such as full stops at the end of sentences, indicating a lack of care in their completed work. The writing needs of left-handed pupils are insufficiently taken into account in many classes. The literacy hour has not successfully contributed towards developing this aspect of the subject and in this respect, progress is unsatisfactory.

75. The part-time literacy support teacher, who combines individual tuition with group support in some classes, effectively supports pupils with lower prior attainment in literacy. Pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Need are well supported by non-teaching assistants. These pupils who have additional support make good progress. Pupils with special educational needs have appropriate individual education plans that inform teaching, though not all are always effectively supported in all lessons requiring literacy skills. At present, the experienced, part-time literacy support teacher prepares all individual education plans for teachers. Teachers are not involved in their composition. This sometimes reflects some inappropriate provision for pupils with special educational needs in lessons, particularly where insufficient account is sometimes taken of pupils' particular needs in literacy. This also reflects the insufficient use made of assessment to inform planning in general. In these instances, pupils' progress varies.

76. Pupils with English as a second language make good progress throughout the school. They quickly learn to communicate their ideas, both in speaking and in writing. The effective support from the visiting teacher enhances their progress.

77. The school has only recently established the literacy hour, which is still in its early stages of implementation. The introductory parts of the hour are generally very effective, with good emphasis being placed on whole class, shared reading. Here, pupils' reading skills are often well developed. In a few lessons seen, pupils were unable to read the insufficiently large print in some texts, restricting the rate of progress. Most conclusions are effective and suitably review work achieved. The group activities are generally sound, though insufficient use is made of the assessment of pupils' work to inform teaching and future planning. Insufficient time is given to handwriting.

78. Teaching is most successful where there is good subject knowledge and effective planning that ensures all pupils are appropriately challenged. In the lessons seen, the quality of teaching was good overall. Four out of the 11 lessons observed were very good, reflecting high expectations and stimulating content. A further two lessons were good, containing well planned tasks that carefully built on pupils' prior knowledge and understanding. In the remaining satisfactory lessons, although the literacy hour contained the appropriate elements, some teaching lacked appropriate management skills, such as ensuring that all pupils maintained concentration and that all pupils had clear understanding of what was expected of them.

79. Work undertaken in other subjects makes a significant contribution to pupils' literacy skills. Pupils learn to write in a range of formats, such as in writing accounts and reports in science, history and geography. They use the CD-ROM regularly to find information for their topics and are well able to use the word processor, such as for writing stories and composing poetry. Pupils develop very good skills in reading for information from books and other sources. Pupils in Year 2 can explain clearly how to find a book in the library and how to use the contents and index pages. Through work in history, the oldest pupils can collect and reorganise information, knowing that some sources of information are more reliable than others. The quality of relationships and the good teaching ensure pupils' speaking and listening skills are well developed across subjects.

80. Management of the subject has been recently delegated to the Year 4 teacher, who has very good subject knowledge and who has been considerably involved in establishing the literacy hour. The co-ordinator appropriately studies teachers' plans each week and provides guidance to colleagues. The use of assessment to inform teaching has recently been a focus, with the co-ordinator having set targets for each year group. Appropriately, her main aim is to enlighten teachers about planning and assessment. Although in its early stages, the system of monitoring and evaluating work in classes has begun.

81. There are adequate resources for teaching English. The school has recently reviewed its reading books, disposing of many out of date schemes, though there are still some that require replacement and repair. The school has spent money on providing good quality books for guided reading. The library has been stocked with suitable books and is adequate. Big books are available for the literacy hour, though these are not plentiful. At present, teachers select those resources they see as necessary for developing pupils' skills. They devise their own worksheets, which vary in quality and usefulness. The school has yet to develop a system for collaborative decision making about the use of resources. Acquiring resources has been difficult for the school in recent years, due to the deficit in the budget. Appropriate plans are in place to increase and improve resources now funds are more readily available. The accommodation is satisfactory for teaching English.

MATHEMATICS

82. In the 1999 National Curriculum assessments, pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 was above the national average. Pupils with higher prior attainment were well above the national average. In comparison with schools with pupils from similar backgrounds, the school achieved comparable results, with higher attaining pupils reaching above average standards. Taking the average of results over the past four years, pupils have achieved higher than nationally expected results. This is an improvement since the previous inspection, where pupils' attainment was satisfactory and in line with the national average. In the 1999 tests, the

achievement of boys was lower than the girls. Standards seen during the inspection were good and above the national average at the end of Key Stage 1 and by the end of Year 4.

83. At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils correctly subtract two digit numbers and solve money calculations of addition and subtraction to 100 pence. They understand clockwise and anti-clockwise rotation. Using clock faces they make quarter, half and three quarter turns in either direction on the clock face. They successfully transfer this to rotating themselves in similar turns. In mental arithmetic, pupils have grasped well the relationship between multiplication and division. For example, they know that as 10 times 8 is 80, so 80 divided by 8 equals 10. Younger pupils recognise the value of using "near doubles" in addition. For example, three plus four is the same as three plus three plus one. Pupils in the key stage have good understanding of two and three-dimensional shapes, their numbers of sides and corners. They use the correct terminology to describe these. Attainment in number, calculation, space, shape and measures, is above average. From their good start in the early years, they make sound progress over the key stage. There is less evidence of good progress in handling data through graphs and charts in mathematics. Displays in the Information Centre show that pupils learn some data handling in information technology lessons.

84. By the time they leave the school, pupils respond rapidly and correctly to number calculations in mental arithmetic. Several pupils explain their method of calculation accurately and concisely. In written work, they solve problems using metric measures, correctly measuring lengths in centimetres and millimetres and understanding the relationship between them. Scrutiny of pupils' work shows that they produce a good quantity of written work, with a high degree of accuracy. There is a good balance across the elements of mathematics. This includes number calculations using all four operations and solving of problems involving money. Pupils also understand fractions and properties of two and three-dimensional shapes, such as the sum of angles in a quadrilateral. Pupils correctly make tallies and draw graphs in handling data.

85. Younger pupils at Key Stage 2 also show a satisfactory range of work in their books. In number, they understand rounding up and down, halves and wholes and simple co-ordinates. They understand properties of shapes, using correct terminology such as vertices and angles. Pupils accurately identify and name different types of triangles. Pupils with lower prior attainment correctly name shapes, for example, pentagon, hexagon, rectangle and semicircle. Pupils bisect right angles and understand symmetry. They successfully solve calculations encountered with money in "real life". Pupils make good progress in Years 3 and 4, particularly in Year 4.

86. Pupils work hard in mathematics lessons. They enjoy the mental arithmetic sessions, where they are challenged well to think quickly and accurately. Most are anxious to excel and earn the teacher's praise. Working individually, pupils show good standards of concentration and application. They behave well and get on with their work. They are interested in mathematics and want to learn and make progress. In group work, pupils collaborate well, helping each other where necessary. There are good relationships amongst the pupils and with the teachers. Pupils discuss their work readily and fluently with a visitor. The presentation of their written work by many is unsatisfactory. Work is frequently not dated or headed. Figures and writing are badly formed, untidy and careless. The work on some pages is upside down.

87. The quality of teaching is good overall. Teaching in the lessons observed was satisfactory in 40 per cent of the lessons and good in 60 per cent. Teachers are implementing the National Numeracy Strategy well, following its structure and breadth. They conduct the mental arithmetic sessions with vigour and commitment, ensuring that questions are

appropriate for pupils' levels of attainment and targeting those who do not offer to answer. Mental arithmetic is effectively increasing pupils' speed and accuracy of calculation. Teachers have a secure knowledge of mathematics. Their lessons are soundly planned and pupils' tasks are suitably matched to their differing prior attainment. Insufficient attention is given to formal evaluation of what pupils have learned and to the consistent recording of their attainment. Pupils' attainment is assessed and recorded so that information can be passed on to the next teacher. Pupils' portfolios have assessed work, but these do not uniformly show levels achieved. Marking of pupils' work is often unsatisfactory, with insufficient constructive feedback given to pupils. Sometimes, a single tick is the only marking on a page and poorly presented work is marked as being excellent.

88. Teachers deploy support staff well to help and encourage pupils with special educational needs and other groups of pupils with lower prior attainment. Tasks for these pupils are satisfactorily planned, often involving them in learning through practical experience. For example, in a lesson on metric calculation, pupils concentrated on practical measuring activities. During lesson introductions, support staff assist pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Need by quietly reinforcing teaching and simplifying questions. These pupils and those with English as an additional language make satisfactory progress overall, particularly at Key Stage 2. Most teachers manage lessons well, with good pace and organisation that maintains pupils' concentration and interest. Occasionally, the introduction and setting of tasks is too long, so that pupils become restless and insufficient time is left for their activities and for a proper conclusion to the lesson.

89. The co-ordinator has good subject knowledge and provides good leadership of mathematics. All classes have been observed and there are clear plans for future development that include improving planning and assessment.

SCIENCE

90. In 1999, teachers' assessments of performance indicated that pupils were achieving satisfactory standards in most aspects of the subject, by the end of Key Stage 1. The exception was in the aspect of life and living processes, which was judged to be well below average. Evidence from the inspection does not reflect the teachers' assessments in 1999, but shows a marked improvement in pupils' achievement, which is now good and above average. Pupils now have good knowledge and understanding in all aspects of the subject, both at the end of Key Stage 1 and by the end of Year 4. At the time of the last inspection, there was seen to be some less than satisfactory attainment in Key Stage 1. This was directly related to some unsatisfactory teaching, which is no longer an issue.

91. At Key Stage 1, pupils were studying life and living processes during the week of the inspection. In Year 1, pupils were studying and recording information about the growth of beans. They recognised that these grew at different rates, knew the names, such as root and shoot and could talk about the conditions required for the beans to grow. The subsequent task of completing an account about their learning was appropriate for most pupils but pupils with special educational needs had difficulty in reading the worksheet. Similarly, the task of copying the worksheet into books was an inefficient use of time.

92. In Year 2, homework was used well to develop pupils' understanding of eating healthy foods. Pupils kept detailed diaries of foods eaten during the weekend and successfully classified them into types, such as sugars, fats, cereals, fruit and vegetables. Good opportunities were provided for pupils to ask and answer questions and they showed good

understanding of a balanced diet. Written tasks were insufficiently matched to pupils' differing prior attainment, though appropriate individual support was provided for those with lower prior attainment in literacy.

93. In Key Stage 2, work undertaken by pupils in Year 3 showed their good recall of previous studies about natural and man made materials. Pupils successfully learned that mixing materials can cause them to change. They conducted their experiments well, using a good range of scientific terms, such as "granular", to describe their work. Pupils were carefully encouraged to think about ways in which to conduct future experiments and to predict results. The effective conclusions to the lessons skilfully reviewed and collated pupils' results, views and opinions.

94. Year 4 pupils have good understanding of the human body, with many knowing how joints operate. They know that there are ball and socket joints, understand how a hinge joint works and can suggest ailments that might develop, relating to the ageing process! Pupils' learning was well reinforced by the use of a recorded programme about the skeleton. They talk maturely about digits, thighbones and the jaw and can explain why the foot and hand contain many bones. Pupils' good prior knowledge is not always sufficiently challenged by the provision of extension work.

95. Most pupils make good progress, with the exception of some pupils with special educational needs in a few classes, where insufficient account is taken of pupils' prior attainment in literacy. This largely reflects the overtly high reading levels of some teacher-devised worksheets. Though well supported by the literacy support teacher in some work, some pupils receive insufficient help in some class lessons. In a few cases, some pupils with higher prior attainment are insufficiently challenged, limiting their rate of progress.

96. Pupils enjoy science and have good knowledge and understanding, which is not always sufficiently extended by the provision of tasks that reflect their higher prior attainment. Pupils with lower prior attainment enjoy the activities, but sometimes struggle when recording their work. Pupils show enthusiasm during investigations and they collaborate well. They listen attentively and willingly share resources.

97. The quality of teaching was good in most lessons. Most teachers have secure subject knowledge and give clear introductions. They explain objectives well and develop the content of lessons systematically. In the best lessons, pupils had good opportunities to ask and answer questions and to predict and hypothesise. The pace of the lessons was good. High expectations were evident, including requests for the good presentation of pupils' work. Marking indicated good use of constructive comments by teachers to help pupils to improve the quality of their work. In the very few less effective lessons, there was sometimes an inappropriate range of written tasks to match pupils' differing prior attainment.

98. Assessment in science currently involves the use of a published science assessment booklet, along with individual teachers' own assessments of pupils' achievements, in relation to lesson objectives. Leadership of science has recently been delegated to a new teacher, whose background qualifications are well matched to the responsibility. Appropriately, science is to be reviewed later this year, as part of the school's identified priorities in the development plan. The co-ordinator is suitably aware of the need to update the policy and scheme of work, to more appropriately reflect new national developments. As part of the school's recent development of some issues raised at the time of the last inspection, the co-ordinator has begun to monitor and evaluate work in other classes. Appropriately, the school has developed links with the middle school to ensure continuity across the science curriculum.

99. Resources are satisfactory and are, appropriately, to be reassessed during the review of

the scheme of work. The accommodation is satisfactory for teaching science.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

100. The previous report identified as a key issue lack of confidence and expertise in all staff in the use of information technology. The school has now very successfully addressed this issue. In the summer of 1999, the Information Centre was established, combining the library and sufficient computers to enable whole class teaching of information and communication technology to take place. All classes have regular time in the Information Centre. Pupils' attainment at all stages and levels is above average.

101. Children in the reception class know that computers are means of collecting, storing and giving information. They discuss and test how they acquire information through their senses of sight, hearing, smell, touch and taste. In a well-planned lesson, they develop these ideas by interpreting familiar sounds on tape and through the computer. Working in groups, some children draw pictures associated with the sounds they have heard. Others listen to a story from a talking book and another group seek information from a CD-ROM. The children are already familiar with computer and audio technology. They use the mouse speedily and confidently and understand the vocabulary of the computer. Older pupils in Key Stage 1 learn how to cut, copy and paste shapes. All switch on the computer without help and confidently open a graphics program to create their shapes. They have good recall of previous lessons about the toolbar. Good step by step teaching enables pupils quickly to learn the technique of selecting, copying and pasting their pictures onto the screen. Some know how to correct mistakes by using the "undo" icon. About three-quarters of the class complete the task successfully and print their work. Others appropriately receive the reinforcement of the support teacher.

102. At Key Stage 2, pupils learn how to set up a database, enter information and save on their own disk. The pupils understand how to change size on screen and know terms like field name and data file. Older pupils work in groups at various tasks. Some successfully research information for their science lesson. Others draft their original poems, while a third group of pupils with special educational needs practise mouse control using a talking book. Pupils with higher prior attainment understand how to find information from a CD-ROM, save, retrieve and print it. Most easily scroll up and down and change fonts and letter sizes. Pupils are familiar with the Internet and successfully obtain information from various websites, in response to a well-prepared worksheet. This work makes a good contribution to pupils' computer control and management, as well as their skill in researching and absorbing information.

103. Pupils greatly appreciate the facilities offered by the Information Centre. In lessons, they are eager to use the computers and work hard at their tasks. No time is wasted. Often, pupils with higher prior attainment work with those who are less secure, helping them to acquire information and to develop skills. Behaviour and attitudes are very good. Pupils are anxious to learn and make progress. Since the establishment of the Information Centre, pupils have made good progress in all fields of information and communication technology, which is now a strength of the school.

104. The headteacher is the subject co-ordinator and teaches all classes at both key stages. He has considerable expertise in this field. The quality of teaching is very good. The curriculum is derived from nationally produced material that ensures all aspects are taught. There is detailed lesson planning and group tasks are designed to challenge the different levels of pupils' attainment. Pupils with higher prior attainment have tasks involving research

and information handling, which effectively extend their skills. Class teachers contribute to lessons led by the headteacher. They are deployed well and their knowledge and confidence is rapidly increasing.

105. Resources are well prepared to stimulate pupils and to give clear guidelines for their work. Lesson management is very good. There is a variety of well-chosen activities and lessons move at a brisk pace. During group work, teachers interact well with all pupils, offering good support and reinforcement. Pupils' progress is carefully monitored and recorded. Work is closely built upon, taking into account pupils' prior attainment.

106. The two computer clubs for younger and older pupils are well supported and provide extra opportunities for pupils to develop their skills, as well as enjoying the different activities the computer can offer.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

107. The school has not yet fully adopted the locally agreed syllabus for North Tyneside. It is therefore not possible to judge pupils' attainment and progress in terms of the targets of that syllabus. Discussion with pupils, scrutiny of their work and observation of lessons indicate that pupils have a good knowledge of Christianity. This was also the finding of the previous inspection.

108. At Key Stage 1, pupils work on a topic involving the story of Noah and his Ark. There are good links with literacy, such as where pupils write dialogue to dramatise the story. Working in groups, they collaborate well to produce ideas for the dialogue. They show good knowledge and understanding of the story. In a subsequent lesson, pupils improvise rhythmic instrumental music to accompany the dialogue. Younger pupils show a satisfactory understanding of why Jesus told parables. They know that a parable is a story with a message and recall details of some of the stories well.

109. At Key Stage 2, pupils consider the parable of "The Good Samaritan" in some depth. They discuss what Jesus meant by "Love your neighbour". A well-planned outcome of the discussion is that pupils work in groups to compile lists of how they can be better neighbours. The story makes a strong impact on their thinking and the lists contain thoughtful ideas such as, "Help Mum when she's tired" and "Help someone who's hurt". In the plenary session, group leaders report the best suggestions from the lists. Older pupils discuss with good insight the qualities of friendship. The level of their discussion is high, both in terms of extended speaking and in the ideas they express. Pupils describe what they admire in their friends and what they would like their friends to recognise in them. They listen seriously to each other and value what each has to say. At both key stages, pupils with special educational needs work hard at the tasks, contribute to discussion and make sound progress.

110. A good feature of pupils' work at Key Stage 2 is the high quality of their writing. This shows a good range, including descriptive writing about characters in the Bible, expression of personal feelings, stories of Jesus and a play about the shepherds in the Christmas story. In some cases, the high quality of writing is diminished by unsatisfactory presentation.

111. Pupils' behaviour is consistently good in lessons. They are genuinely interested in learning about religion and are eager to display knowledge and express their ideas and feelings. Collaboration within groups is good and pupils enjoy sharing ideas.

112. The quality of teaching is good and this impacts strongly on pupils' learning and

progress. Teachers plan their lessons well and provide stimulating and interesting activities for their pupils. They use questioning effectively to provoke pupils' thinking, as in the lesson on friendship. Here, the teacher's pertinent questions drew very good responses from the pupils. In the final part of the lesson the teacher skilfully drew together the main threads of the pupils' discussion by reinforcing phrases such as "a good friend treats you fairly" and "someone you can rely on". Teachers' management of lessons is good. They structure their lessons with good pace and balance of activities. Teachers' good relationships with their pupils provide a secure atmosphere in which pupils can express personal opinions and feelings confidently. Religious education lessons support pupils' spiritual and moral development very well, as pupils reflect on the important principles of living. Some lessons, not only in religious education, conclude with a spontaneous prayer from a pupil.

113. Leadership of religious education is satisfactory. The school is about to embark on the full implementation of the locally agreed syllabus, ensuring a more coherent development of the curriculum across the school and a better balance between the teaching of Christianity and other world faiths. Current teaching insufficiently reflect the diversity of religious traditions found in today's society. Links with churches and other faith communities are underdeveloped.

ART

114. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in art throughout the school. Younger pupils develop suitable skills in a range of art techniques, including drawing, painting and printing. They learn about pattern and shape and how to mix colours when painting. Pupils use a range of colours, such as when they painted their model homes, showing appropriate control of paintbrushes. In Year 1, pupils develop sound understanding of texture, such as where they create a textured picture, using lentils and pulses. Some pupils show good imagination in contrasting colours and textures. By the end of the key stage, pupils have sound understanding of perspective, making satisfactory attempts to draw figures and objects of appropriate size.

115. At Key Stage 2, pupils mix paints appropriately to colour helmets designed in Viking style. Some pupils did not fully understand the aim of decorating the helmets symmetrically. Pupils have an appropriate range of experiences in art and, by the end of Year 4, they show good observation skills. For example, the current work on India has stimulated pupils' interest in design and pattern. They have produced some detailed patterns, using a range of materials. Similarly, their observations of seashells are carefully sketched.

116. Pupils throughout the school have suitable opportunities to learn about the work of famous artists, including Clarice Cliff and Kadinsky. The school takes the opportunities provided to welcome artists in residence and pupils have already benefited from their collaborative involvement in designing and making a fabric border for the school stage.

117. Pupils enjoy art and show good imagination in their designs. They work well together and share resources. They appreciate the work of others and try hard to improve their own work. Behaviour is very good.

118. The quality of teaching seen was satisfactory. Lessons were generally planned appropriately, though few plans showed detail of the development of skills over time. In some lessons, teaching insufficiently stressed the principles of design, contrast and texture, which were the lesson objectives. Where used, support staff are well deployed and they support pupils' learning. Assessment is informal.

119. The co-ordinator, who teaches in the nursery, has good subject knowledge and understanding. Considerable work has been undertaken to ensure there is appropriate breadth and balance in the scheme and to address the lack of three-dimensional work noted at the time of the last inspection. A useful checklist has been prepared to guide teachers in their planning, whilst the co-ordinator has also begun to observe lessons to monitor her subject.

120. Resources are satisfactory, with a good range of additional information provided by the co-ordinator to support teaching. The accommodation is satisfactory for teaching art.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

121. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. Older pupils have a sound knowledge of the procedures required to produce a finished article from an initial sketch. They know what kinds of materials are appropriate for their designs and they work with care on activities such as cutting and sticking. Pupils in Year 2 design and make a castle with a moving drawbridge. The best designs record the materials needed for construction and the step by step procedures to be followed. Some pupils find difficulty in moving from a sketch to the next stage of planning. Pupils work well in groups, helping each other where necessary, particularly in solving the problem of the moving drawbridge. They discuss with interest the merits of different methods.

122. Children in the reception class successfully design and make houses from “junk” materials. They choose from a variety of boxes and other cardboard shapes, checking to see whether their house matches the design. Older pupils in Key Stage 2 successfully plan and make Viking helmets. Part of the designing stage has been undertaken at home. A good display of Viking artefacts and posters supports this work well. Pupils use a well-prepared sheet, on which they sketch artistic designs for the finished helmet, stating the materials they will need and the procedures they will follow.

123. Pupils’ attitudes and behaviour in lessons are good. They listen attentively to the teacher and follow instructions carefully. They co-operate well, helping each other and sharing ideas as well as resources. Pupils are anxious to succeed in producing well-finished articles. They readily tidy up at the end of the lesson. Pupils work carefully, handle scissors and tools correctly and show due regard for safety. They discuss their work sensibly, are able to say what difficulties they encounter and identify possible solutions.

124. Teaching in the lessons observed was satisfactory or better. Teachers have satisfactory knowledge and plan their lessons soundly. They prepare appropriate materials and guidelines for pupils and give them clear instructions. Sometimes, teachers limit pupils’ practical experience by providing materials that have already been measured and cut. Their management of pupils working individually or in groups is good. Voluntary parent helpers often make a significant contribution by supporting individuals and groups in their tasks. Teachers use design and technology to support pupils’ learning in other subjects. For example, making the Viking helmets was undertaken during pupils’ study of the Vikings in history. Reinforcement of mathematical shapes and measures is also evident. There is a good range of activities in the curriculum. Pupils use cardboard and other flexible materials, prepare food, model with computer control and weave with fabric. With the help of an artist in residence, pupils designed and made a strikingly attractive fabric border, based on the theme of “rock pools,” for the front of the stage. Assessment is undertaken informally, though it is not yet used effectively to inform future teaching. The tools and other resources provided by the school are adequate. There is sound leadership and management of design and technology.

GEOGRAPHY

125. Few lessons were seen in geography during the inspection. Evidence from the lessons seen at both key stages, discussions, displays, the scrutiny of work and teachers' plans indicates that pupils make satisfactory progress throughout the school. Pupils with special educational needs make the same, satisfactory progress.

126. At Key Stage 1, Year 1 pupils understand seasonal changes and the effect on the environment. In their development of geographical skills, pupils make simple plans and maps, such as those showing the route and its features on the way to school. Year 2 pupils continue to study the local area, identifying features and learning about ways in which these are symbolised on a simple map. By the end of the key stage, most pupils can recognise symbols and directions on a map.

127. At Key Stage 2, pupils understand similarities and differences between their own and other localities. They compare and contrast urban and rural areas and recognise the effects of climate. By the end of Year 4, pupils can recognise and name some of the major countries of the world. They use an atlas appropriately to locate different countries, though they are unfamiliar with the use of grid references and the index to help them to locate these countries. Pupils compare and contrast their own lives with that of an Indian boy, showing good understanding of cause and effect.

128. Pupils seen responded well to geography, showing interest. Pupils in Year 2 were enthusiastic about their study of their local area, supported by the recent visits made to observe and photograph features. In Year 4, though pupils appropriately completed the written task, a few lacked appropriate concentration and their work was insufficiently well presented.

129. The quality of teaching seen was good in one lesson and satisfactory in the other. The best teaching included carefully planned work that was closely linked to previous tasks and which built upon pupils' prior experience. There was good, whole class teaching, supported by effective questioning, explanation and demonstration. In the satisfactory lesson, although work was suitably organised, some pupils were insufficiently challenged by the task and they lost concentration. Marking and assessment varies in the school, as does the use of assessment to inform planning.

130. Geography is taught within topics in the early stages of the school, with discrete teaching undertaken from Year 2 onwards. Inappropriately, the development of skills is not clearly evident in the existing scheme of work or in teachers' plans. The subject is suitably due for review. Leadership of geography has been recently delegated to a senior member of staff, who also has responsibility for English. Appropriately, the school has focussed on establishing the literacy hour as a priority, whilst recognising that geography will be reviewed in the near future.

131. Resources are adequate for geography, with additional resources having been recently acquired to support pupils' learning about weather and rivers and to support their mapping skills. Use is made of the local area, including the seashore, as a resource for learning. The accommodation is satisfactory for teaching geography.

HISTORY

132. The previous inspection found that pupils' progress was satisfactory or better. Evidence

from the current inspection indicates that pupils make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1 and good progress in Key Stage 2. Pupils with special educational needs are frequently supported well in history lessons and make good progress.

133. Pupils in Key Stage 1 learn about changes over time through their own immediate experiences. Younger pupils consider how they themselves have changed since babyhood. They illustrate this well through drawing a simple timeline. They talk with interest about the relative ages of their parents and grandparents and what has happened in their lifetimes. They draw pictures of their toys and describe how they are different from those of children in the past. Other learning about the passage of time takes place through stories of people, such as Florence Nightingale. Pupils at this key stage also develop sound historical understanding through studying topics. Learning in history links well with other areas of the curriculum. For example, a study of changes in lighting over time relates appropriately to work in science. Pupils consider how dwellings have changed over the centuries. Year 2 pupils making models of castles in design and technology, discuss reasons for needing high walls, battlements and drawbridges.

134. In Years 3 and 4, pupils' books contain some good original writing. Pupils write letters from an imaginary Roman soldier on Hadrian's Wall. These include not only good historical information, but also insights into how the soldier might feel. Pupils write good descriptions of the Saxon and Viking conquests of Britain. Their extended writing and use of a wide vocabulary shows good knowledge, understanding and imagination. Their work is often well illustrated. Pupils' written work makes a significant contribution to their literacy progress. Pupils undertake independent research well, using books or information technology and often continue this at home. Pupils in Year 4 produce work of high quality on the Victorian period. They write good accounts of the social conditions of the time, the development of schools, hospitals, transport and industry. Pupils have a good sense of cause and effect, such as seen in their work about the reasons why Dr. Barnardo decided to set up his children's homes.

135. Pupils are interested in history and work hard. In discussion, they eagerly contribute information that they have discovered. Older pupils talk knowledgeably about Victorian times and offer opinions and ideas about the differences between then and now. Other pupils attentively watched an informative video about Viking exploration. In the subsequent discussion, they showed good recall of the information. Pupils maintain concentration and their behaviour is consistently good. There is a great variation in the quality of the presentation of their work. In many cases it is unacceptably untidy and careless.

136. The good quality of teaching makes a strong impact on pupils' learning, especially in the older classes. Teachers have an extensive knowledge of the topics they are teaching and communicate their own enthusiasm for the subject. Lessons observed during the inspection were well planned, showing good detail about their objectives and activities. Teachers enhance their pupils' learning by providing displays of posters and artefacts. They make good use of video resources, pausing at appropriate points to reinforce pupils' learning with brisk, pertinent questions. Teachers manage their lessons well, providing interesting tasks that are appropriate to pupils' differing prior attainment. They provide a good balance between teaching and pupils' activities to ensure pupils successfully maintain concentration and motivation. Formal procedures for assessing and recording pupils' achievement are not yet in place. There is a sound policy and scheme of work. The co-ordinator provides satisfactory leadership of history. Resources and the accommodation are satisfactory.

MUSIC

137. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, at both key stages, make satisfactory progress. Their progress is enhanced by the provision of good, extra-curricular, music-making activities. This was also the finding of the last inspection. Pupils in the reception class successfully sing action songs with accompaniments, using percussion instruments. The pupils correctly identify and describe the kinds of sounds the instruments make. In accompanying the songs, most are successful in keeping a steady beat. Older pupils in Key Stage 1 discuss the creation of sounds, to accompany a dramatised version of the story of Noah's Ark. Working in groups, they devise sequences of sounds to represent the events of the story. Under the leadership of one pupil, some groups successfully perform the pieces they have devised. They write down the sequence of musical events they want. All pupils are involved and all have an instrument on which to improvise.

138. Lessons observed at Key Stage 2 are based on recorded broadcast programmes. These and the associated pamphlets, are used well to provide stimulating and balanced experiences for the pupils. Pupils join in the songs enthusiastically and accurately and can hold parts in two-part songs confidently. After singing songs about animals, pupils made good suggestions on what kinds of rhythms would be suitable to portray a tortoise. Older pupils are interested in creating vocal sounds that could represent acts in a circus. Working in groups, individual pupils lead the improvisations, the others joining in, according to the agreed plan. Some devise a graphic score to represent their pieces.

139. At both key stages, pupils show satisfactory achievement in lessons. Over time, they make sound progress in improvisation, understanding of musical concepts and performance skills. Singing in class and in assembly is of good quality, tuneful and in pitch. Progress in listening to and appraising music is less satisfactory. Pupils have limited opportunity to experience this area.

140. Pupils enjoy their music lessons. They work well, particularly in groups. They exchange ideas readily, choose a leader and respond well to his or her direction. In composing and performing music, they are anxious to succeed and listen carefully to each other's pieces. They show appreciation of the other groups' work.

141. The school choir meets weekly. Pupils have a good repertoire of songs, which they sing tunefully and enthusiastically from memory. During the inspection, pupils were singing Northumbrian songs, making a good contribution to their appreciation of local culture. They used the style of these songs to compose their own song about Whitley Bay. Recently, the choir joined with other school choirs to participate in a local church festival. Some pupils are taught the violin by a visiting teacher and although at present there is no systematic teaching of the recorder, a small number of Year 4 pupils play musically in assembly from time to time.

142. Teaching is satisfactory. Although there is a heavy reliance on recorded broadcast programmes, teachers use these well. They stop the tape at appropriate points to reinforce pupils' learning, or to allow time for improvisation or performance. Sometimes, when leading unaccompanied singing, teachers pitch the songs too low for the pupils. Teachers prepare their lessons well and make sound use of classroom instruments for improvisation and accompaniment. They also make satisfactory use of the broadcast pamphlets to familiarise pupils with musical notation. The subject is soundly led and managed, with the co-ordinator having only recently been appointed. The helpful scheme of work is derived from the North Tyneside Music File for Primary Schools. Assessment procedures have not yet been established.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

143. Pupils make sound progress in physical education, achieving satisfactory standards at the end of Key Stage 1 and by the end of Year 4. This reflects an improvement since the last inspection, where some unsatisfactory attainment was seen at Key Stage 1. Pupils successfully learn about the need for appropriate safety rules and these are understood well by the time pupils begin school. Pupils with special educational needs make sound progress.

144. At Key Stage 1, in gymnastics, pupils develop appropriate understanding of different ways in which they can travel across, on and below apparatus. By Year 2, pupils can link a series of movements into simple sequences. They refine their performance by closely observing others and improving what they can do. For example, pupils practised ways of leaving the floor, jumps and landings and worked hard to develop these movements into an interesting sequence. At Key Stage 2, pupils continue to refine their performance, showing increasing control and poise. A few pupils in Year 4, who attend the extra-curricular gymnastics class, achieved well, showing poise and good control.

145. In the lesson seen at Key Stage 1, pupils made good progress in games' skills. In Year 1, they showed good co-ordination when throwing and catching balls and beanbags. They worked well as team members and as partners.

146. In dance, pupils in the reception class showed good understanding of the use of space, during a music and movement programme. They could appropriately curl, stretch and twist their bodies and showed suitably developing control when balancing. In the Year 3 class lesson, pupils showed good imagination when interpreting movements made by different objects, such as a helicopter.

147. Pupils make sound progress in swimming, where most can swim a length, some aided and others independently. Most are developing appropriate leg kicks and arm movements and show increasing confidence in the water.

148. Pupils respond well. They are well behaved, listen carefully to instructions and try hard to improve their work. Pupils collaborate effectively with each other and show appreciation of others' achievements. They have good understanding of safety rules and the impact of exercise on their bodies.

149. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers are well organised and make efficient use of all available resources. There is a consistent approach to teaching physical education, with good use made of time. Teachers and pupils have good relationships and pupils respond positively to the constructive praise provided. Assessment is undertaken informally. The recently appointed co-ordinator provides sound leadership. Resources for gymnastics are good, with a range of large and small apparatus that is well maintained. The school hall is adequate for teaching physical education, though space is somewhat limited due to its use for storing other school equipment. The outdoor play area is adequate, though the surface is uneven. Pupils have no access to playing fields for outdoor sports. Good use is made of an annual residential visit, when older pupils have suitable opportunities to undertake outdoor adventurous pursuits.