

INSPECTION REPORT

RICHARDSON DEES FIRST SCHOOL

Wallsend, Tyne and Wear

LEA area: Tyneside

Unique reference number: 108596

Headteacher: Mr. J. Farnie

Reporting inspector: Dr. B. Blundell
23868

Dates of inspection: 15th – 18th May 2000

Inspection number: 188844

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

| | |
|------------------------------|---|
| Type of school: | First School |
| School category: | Community |
| Age range of pupils: | 3 - 9 |
| Gender of pupils: | Boys and Girls |
| School address: | High Street East Wallsend Tyne and Wear |
| Postcode: | NE28 7RT |
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| Appropriate authority: | The Governing Body |
| Name of chair of governors: | Mr. P. Gilroy |
| Date of previous inspection: | 17 th June 1996 |

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Team members | | Subject responsibilities | Aspect responsibilities |
|-----------------|----------------------|---|--|
| Dr. B. Blundell | Registered inspector | Equal Opportunities | What sort of school is it? |
| | | Mathematics | What should the school do to improve further? |
| | | Information and communications technology | School's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? |
| | | | How well is the school led and managed? |
| Mr. T. Smith | Lay inspector | | Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development |
| | | | How well does the school work in partnership with parents? |
| | | | How well does the school care for its pupils? |
| Mrs. A. Lowson | Team inspector | English | How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils? |
| | | Geography | |
| | | History | |
| | | Religious education | |
| Mr. A. Allison | Team inspector | Science | |
| | | Music | |
| | | Physical education | |
| Mrs. J. Fisher | Team inspector | Under fives | |
| | | Special educational needs | |
| | | English as an additional language | |
| | | Art | |
| | | Design and technology | |

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Inspection Quality Division
The Office for Standards in Education
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Richardson Dees First School is a community school for boys and girls aged 3 to 9, situated in Wallsend, Tyne and Wear. There are 313 pupils on roll. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is low. The percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs is below the national average, as is the proportion of pupils with statements of special need. Pupils' attainment on entry is well below average. The school has a relatively high level of pupil mobility, with nearly one in four children moving school during the course of the current academic year.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The overall effectiveness of the school is good. Standards in English, mathematics and science for pupils currently aged seven are in line with national averages. The overall quality of teaching is good. Leadership and management of the school are good. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards of attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 are currently in line with national averages in English, mathematics and science.
- The quality of teaching throughout the school is good; management of pupils is very good.
- The overall leadership and management of the school by the headteacher and governing body is good.
- Relationships are very good throughout the school.
- Pupils are friendly and enthusiastic; their behaviour is good.
- The procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance and good behaviour are very good.

What could be improved

- The provision for information and communications technology, whilst improving, does not cover the required areas of monitoring and modelling.
- The overall level of monitoring of teaching by the curriculum co-ordinators is unsatisfactory.
- Pupils' handwriting skills are in need of further development throughout the school including the Nursery; their story writing skills are in need of further development in Key Stages 1 and 2.
- Library provision is unsatisfactory, as are pupils' library skills.

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. The improvement of the school since the last inspection is satisfactory overall, with all six key issues raised being satisfactorily addressed. Whilst progress has been made in developing pupils' writing skills, this is currently being further developed. There is now an appropriate balance between the time allocations to each of the core subjects. Assessment procedures have improved and a beginning has been made on the appropriate analysis of data. The role of the special educational needs co-ordinator has been suitably addressed. Registration procedures are now satisfactory. Pupils are grouped appropriately in lessons. The proportion of children moving between schools has continued to rise since the last inspection and this has an adverse effect on pupils' attainment in national tests. Nonetheless, standards of attainment of the current Year 2 are judged to be broadly in line with national averages.

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 | D | D | E | B |
| Writing | D | C | E | C |
| Mathematics | E | D | E | C |

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

In 1999, the school's results at the end of Key Stage 1 were well below national averages in reading, writing and mathematics. Over the last four years taken together, pupils have left Key Stage 1, approximately one term behind others nationally, in reading, writing and mathematics. However, in comparison with schools of a similar type, pupils' performance in 1999 was above average in reading and average in writing and mathematics. The school has set targets for a further rise in attainment from the current 80 per cent to approximately 90 per cent of pupils in 2000 and in 2001 attaining national averages; it is unlikely that these will be fully met. In the work seen during the inspection, standards in English, mathematics and science for seven year olds are judged to be in line with national averages. Standards in information and communications technology are below national expectations. In religious education, standards are in line with the requirements of the Local Agreed Syllabus. A scrutiny of pupils' bookwork shows that pupils make satisfactory progress overall throughout the school and good progress in mathematics and science. In the majority of lessons seen during the inspection week pupils' progress was good in all subjects. Pupils' learning in history, geography, music, art, design and technology and physical education is satisfactory throughout the school.

Children join the nursery with low levels of knowledge and skills. They make good progress in the Nursery and Reception, but their attainment is still below average by the time they are five and the majority do not attain all of the desirable learning outcomes. (The Desirable Learning Outcomes are the nationally expected standards for children entering compulsory education.) Standards at the school are not yet consistently high enough, but the transient nature of a substantial proportion of the pupils adversely affects overall levels of attainment. For example, of the cohort of pupils who took the end of Key Stage 1 tests in 1999, approximately one half joined the school after the age of five. An analysis of the attainment of those pupils who stayed at the school from Reception to the end of Key Stage 1 shows that they performed significantly better and obtain results in reading, writing and mathematics that are broadly in line with national averages.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|---|
| Attitudes to the school | Pupils' attitudes are good. They are enthusiastic and interested; some have limited attention spans. |
| Behaviour, in and out of classrooms | Behaviour is good throughout the school. Pupils have a good understanding of the impact of their actions on others. |
| Personal development and relationships | Relationships throughout the school are very good. Personal development is good. |
| Attendance | The rate of attendance was below the national average for the year 1998 to 1999. Attendance for the current academic year has improved and is in line with national averages. |

Pupils are friendly; they respect the feelings and beliefs of others. They show courtesy in, for example, holding the door open for others or offering their seat for adults.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The overall quality of teaching is good throughout the school. Teaching of English and mathematics is good throughout. A particular strength in teaching is teachers' management of their pupils, with clearly defined strategies. There are no specific weaknesses in teaching; planning in literacy and numeracy is good and these skills are taught well. The school meets the needs of all pupils appropriately; temporary pupils are given their full entitlement by teachers and are always issued with the full complement of exercise books.

All teaching seen was at least satisfactory and sixty-seven per cent was good or better. Overall standards in teaching have improved since the time of the last inspection.

Pupils are generally keen to learn and concentrate on their work, although a few, particularly in extended independent learning sessions drift off task unless reminded by their teachers that they should be working.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

| Aspect | Comment |
|---|--|
| The quality and range of the curriculum | The curriculum is broad and balanced. |
| Provision for pupils with special educational needs | Provision for these pupils is satisfactory overall. Whilst individual educational plans are in place appropriately, a number of these lack sufficiently sharply focused targets. |
| Provision for pupils with English as an additional language | This is good. The school meets the needs of these pupils well.. |
| Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | This is good overall. Provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory; for their moral and social development, provision is good. |
| How well the school cares for its pupils | The school cares well for its pupils. Procedures for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare are good. |

The school's partnership with parents is satisfactory. The school encourages parents to become involved in the life of the school.

Provision for extra-curricular activities is satisfactory overall. All areas of the curriculum meet statutory requirements, with the exception of information and communications technology. The school has a caring environment.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|---|
| Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff | The leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff are good overall. The school is particularly good in providing for the pastoral side of pupils' lives. |
| How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities | The governors are very committed; they want the best for the school and they fulfil their responsibilities well overall. An area that they are currently developing further is their role in monitoring the delivery of the curriculum. |
| The school's evaluation of its performance | This is satisfactory overall and improving. The school has started to analyse data to see where it is and where it needs to go. |
| The strategic use of resources | This is good overall, but the use of the library is unsatisfactory. |

The adequacy of staffing, accommodation and learning resources is satisfactory overall.

The school improvement plan is a useful working document. As the school itself is in a period of transition, with proposals to change it from a first to a primary school, governors have been prudent in managing finances. There is a large under-spend of money as the governing body is unsure as to where funds for the newly created school will need to be allocated. The school spends its money wisely and appropriately applies the principles of best value.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

| What pleases parents most | What parents would like to see improved |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school. • Parents feel comfortable approaching the school. • Their children make good progress. • The school is helping their children to become mature. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some parents would like more homework for their children. • Some parents would like a greater range of extra-curricular activities for their children. |

Inspectors agree with parents' comments about the positive features of the school. Inspectors find that the level of homework is broadly satisfactory. Extra-curricular activities are provided at lunchtimes but not after school due to transport arrangements for many pupils. Whilst inspectors judge that the level of activities provided at lunchtimes is satisfactory, there could be a greater range.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. The children's attainment on entry to the nursery is well below average. By the time that children leave Reception, they have made good progress, but their attainment is still below average. By the time they are five, the majority of children do not attain most of the Desirable Learning Outcomes, the nationally expected standard.
2. In the National Curriculum tests in 1999 at the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics was well below the national average in terms of their average National Curriculum points score.
3. Over the four years from 1996 to 1999, pupils' attainment overall in reading and writing was just under one term behind pupils nationally; in mathematics their attainment was just over one term lower. All in all, pupils at Richardson Dees school leave this key stage with attainment falling about one term behind pupils nationally.
4. Pupils' performance in 1999 in comparison with schools of a similar type, in which there was a similar proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, was above average in reading and average in writing and mathematics.
5. The average attainment of boys in the years from 1996 to 1999 has been below that of girls in reading, writing and mathematics. In reading and mathematics, the boys have lagged behind the girls by nearly half a year. In writing, the difference has been much less pronounced.
6. Apart from in 1999, the school's results have been rising at a faster rate than nationally in writing and mathematics. In reading, results have shown no discernible trend. The school's results in 1999 were low due to the particular cohort of pupils and their mobility, with approximately fifty per cent transferring from other schools.
7. The targets for the next two years show pupils' attainment is expected to rise so that approximately 90 per cent will achieve Level 2 or above. Inspection findings indicate that it is unlikely that the school will quite meet these targets, particularly for the current Year 2.
8. Overall, pupils' progress over time for all subjects averaged together is good for the under-fives, satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory in Key Stage 2. In the majority of lessons seen throughout the school during the inspection, pupils' progress was good. A reason for the difference between pupils' progress over a longer period of time and that seen during the inspection is the disruption caused to classroom routines by the composition of classes changing regularly due to pupils' mobility.

9. In the work seen during the inspection, attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 in English is judged to be in line with national averages overall. However, whilst pupils' skills in reading, speaking and listening are in line, their attainment in writing is below national averages. By the end of Year 4, pupils' attainment in English is again overall at the expected level, although writing still lags behind. Pupils' story writing and library skills are unsatisfactory at both key stages. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils' attainment was below average in analysing non-fiction texts.
10. Attainment in mathematics in the work seen during the inspection was in line with national averages at the end of Key Stage 1 in all areas. Their attainment by the end of Year 4 was also at the expected level. The only weakness observed was that some pupils do not have instant recall of appropriate multiplication tables. This was observed, for example, in a Year 3 lesson.
11. Pupils' attainment in science in the work seen in the inspection was in line with national standards at the end of Key Stage 1 and at the expected level by the end of Year 4. In a Year 3 lesson, for example, pupils were familiar with terms such as 'repel' and 'attract' and are aware that stronger magnetic fields occur at the end of magnets.
12. Pupils' attainment in information and communications technology is below national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and also by the end of Year 4. Whilst pupils' word-processing skills are improving, they are below national standards; many are slow with keyboard work and lack confidence when changing the layout of text. Pupils in Year 2 could accurately programme a controllable robot to turn through ninety degrees or to follow a square track. Throughout the school, pupils' attainment in monitoring and modelling is below national expectations. The school is not currently covering these areas of the National Curriculum programme of study.
13. In religious education, pupils' attainment is in line with the requirements of the Local Agreed Syllabus by the end of Key Stage 1 and also by the end of Year 4. Pupils in Year 3 know that Christians celebrate Christmas and Easter as special times related to Jesus. They are aware that Hindus celebrate a special festival for brothers and sisters called Raksha Bandhan.
14. The strategies for implementing both literacy and numeracy are satisfactory overall and support pupils' learning appropriately. They are starting to have an impact on raising standards.
15. Pupils' progress in history, geography, music, physical education, art and design and technology is satisfactory overall. For example, in geography, Year 1 pupils are aware that South Africa is a long way away and to get there takes a long time. They know how to use an atlas and are building up their geographical knowledge appropriately. In a physical education lesson, Year 4 pupils built up their skills in throwing and catching for summer games.
16. Progress of pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language is satisfactory.

17. The school's analysis of the attainment of those pupils who remain with the school, as opposed to those who stay for shorter periods, shows that by the end of Key Stage 1 those who join later do not do as well as those who have spent all their school life at Richardson Dees. For example, in the 1999 national tests, pupils who started at Richardson Dees in Reception and remained through to the end of Year 2 achieved attainment levels in writing and mathematics that were approximately in line with the national average; however their attainment in reading was still below.
18. Since the last inspection, standards of attainment in the core subjects have declined a little. Also, standards in music, design and technology and information and communications technology are not as high. Levels of transience have risen considerably since the time of the last inspection.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

19. The quality of pupils' attitudes to work, their behaviour and personal development have been sustained since the last inspection and remain strong features of the school.
20. Pupils enjoy coming to school and, overall, have good attitudes to work. This has a positive impact on the standards achieved. Most are well motivated and keen to respond to the challenges offered, pursuing each new task with purpose and determination. A sizeable minority, however, has short attention spans and can only concentrate for limited periods of time, although they do not usually disrupt the flow of lessons. In general, pupils are good listeners. They answer questions sensibly and contribute confidently in discussions. Children under-five are also developing good work habits and co-operate well with their teacher and classmates.
21. Behaviour is good, both in and out of class. Pupils are a credit to their school. They clearly understand what is expected of them and usually react accordingly. Incidents of bullying are rare and none were observed during the inspection. There have been no permanent exclusions in recent years. Pupils are genuinely proud of their school and show due respect for their environment.
22. The quality of relationships amongst pupils and between pupils and staff is now very good. This makes a significant contribution to the quality of education provided. There is a relaxed and harmonious atmosphere within the school. Pupils are polite, very open in their dealings with others and always ready to be helpful. In lessons they work very well together in pairs or groups and share ideas and equipment sensibly. At playtime and when eating lunch, they are sociable and friendly.
23. Pupils' personal development is good. The youngest children understand the importance of sharing and taking turns and already have a well-developed sense of fair play. Pupils are confident and clearly respect each other's rights feelings and beliefs. They willingly accept responsibilities offered to them, such as taking register to the secretary and perform their duties well. Courtesy is shown in a variety of ways. For instance, pupils offer their seats to adults entering a room and will hold doors open whilst others pass through. Opportunities for them to plan and carry out their own work are not a strong feature of the school, but when offered are used productively. Older pupils also gain confidence as a result of the annual residential visit to the Powburn outdoor activity centre.

24. In recent years, attendance was below that typically found in primary schools. However, as a result of various initiatives introduced last autumn, it has shown some improvement and is currently around the national average. Unauthorised absence has also improved and is now very low.
25. Punctuality is generally good. Most pupils arrive on time and are settled in class promptly at the start of sessions, but a few regularly arrive late.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

26. The overall standard of teaching in the lessons seen is good. For children who are under-five it is good. Teaching in both Key Stage 1 and in Key Stage 2 is also good overall. Teaching in 100 per cent of lessons was satisfactory or better and in 55 per cent, it was good. Teaching in 10 per cent per cent was very good. One excellent lesson was seen; no unsatisfactory teaching was observed.
27. Examples of good teaching were seen in every class in the school. Additionally, very good lessons were seen for the under-fives and in Key Stage 2. There was also an excellent literacy lesson in Year 3. A student teacher taking Year 1 classes taught her lessons well.
28. The best feature of teaching, which has the greatest effect on pupils' attainment and learning, is the very good class management seen throughout the school. Behaviour strategies are in place in all classes and pupils know what is expected of them. Behaviour is also helped by teachers issuing "Pupil of the lesson" certificates at the end of each lesson; sometimes several pupils are awarded these and their use helps pupils to concentrate. The use of support staff is good throughout the school and particularly good in the Nursery.
29. There are no particular weaknesses in teaching, although little evidence of teaching information and communications technology was observed. Teachers' knowledge and understanding are good throughout the school. They are skilful in getting pupils to carry out challenging work without making it appear hard to pupils. For example, in a Year 2 mathematics lesson, pupils were using simple algebra to solve equations, without realising that it was algebra.
30. The teaching of basic skills is good in both key stages. The skills of literacy and numeracy are well taught in all sections of the school, although there is a need for continued emphasis on pupils' story writing and handwriting. Handwriting skills in the Nursery are not sufficiently emphasised.
31. Teachers' planning is thorough, particularly in literacy and numeracy. There is much evidence of joint planning between classes within a year group, particularly in Year 2.
32. Whilst lessons generally have learning objectives, these are rarely shared with the pupils at the start of the lesson. In a Year 1 mathematics lesson, however, the learning objectives were explained to pupils at the start and then re-visited at the end of the lesson to see how far they had been met. Such very good practice had a most positive impact on pupils' work on basic number.

33. The majority of lessons start with effective question and answer sessions and teachers have high expectations. Pupils are eager to take part in these and often ask questions themselves. This has a positive impact on pupils' attainment and learning.
34. Lessons generally have a good pace; the only time when pupils were seen to go off task was in some lengthy independent learning sessions. Nonetheless, some teachers are adept at keeping their pupils working and will regularly remind them of how long they have left or will ask the class "how many of you have finished the first five questions".
35. Pupils' books are generally well marked and have encouraging comments to motivate them. However, there are rarely challenges posed to take pupils who have obtained "full marks" further. One exception to this was the marking of mathematics in Year 4, which was particularly thorough.
36. Homework is satisfactorily used through the school to consolidate pupils' learning. Pupils are generally given work for the weekend including reading and mathematics. Some parents felt that insufficient homework is given, but inspectors generally found the level to be appropriate.
37. The overall quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection, when approximately one in every thirteen lessons was judged to be unsatisfactory.
38. Pupils with special needs receive good support, both within the classroom and when withdrawn to work in small groups with the teacher responsible.
39. Pupils with English as an additional language are effectively supported by a specialist support teacher.

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

40. The school provides a curriculum which is sufficiently broad, balanced and relevant and follows the guidelines for religious education in the locally agreed syllabus. The quality and range of learning opportunities in the school is satisfactory. Overall, it meets statutory requirements of the National Curriculum with the exception of provision for information and communications technology in the areas of monitoring and modelling. Weaknesses identified in the last inspection have been addressed and improvements in the school since the last inspection are satisfactory overall. There has been insufficient progress in pupils' writing skills. Curriculum time devoted to the teaching of English, mathematics and science is balanced and is in line with national averages. The national literacy and numeracy projects are in place with appropriate strategies for their development. The governing body has formally approved all curriculum policies and governors are assigned to all subjects and areas including that of special educational needs.

41. The school has a full range of policies, to support the step-by-step development of what pupils should know, be able to do and understand. Schemes of work, such as literacy and numeracy provide a clear framework for teachers to plan thoroughly for each term, each half term and lessons for the week. Several, such as history, are to be based on guidance from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. Planning is good. Teachers identify how pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding are to be developed, step by step, as pupils move through the school, including those with special educational needs and pupils for whom English is a second language. The curricular provision for the children under the age of five continues to be good. It meets the needs and interests of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is a second language.
42. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory overall and the curricular requirements of pupils on the special educational needs register are met. Since the last inspection the role of the special educational needs co-ordinator has been suitably addressed. There is now a greater sharing of expertise and responsibility for the education of pupils with special educational needs. There is an appropriate policy document in place and clear processes for identifying such pupils at an early stage in their education. Individual education plans, appropriate for each pupil on specific stages of the special needs register, are in place, but a number of these lack sufficiently focused targets. Progress is satisfactory overall. Pupils have access to the full curriculum and receive good support, both within the classroom and when withdrawn to work in small groups with the teachers responsible. Pupils who are withdrawn carry out similar work to that provided for the rest of the class. The review process, involving the parents who attend, the class teacher, the specialist support teacher and the teacher responsible for these pupils, ensures the movement of pupils onto and off the register and is satisfactorily documented. Resources are adequate overall, but provision in information and communications technology software and additional games for literacy is inadequate.
43. Provision for pupils for whom English is a second language is good overall. The school meets the needs of these pupils well, both within the classroom and when withdrawn in small groups for support teaching. They attain levels of achievement which reflect their increasing understanding of the language, developing skills and growing confidence. They have access to the full curriculum, receive good support, both within the classroom and in small groups and make satisfactory progress. A specialist support teacher is employed through the service level agreement with the Local Education Authority and pupils receive good support.
44. Throughout the school the strategies for developing literacy and numeracy skills are satisfactory. The topic work approach gives opportunities to integrate the curriculum subjects and skills are reinforced in other subjects throughout the school. For example, in science, Reception pupils develop their understanding of sound and design and make simple musical instruments such as drums and shakers. In Year 3, pupils link their geographical study of India with their religious study of the Hindu festivals, such as Raksha Bandham.

45. There is satisfactory provision for extra-curricular activity in sport, such as football and physical education during dinner times. Difficulties with pupils' transport means that the school has not felt able to offer after-school activities. Visits are made to the theatre, concerts, museums, and science fairs and Year 4 pupils attend an annual residential activity centre. All of the latter add breadth and interest to the curriculum and provide valuable experiences to those who participate. Pupils of all ages gain valuable and effective historical, geographical, scientific and cultural stimulus and experience from visits locally and further afield, such as Whitehouse and Marlish Farms, Newcastle Keep, Plessey Woods, the Rising Sun Countryside Park, Sealife Centre, South Shields Planetarium, the Education Technology Centre and the ballet. An annual residential visit to Powburn Outdoor Centre by Year 4 pupils enhances the physical education curriculum.
46. The school continues to be fully committed to equality of access and opportunity for all pupils and has regard to all statutory requirements.
47. The school has a policy for sex education, which is taught only when and where it appears in the science curriculum. The school is mindful of the need to review its drug education programme. The delivery of health education is supported by external health providers, for example by a visit from the dental nurse at Key Stage 1.
48. The school is involved, satisfactorily, in various aspects of the community. Pupils have benefited, from the expertise of external coaches in cricket, football and swimming. Pupils distribute Harvest produce to the elderly, following their school festival and entertain residents at the local Rose Bank Hall and the Forum shopping centre with festive songs at Christmas..
49. Satisfactory arrangements are made to help the pupils in the transition to their next phase of education by way of visits and teachers from the schools involved meet to discuss the work of the pupils before transfer. Currently, the local authority's school three-tier system is being re-organised.
50. Provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is good overall. Provision for the pupils' spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory and for moral and social is good.
51. Provision for the spiritual development of pupils is satisfactory. Spiritual development is stated in the aims of the religious education syllabus. Throughout the school, teachers provide satisfactory opportunities for the pupils' spiritual development. Pupils' sense of spirituality is enhanced by the provision of art work in the style of famous artists and opportunities to listen to the works of famous musicians while entering and leaving assemblies. They reflect on what they have achieved and heard. In one assembly seen, pupils looked in wonder at the wide variety of creatures shown on the overhead projector. Nursery children were equally in awe when looking at tadpoles and a snail.

52. Provision for the moral development of pupils is good. There are clear guidelines for the encouragement of good behaviour throughout the school and the codes of conduct displayed in every classroom and the hall are seen as important in achieving this behaviour. Expectations of good behaviour are high. The pupils respond very well to these, as seen in the way they behave to each other and to adults and the very good behaviour, both inside and outside the classrooms. Staff set very good examples for the pupils to follow. The school is a caring place and all pupils feel valued.
53. Provision for the social development of pupils is good. The whole school ethos is very good in promoting pupils' social development. Throughout the school, emphasis on the school as a family community is stressed and pupils develop an early understanding of the implications of living in a community. Teachers provide many occasions when pupils work together in small or large groups and pupils show respect for one another. Lessons and assemblies provide opportunities for pupils to recognise and celebrate the achievements of others. For example, a 'Pupil of the lesson' certificate is given to pupils and others in the class are unstinting in their applause. There is a high level of mutual respect between adults and pupils. Pupils are courteous and polite in their relationships with adults. All pupils are given opportunities to accept responsibilities, such as children giving out milk and biscuits in the nursery and looking after the wild plant garden. Older pupils return registers to the office, keep the school tidy and act as lunchtime monitors. Year 4 pupils learn the value of teamwork through their annual residential visit.
54. Provision for cultural development is satisfactory. The teachers promote pupils' appreciation of their own culture as well as others, through music, geography, and religious education. The religious education curriculum supports cultural learning through the teaching of major faiths such as Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism and Buddhism. Indian music is used effectively to enhance and reinforce work on India and Hinduism. Knowledge of local culture is developed through subjects such as history and geography. Visits to Whitehouse Farm, Newcastle Keep and Plessey Woods give a practical approach to learning about the locality and its past.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

55. Pupils' general welfare remains a high priority and continues to be well promoted within the school. A suitable health and safety policy is in place, and fully implemented. Risk assessments are carried out on a regular basis and the day-to-day working practices adopted by members of staff are good. Standards of cleaning and maintenance are high. Pupils are supervised carefully throughout the day and lunchtime routines are managed well. As a result the school functions smoothly. There are clear procedures for dealing with accidents and illness and for the administration of medication and these are followed closely. Child protection arrangements are effective. Local authority guidelines are followed if cases of abuse are suspected and the head teacher has designated responsibility for liaising with outside agencies.

56. Systems for monitoring pupils' personal development are effective and involve a combination of record-keeping and teachers' good knowledge of them. Pupils' behaviour is well documented on reward merit cards and these are sent home on a weekly basis. Written comments are included on their end-of-year reports and, whenever it is considered necessary to do so, teachers maintain formal diaries for those exhibiting behavioural problems. Attendance and punctuality are monitored thoroughly. Registers are now completed properly at the start of sessions in accordance with current guidelines. Any absences that are not explained promptly by parents are followed up effectively and pupils arriving late have their names recorded in the late book, which is kept in the entrance hall.
57. Arrangements for supporting pupils' personal development are good and permeate all areas of school life. Pupils are truly valued and teachers place strong emphasis on building their self-esteem and making them feel important. Praise and rewards are used effectively to encourage effort and good behaviour and significant achievements are celebrated in assembly. Transient pupils are well integrated into classes and made to feel full members of the school community.
58. Procedures for promoting high standards of discipline and behaviour are very good. They are securely underpinned by an effective policy and implemented effectively by all members of staff. Clear and straightforward school rules are well understood by pupils and ensure that they act in a thoughtful and sensible way at all times. Rewards and sanctions are fair and applied consistently. Effective guidelines are also in place to deal with incidents of bullying. Any reported incidents are taken seriously and dealt with quickly. The school is also very keen to raise attendance, and rewards those who come regularly through class awards and certificates for the individual. The residential visit to Powburn helps pupils to gain confidence and enhance their social skills, but opportunities for them to plan and carry out their own work in lessons are insufficiently developed.
59. The procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are satisfactory throughout the school except in the Nursery where they are in need of further development. The school has an appropriate assessment week each half term for English, mathematics and science for all pupils from Reception upwards. Teachers produce grades for all pupils from these tests and convert them into National Curriculum levels. These levels are then reported to the coordinators for these subjects together with samples of the pupils' work that they have levelled. If the coordinators have any concerns about the levels, then they request further samples from the class teachers. The use of assessment in the foundation subjects and in information and communications technology is underdeveloped.
60. The use of assessment information to help to plan the curriculum is satisfactory in all sections of the school. It is most developed in literacy and numeracy and is used effectively to promote pupils' attainment and learning. This area has improved since the time of the last inspection.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

61. Parents express strong support for the school. Of those who responded to the questionnaire, the vast majority consider that it works closely with them and indicate that they would feel comfortable approaching teachers if they had any worries or concerns. The school actively encourages parents to support their children's learning through the work they do at home and most are happy with the homework set. Occasionally, the school also runs courses to help parents gain a greater understanding about the education of young children. A few parents help in class on a regular basis, where they provide valuable help with activities such as swimming and information technology. Most parents have signed up to the home-school agreement. The Parents' and Supporters' Association remains active. It puts on various events throughout the year and spends any proceeds on activities for the pupils. Children under-five and their parents are introduced into the school with understanding and given clear guidance about its routines and expectations. Parents who are involved as school helpers work conscientiously to support the work of the school. They have opportunities to attend 'Open Evenings' and other 'Open' sessions to discuss work or see the school in action.
62. Communications with parents remain satisfactory, although the school's prospectus and governors' annual report lack a few items of necessary information. Parents are kept well informed about the life of the school through newsletters and various other forms of correspondence and almost all of them are happy with the information they receive about their children's progress. There are ample opportunities for parents to consult with teachers on a formal basis and the quality of pupils' annual reports is good. These give clear indications about how pupils are getting on and set suitable targets to help them improve. In addition, parents also receive a brief summary report each half term but, at present, do not get any details to let them know what their children are studying in class. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are properly involved from the time the teacher has an initial concern. Individual education plans are sent home so that parents are fully aware of the targets the school has set for their child and they are always invited to review meetings, but very few attend.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

63. The leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff are good. The senior management team consisting of the headteacher, deputy headteacher and the coordinators for literacy and numeracy have a suitable impact on creating a clear educational direction for the school. Their leadership is particularly good on the pastoral side of the school.
64. The aims of the school, as detailed in the school prospectus are reflected in the life of the school. The aim, "to encourage the formation of good and socially acceptable habits", is particularly successfully met. The delegation and contribution of staff with management responsibilities is satisfactory overall. However, the curriculum coordinators' role in monitoring and evaluating teaching is yet to be fully addressed. The school improvement plan identifies this as an area for development from September 2000. Whilst the headteacher monitors teaching and clearly knows the strengths and weaknesses of his staff, formal monitoring with written reports to teachers has not yet regularly been carried out. The deputy headteacher, who is a good classroom practitioner, is to have her monitoring role increased from next year.

65. The effectiveness of the governing body in fulfilling its responsibilities is good. They are a committed and enthusiastic governing body, only formed within the last two years. Offering a range of expertise, they work hard for the school and fulfil most of their statutory roles well, although their annual report to parents and the school's prospectus contain some minor omissions. Whilst governors are assigned to each class and visit lessons when they are able, their role in monitoring subject areas has only recently commenced. They now plan to extend this role and become more objective critical friends of the school. Governors show good overall knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of the school, but much of that knowledge has hitherto been based on information from the headteacher rather than being first-hand.
66. Whilst the school has made a satisfactory start on performance management, there is currently no formal appraisal. There is, however, an annual review of each teacher's' work, carried out by the headteacher. The headteacher has yet to be appraised by the local education authority. Induction procedures for new members of staff are in place and are appropriate.
67. The school has identified appropriate targets and has made a good start on analysing performance data to identify targets for groups of pupils and individuals and to ensure that this information informs teachers' planning. Pupil mobility makes it very difficult to meet current attainment targets for all children and groups.
68. The school improvement plan is a useful working document; the school's priorities for development are good. Educational priorities are well supported by good financial planning. The school has a very large under-spend in its money, currently amounting to nearly £50000. The major reason for this is that re-organisation of the school, from a first school to a primary is planned for next year and the governing body is still unsure of the financial implications of this. The governing body is being most prudent in delaying the expenditure of this money until the true situation is fully known.
69. The school's finances are handled well on both a day-to-day and long-term basis. The school secretaries competently handle daily matters and prepare regular balance sheets for the governing body. As the school has been delegated its own local bank account, it is able to obtain good value and applies the principles of best value in its transactions. Specific grants are utilised appropriately for their intended purposes. The school's use of new technology in the school office is good.
70. Although some subject coordinators are assigned to subjects that are not their main specialisms for historical reasons, the match of teachers and support staff to the demands of the curriculum is satisfactory. The accommodation is satisfactory overall, with the exception of the library, which is unsatisfactory. The school is housed in a large Victorian building which was refurbished approximately sixteen years ago. It is well maintained by dedicated caretaking and cleaning staff. Learning resources are good overall, although the stock of books in the library is unsatisfactory.
71. Since the last inspection, the role of the special needs coordinator has been suitably addressed and there is a greater sharing of expertise and responsibility for the education of pupils with special educational needs
72. The management of English by the specialist support teacher is good.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

73. In order to improve standards further, the headteacher, senior management team and governing body should: -

- (1) Improve the provision for information and communications technology, by ensuring that the full range of the National Curriculum is covered, particularly modelling and monitoring. (Para 40,138)
- (2) Provide more time for curriculum coordinators to monitor the teaching of their subjects. (Para 64)
- (3) Improve pupils' handwriting throughout the school, including the Nursery and improve story writing at Key Stages 1 and 2. (Para 78, 86, 90)
- (4) Improve the library provision and develop pupils' library skills. (Para 97)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

| | |
|--|----|
| Number of lessons observed | 52 |
| Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils | 20 |

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

| Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|-----------|-----------|------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| 2% | 10% | 55% | 33% | 0% | 0% | 0% |

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

Information about the school's pupils

| Pupils on the school's roll | Nursery | YR – Y4 |
|--|---------|---------|
| Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils) | 27 | 286 |
| Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals | 0 | 140 |

FTE means full-time equivalent.

| Special educational needs | Nursery | YR – Y4 |
|---|---------|---------|
| Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs | 0 | 2 |
| Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register | 11 | 49 |

| English as an additional language | No of pupils |
|---|--------------|
| Number of pupils with English as an additional language | 5 |

| Pupil mobility in the last school year | No of pupils |
|--|--------------|
| Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission | 60 |
| Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving | 30 |

Attendance

Authorised absence

| | % |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data | 7.0 |
| National comparative data | 5.4 |

Unauthorised absence

| | % |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data | 0.5 |
| 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

| | Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
|--|------|------|-------|-------|
| Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year | 1999 | 30 | 22 | 52 |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results | | Reading | Writing | Mathematics |
|--|----------|----------------|----------------|--------------------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above | Boys | 20 | 18 | 24 |
| | Girls | 21 | 21 | 17 |
| | Total | 41 | 39 | 41 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School | 79() | 75() | 79() |
| | National | 82(80) | 83(81) | 87(84) |

| Teachers' Assessments | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|----------------|--------------------|----------------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above | Boys | 20 | 22 | 24 |
| | Girls | 21 | 20 | 22 |
| | Total | 41 | 42 | 46 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School | 79() | 81() | 88() |
| | National | 82(81) | 86(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 | 1 |
| Black – other | 0 |
| Indian | 2 |
| Pakistani | 0 |
| Bangladeshi | 0 |
| Chinese | 0 |
| White | 230 |
| Any other minority ethnic group | 1 |

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

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 of pupils of compulsory school age, 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) | 12.0 |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher | 25.5 |
| Average class size | 28.6 |

Education support staff: YR – Y4

| | |
|---|-----|
| Total number of education support staff | 4.6 |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week | 144 |

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

| | |
|--|------|
| Total number of qualified teachers (FTE) | 1 |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher | 27.0 |

| | |
|---|-----|
| Total number of education support staff | 1.0 |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week | 20 |

| | |
|--------------------------------|----|
| Number of pupils per FTE adult | 13 |
|--------------------------------|----|

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

| | |
|----------------|---------|
| Financial year | 1998-99 |
|----------------|---------|

| | £ |
|--|--------|
| Total income | 557078 |
| Total expenditure | 537078 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 1785 |
| Balance brought forward from previous year | 62087 |
| Balance carried forward to next year | 82087 |

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-----|
| Number of questionnaires sent out | 126 |
| Number of questionnaires returned | 54 |

Percentage of responses in each category

| | Strongly agree | Tend to agree | Tend to disagree | Strongly disagree | Don't know |
|--|----------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|------------|
| My child likes school. | 74 | 26 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| My child is making good progress in school. | 76 | 22 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Behaviour in the school is good. | 50 | 46 | 2 | 0 | 2 |
| My child gets the right amount of work to do at home. | 39 | 44 | 11 | 6 | 0 |
| The teaching is good. | 80 | 20 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on. | 70 | 24 | 6 | 0 | 0 |
| I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem. | 83 | 15 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best. | 76 | 20 | 2 | 0 | 2 |
| The school works closely with parents. | 50 | 43 | 2 | 0 | 5 |
| The school is well led and managed. | 76 | 20 | 0 | 0 | 4 |
| The school is helping my child become mature and responsible. | 72 | 28 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons. | 33 | 26 | 9 | 2 | 30 |

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

74. Fifty two children enter the nursery for one half session per day in the year that they are four. At the time of the inspection fifty two children attended the nursery part- time and ten children under five attended the reception classes full-time. When the children are five they transfer to the two reception classes. The majority of children enter the nursery with speaking and listening skills, number and personal and social skills, well below those expected for their age. Assessment tests on entry to the reception classes confirm the inspection findings that, in spite of the good progress made in the nursery, the majority of children do not attain the nationally accepted standard in early reading skills and mathematics by the time that they are admitted full-time into the reception classes. In the reception classes, the children continue to make good progress because of the consistently good teaching, but it is likely that by the time the children are five the majority of children will still be below the nationally agreed targets for their age in language and literacy and numeracy. The majority of the children transfer to the reception classes after the nursery year.
75. Satisfactory induction procedures are in place to support the children as they begin their education in school. Parents are given helpful guidance by way of, and through pre-school visits. An open evening for parents, when parents learn about the work of the under fives, helps the children to make a positive start to their school life. Children with learning difficulties make satisfactory progress because their learning needs are identified quickly, and they receive good support for their learning. Overall there is good provision for the children under five, but writing, as mentioned in the last inspection is in need of development in the nursery. The structured teaching in the use of tools remains undeveloped, but the school has issued a policy statement stating its reasons for the non-provision of 'real' tools. The school is mindful that whilst there has been an improvement in liaison between the nursery and the reception classes, a uniformity of approach to the Early Learning Goals planning to be introduced in September is needed, to ensure continuity and progression. A 'Baseline' model of assessment continues to be in place in the nursery, and individual Records of Achievement are used to show the skills and progress made by the children, but there is no compiled recorded class list of these assessments for quick and easy reference by the nursery staff and the reception staff when pupils transfer.
76. The personal and social education of children under five is at or above the expected level. Children, including those with special educational needs, make good gains in their learning in relation to their levels of initial attainment. Children make very good progress from their entry into school. The teaching is never less than good and sometimes it is very good. In good and very good practice the teachers have a very good knowledge of the educational needs of young children and show firm, but sensitive ways to encourage the children to behave well. The children make good progress because of the quality teaching and the professional way in which the teachers, the nursery nurse and the classroom assistants work together and with the children. Children of different attainment are happy to come to school and are valued for the contribution they bring. They enjoy a good relationship with adults, trust them quickly, feel secure and become more confident in their attitude and work. Teachers use praise effectively and demonstrate their awareness of the personal needs of all of the children by providing opportunities to develop their self-esteem, such as setting tasks, which are realistic, but challenging and rewarding. Relationships are good. Adults set very good examples for the children to follow. They value their pupils' individuality, treat them with respect and expect them to play together co-operatively and

behave responsibly when they work independently. The children begin to develop an appropriate understanding of right and wrong and readily accept codes of conduct for example, when working in the sand or water. Social skills throughout the nursery are well developed. Good opportunities are provided during 'Snack time' in the nursery when children are encouraged to acquire good eating and social skills. However the large class grouping does not cater for all children to be able to join in the social chats and discussions that take place. The majority of children share, co-operate and show a well-developed sense of responsibility in their behaviour. In the nursery class they learn the importance of classroom routines, such as lining up, waiting patiently for the teacher and acknowledging others when moving around the classroom. Many sustain interest for an appropriate amount of time and concentrate during their tasks. They co-operate well when taking turns with matching games and show independence and self-reliance in activities such as water play and using the computer. Personal skills are developed well because personal hygiene and safety are skilfully taught. Children wash their hands at appropriate times, and children change their clothes with little assistance and fold and store them neatly before going into the hall for their physical education lessons.

77. By the age of five, attainment in language and literacy in the nursery is below that expected for their age. A few children exceed standards expected for their age and a few others are in line with those expected. Children, including those with special educational needs, make good gains in their learning in relation to their levels of initial attainment. Teaching is good in the nursery and the reception classes, with very good teaching seen. A purposeful working ethos contributes to the good progress made and the effective use of resources. The curriculum is planned to be relevant to the needs of all children. In one reception class the teacher's sense of humour helped the children to develop positive attitudes to the subject and the use of 'jingles' helped the children to remember the purpose of the lesson. The effective teamwork between all adults adds zest and enjoyment to the lesson. For example the bursting of a balloon on cue by a classroom assistant, contributed well to children's learning in the lesson on 'Sound'.
78. In the nursery and the reception classes most children of different attainments listen attentively to adults in large groups and join in sensibly in small group discussions as a result of the good teaching. Language is used to extend children's talk and questioning. Speaking skills progress from the low attainment found on entry because of the good teaching. Some children have the confidence and the vocabulary to express themselves clearly, but many do not. Little use of books by the nursery children was observed and no child was seen choosing to look at books in the library corner. In the reception classes, the children know that the words and pictures convey meaning and are making the connection between print and words. They show interest in books, handle them carefully and correctly and listen attentively and with enjoyment to stories, nursery rhymes, and poems such as 'Surrounded by Sound'. They progress from the very early pre-reading skills to pre-reading and early phonetic reading skills. They read simple, familiar reading texts and many need support. They show an interest in the Literacy Big Books such as 'Titch' and 'The Baby Sitter' that are used to familiarise them with story, text and punctuation. A few pupils use their knowledge of sounds to 'read' three letter words and are beginning to be aware of the use of capital letters and full stops. A few higher attaining children are beginning to recognise a few capital letters and the use of full stops and two children recognised question marks. In the nursery, whilst there are more satisfactory opportunities for children to spontaneously 'mark make' than found at the time of the last inspection, such as in the 'Hair Salon, the children are less likely to attain elements in the nationally agreed targets related to writing their own name, correctly and legibly. This is due to the lack of opportunities to practise writing throughout their time in the nursery. Nursery planning indicates that staff will focus on this aspect in the second half of the summer term, but it has not been built into the children's experiences progressively over time. In the reception

classes, most children can trace, overwrite, under write and copy-write, but many have poor pencil skills. A few higher attaining pupils write short sentences using a word bank. The promotion of all aspects of the language and literacy skills in the reception class is given an appropriate amount of time, and planning is clear, detailed and focussed. Teachers give children daily opportunities to use the computer programmes to reinforce reading skills.

79. By the age of five, attainment in mathematics is below the expected level. A few children exceed standards expected for their age and a few others are in line with those expected. Children, including those with special educational needs, make good gains in their learning in relation to their levels of initial attainment. Teaching is good or very good. Planning is good. The format of the numeracy strategy is used well in the reception classes. There is a wide range of curriculum opportunities to reinforce and consolidate mathematical knowledge and understanding as well as skills. In the nursery, children have opportunities to use shopping and domino games to solve mathematical problems and real life situations such as giving out the 'Snacks' for the required number of children. A range of mathematical vocabulary is introduced to the children to describe position such as, in front of and behind. The teachers take every opportunity to encourage the children to acquire an understanding of number, and provide opportunities for them to sort, match, and sequence numbers. In the nursery, children recognise and match numbers to 10, use dominoes, create patterns and use number songs such as 'Five Little Frogs' to understand how many objects are left each time one is taken away. Fewer opportunities were seen for children to record numbers. A range of good opportunities is provided to explore everyday materials and equipment, for example, through large block play and practical play with water and sand. In the reception classes, children are still below the expected level for their age. Cone hats are used as aids to recognise and use numbers to 10 with satisfactory accuracy, but few children are able to order numbers correctly and confidently. The children refer regularly to a large sized number line to count on and backwards to 20. Some children count successfully in ones to 20, but many need support. A few can identify the position of the numbers. Games to re-enforce and consolidate number skills were seen in use, such as counting the number of beads in a box by the teacher and children, and counting to 10 and 12. A few children can recognise and name shapes such as circle, square and triangle, but have little knowledge of solid shapes. The children acquire number skills through counting rhymes, songs, poems, and everyday experiences as well as through the more formal activities. Number recording skills are less developed. Information technology programmes provide good support for mathematics in shape, colour and counting.
80. By the age of five, attainment in knowledge and understanding of the world is broadly in line with the expected level. Children, including those with special educational needs, make good gains in their learning in relation to their levels of initial attainment. Teaching is good. The teachers plan effectively, through topic work, to ensure that the children are introduced to history, geography science, design and technology and information and communication technology. The work is progressively hard, yet interesting and appropriate for all abilities of children. In the nursery most children are able to say the names of their families, but are limited in their ability to explore through questioning and imagining beyond their personal experience. They understand the passage of time by comparing past and present photos of themselves in topics such as 'Growing Up'. Activities in the Nursery and the Reception classes are carefully planned to ensure that children develop a greater knowledge of the local environment and community and the world beyond their horizons. They visited the local park and on their return the children in the reception class expressed their dislike of the abuse of the environment, such as the trolley dumped in the pond and the broken fence. They wrote simple sentences to convey their feelings. In the reception classes, visits from a dental technician and the police help develop a satisfactory understanding of

the wider community and how these people help us. Teachers provide good opportunities for the children to explore and recognise features of living things. The nursery children use the small 'wild flower' garden to enhance their work on the growth of flowers and the study of insects. Computers continue to be introduced in the nursery and children use them with increasing confidence and control.

81. By the age of five, attainment in physical education is in line with the expected level. Children, including those with special educational needs, make good gains in their learning in relation to their levels of initial attainment. Teaching in physical education and dance is good or better. In the reception classes, the very good behaviour of the children and the progress made in their physical education and dance skills resulted from the good and very good teaching. In the nursery, carefully planned outdoor activities challenge the children and allow them to develop their gross motor skills. The children move confidently and show awareness of space, of themselves and of others. They use a range of small and big equipment in their work and climb and balance well on the climbing frames with increasing control and co-ordination. In the nursery the children use a range of creative material, and finer motor skills develop satisfactorily. They join jigsaws satisfactorily but cannot always sustain concentration. They pick up small building blocks to make patterns, deftly. No painting or play dough work was observed during the inspection, but, an attractive collage of 'Old Mac. Donald's Farm shows that children have satisfactory opportunities to use pencils, paints, crayons and collage materials. In the reception classes children show increasing dexterity, but letter formation is frequently, poorly formed. The children are given good opportunities to use plastic tools to express their ideas, but as noted in the last inspection, the use of 'real' tools' is not present in the curriculum for children under the age of five. A recent policy states the reason for this.
82. By the age of five, attainment in creative development is broadly in line with the expected level. Children, including those with special educational needs, make good gains in their learning in relation to their levels of initial attainment. Teaching is good. The children use their imagination through art, imaginative play, music and singing and have opportunities to explore colour through painting, collage and crayoning. There are imaginative play areas in all classes and reception children, with support, are able to use their speaking and listening skills satisfactorily, and work co-operatively with one another when acting out roles such as the receptionist in the doctor's surgery restaurant. Nursery children are less successful due to poor speaking skills. Children handle scissors well enough to randomly cut out scrap card and some attempt to cut in a straight line. They make three-dimensional models such as musical instruments and boats from reclaimable materials. Many children handle glue bushes with limited control. No painting was observed. In the nursery and reception classes children had designed and assembled their own musical instruments to make a sound of their choice. No music lesson was seen. Planning shows that the children have the opportunity to explore sound, using percussion instruments. When singing in assembly, most children recognise familiar tunes and are able to sing in tune, with obvious enjoyment.

83. The provision for the children under five is good. Each class contains the required areas of learning with well-structured resources, which support the children's learning. Lesson planning is good overall, but insufficient detail is given in the nursery to ensuring that children's early writing skills are properly developed. Adults are professional and knowledgeable of the children in their care. Teachers are well supported by the classroom assistants and nursery nurse, who contribute effectively to the progress being made. Students and other helpers are well briefed about the tasks they are to do. This contributes significantly to the caring ethos of the school and this is reflected in the positive attitude and very good behaviour of the children. Individual records of children's attainment are kept and in the reception classes results are analysed and compiled to make class lists for teachers' quick scrutiny. This evidence of the class attainment is not in place in the nursery. The school is aware that the liaison between the nursery and reception classes, whilst it has improved since the last inspection, continues to need developing. It views the future transfer of the nursery children to the main building as an opportune time for the classes to liaise more closely when introducing 'Early Learning Goals' into the nursery and the reception classes. This will allow the children to continue to progress, step by step, in their learning experiences until they reach five years of age. Teachers encourage the development of pupils' skills and confidence by using a variety of methods such as whole class, group, small groups or individual teaching. Communication and links with parents continue to be good. A parent and toddler session is held weekly. Homework, by way of reading books, goes home and the 'Book Bag Project' is to be re-introduced. Resources in the nursery and the reception classes have been re-organised and enhanced by way of a bright, attractive outdoor play area with suitable markings to stimulate outdoor play activities. It is easily accessible and is used well by the nursery and reception classes.

ENGLISH

84. By the end of Key Stage 1, the 1999 National Curriculum tests indicated that pupils were achieving standards in reading and writing that were well below the national average. The percentage of pupils achieving the higher Level 3 in reading was also well below the national average and below the national average for writing. When compared with the results of similar schools, pupils' performance in the reading test was above average and close to the average in writing. However, from 1996 onwards, standards in reading have been static and remained low in comparison to national averages, whilst standards in writing have been rising rapidly but dipped markedly in 1999. The school has analysed these results and the main reason for the fall in attainment was the transient nature of a substantial proportion of pupils which took that test. Those pupils who stay in the school from reception onwards obtain results in reading and writing that are broadly in line with national averages.
85. During the period from 1996 to 1999, the attainment of boys in their reading tests was consistently and markedly below that of the girls. The introduction of the literacy hour is now having a significant impact on the reading skills of the pupils, particularly the boys. The school has also sought to address this gender difference by choosing reading books that appeal to the interest of boys. The evidence of the inspection is that pupils' attainment at the current end of Key Stage 1 group is broadly in line with the national average in English; it is average in speaking, listening and reading and below average in writing. The school's targets for a further rise in attainment to 90 per cent of pupils reaching the national average in 2000 are unlikely to be met; however, the school is well placed to make further improvements in standards.

86. By the age of nine, when pupils move to the middle school, existing school assessment records and inspection evidence indicates that the majority of pupils will not achieve a high enough standard in writing and will perform below the standard expected nationally. In reading, standards are now better and pupils are just reaching the required standards. Standards in English are similar to those found in the previous inspection, when writing was judged to be weaker than reading and this is still the case. Standards in spelling, although the school now has effective strategies in place are still in need of improvement and are not as good as those found in the last inspection. This is also true of handwriting. Handwriting skills in particular are not consistent across the school, with many pupils in both key stages still forming letters incorrectly, or not positioning them correctly on the line. Older pupils do not use a joined script with any consistency and standards of presentation are often not high enough.
87. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in line with their individual education plans. Pupils for whom English is an additional language are well supported in classrooms and make good progress. The implementation of the literacy strategy has been successful and is beginning to have a beneficial effect on the rate of progress made by pupils.
88. By the end of Key Stage 1 and by the age of nine in Key Stage 2, standards in speaking and listening are average and pupils make satisfactory progress. In Year 1, pupils join in when reading a story aloud, talk about the main characters and predict what may happen next. The majority of pupils speak clearly and give appropriate explanations when asked about their work. In Year 2, pupils use correct vocabulary to explain how a non-fiction book is organised and are quite confident when describing the meanings of words for a glossary. Pupils listen carefully to the views and opinions of others and make correct responses to direct questions. In many lessons observed, pupils are making good progress in their speaking and listening skills because of the level of discussion encouraged by teachers during whole class teaching activities. In Years 3 and 4, pupils are ready to engage in discussions, particularly when talking about the class story. They are confident when talking about their work.
89. By the end of Key Stage 1 and by the age of nine in Key Stage 2, standards in reading are average and pupils are making steady progress. Pupils enjoy their shared reading activities during the literacy hour and join in with enthusiasm when reading stories and poems. Older pupils listen intently to the story of *Cinderboy* and express a preference between the stories of *Cinderboy* and *Cliffhanger*. Pupils are able to explain the similarities and differences between new and traditional stories. When reading independently, higher attaining pupils in Key Stage 1 read fluently and with expression, whilst the majority of pupils can correct their mistakes by building up words and sounding them out. Below average attainers often need help to proceed, but are developing strategies to help them tackle unfamiliar words. In Key Stage 2, higher attaining pupils read accurately with emerging expression, whilst the majority of pupils often read slowly but with developing fluency. Below average attainers hesitate frequently over unfamiliar words and still use a finger to point to words. All pupils express an enjoyment of reading and many are members of the local library. Pupils of both key stages have unsatisfactory skills in using the school library. At the moment, the lack of library skills has a detrimental effect on the pupils' ability to find reference information in order to carry out simple independent research.

90. By the end of Key Stage 1 and by the age of nine in Key Stage 2, attainment in writing is below the level expected, but pupils are now making satisfactory progress. In Year 1, pupils are developing their spelling strategies effectively and understand some sounds and know how they are written. By the end of the key stage, higher attaining pupils spell common words correctly and are beginning to use punctuation correctly. The majority of the pupils can match words with their correct spelling during oral work, but still make many errors when writing them down. They know that capital letters and full stops begin and end sentences but have to be reminded in lessons to check their work. In handwriting books, pupils' writing is neat and joined but this is rarely transferred to their other books. Pupils of all abilities often do not form their letters correctly and misplace letters on the line. In their story writing, higher attaining pupils are beginning to write with a sense of flair and imagination, for example; *Ten minutes later, a butterfly came and took the amaryllis when Henda was not looking.*
91. In Key Stage 2, pupils in Year 3 are continuing to develop spelling strategies. The majority of pupils can also identify the pronouns used in stories written in the first person. In one class of Year 3 pupils, good progress was made during the lesson in story writing skills because the teacher chose to use both music and pictures to inspire the pupils and they began to write expressively. The strategies used in this lesson were very effective and had a beneficial effect on the process of writing. In Year 4, the work of pupils of all abilities still contain many spelling errors and, although their handwriting is legible, many pupils still print and no consistent style of handwriting is evident. Errors in the incorrect formation of some letters are still evident. The majority of pupils have erratic punctuation skills, but the basic structure of sentences is usually correct. Pupils are beginning to write reports and stories with an awareness of an audience, for example, their reports of a recent visit to the theatre to see a ballet were interesting and thoughtful.
92. The school has carefully analysed standards in writing and the strategies that have been put into place since the last inspection are proving successful. Also, the impact of the literacy hour and lessons where extended writing activities are taking place, are showing improvements over the long term. The school is beginning to use computers for pupils to extend their writing skills, but they do not at present often use the computer to plan, draft, edit and re-write stories and this could be improved. Literacy is also being successfully developed in other curriculum areas, such as history and geography to consolidate writing skills.
93. The pupils' attitude to their work in literacy lessons is usually enthusiastic and they behave well in class. Some pupils do lack concentration during particular activities; for example, in one Year 4 class, a large percentage of boys became restless during an activity focusing on developing spelling strategies and had to be reminded by the teacher to work hard. However, pupils co-operate well together and have very good relationships with the teachers and each other.
94. The quality of teaching is never less than satisfactory and, in the majority of lessons, teaching is good. In one lesson, teaching was excellent. Although the standards that pupils achieve in their writing are still below what is expected, the quality of teaching is having a positive effect on raising standards and pupils often make good progress in lessons. This promises to show results over time, particularly as the literacy hour has been effectively implemented and teachers are confident and competent when teaching basic skills. Strategies to teach spelling and punctuation are now well established and are beginning to show benefits. The teaching of handwriting, however, needs a much clearer whole-school focus and, particularly with younger pupils, constant monitoring of the correct formation and orientation of letters is crucial in achieving later fluency. In

the teaching of writing stories, the evidence of excellent teaching indicates that pupils can and do write with imagination and flair when suitably inspired and provided with powerful stimulus in the form of visual or musical resources.

95. Teachers plan their lessons well and ensure that pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language receive appropriate support. Formal assessment is regularly carried out and recorded and the use of assessment data to guide future work is being developed. Most teachers' marking is effective in improving the work of pupils, but the marking of handwriting is not always thorough enough, with many inconsistencies not corrected. Homework is set every week for English, but unfortunately, not all pupils complete it.
96. The co-ordinator for English provides satisfactory leadership and has ensured that all staff have implemented the literacy hour. The results of pupils' tests and assessments are monitored well and this has enabled the school to put appropriate strategies into place in order, over time, to improve standards. The difference in the attainment between boys and girls has been monitored and this will be on going. Although the co-ordinator has worked alongside teachers in the classroom, the structured monitoring and observation of teaching does not take place and therefore an opportunity is lost for teachers to develop further by learning from the good and sometimes excellent practice of others.
97. Resources for English are satisfactory. There is a good supply of reading scheme books and Big Books for use in the classroom. However, the library is not adequately stocked or organised well and is at present an unsatisfactory resource in school, in that it does not promote the skills of pupils to develop independent research. Classrooms do not contain any listening stations for pupils to develop listening skills.

MATHEMATICS

98. On the basis of 1999 national test results based on average national curriculum points scores, attainment was well below the national average at the end of Key Stage 1. The percentage of pupils obtaining both level 2 and the higher level 3 at the end of Key Stage 1 was below the national average. Pupils' performance in the Key Stage 1 mathematics test was broadly in line, in comparison with schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. The average attainment of pupils in the four years 1996 to 1999 was well below the national average in the Key Stage 1 tests. On average, pupils leave Key Stage 1 just over one term behind pupils nationally. The performance of girls was higher than that of boys in the end of Key Stage 1 tests; on average, they were nearly one and a half terms ahead of the boys.
99. An analysis of the attainment of those pupils who started at Richardson Dees in Reception and stayed at the school until the end of Year 2 in 1999, shows that their attainment in the National Curriculum test was approximately the same as that nationally.

100. Attainment in lessons observed, scrutiny of pupils' work and discussions with pupils is in line with national standards at the end of Key Stage 1 and in line with expected levels by the time they leave the school at the end of Year 4. The reasons for the differences between test results and inspection findings are twofold. Firstly, the current Year 2 has had significantly less pupil mobility than previously and secondly, the effects of the numeracy strategy are beginning to bear fruit. Within the range of mathematics work seen during the inspection, many pupils in Key Stage 1 demonstrate unsatisfactory attainment related to investigative mathematics and number. Many pupils in Key Stage 2 do not have sufficiently good knowledge of all their multiplication tables. This hinders their attainment in other areas of mathematics. Some pupils at the top of this key stage develop their own strategies when solving problems, can interpret tables and charts and are familiar with different ways of presenting data. Lower attainers make sensible choices to complete number patterns. There was no discernible difference in the performance of girls and boys in the lessons seen. Standards in mathematics are currently approximately the same as they were at the time of the last inspection. To raise standards of attainment in both key stages there is a need to continue to build up a coherent mathematical vocabulary and ensure that pupils have instant recall of their multiplication tables from an earlier age.
101. Overall progress of pupils since September 1999 in mathematics is good in Key Stage 1 and in Key Stage 2. Factors aiding progress include the attitudes and behaviour of the pupils and the overall standard of teaching. The teaching observed was very good in two of the eight lessons seen, good in three lessons and satisfactory in the other three. The features that make the best lessons very good and contribute to a high rate of learning are very good class management coupled with a fast pace and high expectations. Such lessons clearly explain what the learning objectives are and re-visit these at the end to see how far they have been achieved. Teachers in these lessons start off with quick-fire question and answer sessions to get pupils thinking. In numeracy lessons, the likeliest time for pupils to lessen their rate of working is when working independently. In the best lessons, however, teachers are aware of this and set appropriate time targets, as in, for example, a very good Year 1 lesson on doubling. Factors militating against progress are a lack of even higher expectations, a lack of pupils' instant recall of multiplication tables and an over-reliance occasionally in some classes on commercial games with little mathematical value. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language generally make satisfactory progress in mathematics. Numeracy skills are being successfully developed in other curriculum areas such as science.
102. Pupils' response in lessons seen is good in Key Stage 1 and in Key Stage 2. They behave very well and concentrate, mirroring the enthusiasm of their teachers. Pupils' attitudes to mathematics are generally positive and they show enjoyment for the subject. Relationships overall between pupils and with their teachers and learning support assistants are very good.
103. Assessment procedures are generally thorough. Day-to-day marking of pupils' work is generally satisfactory. In some cases it is detailed with diagnostic comments to help the pupils to improve and comments that pose deeper questions for those who had obtained full marks. This was particularly good in a Year 4 class; in some other cases it is less thorough. The standard of presentation of the pupils' work is satisfactory.

104. The school has satisfactory resources for mathematics and use of these to support the work in hand is satisfactory and enhances learning. The co-ordinator for mathematics is committed to high standards and has carried out some monitoring of teaching as well as teachers' planning. The effectiveness of the strategy to teach numeracy is satisfactory overall.

SCIENCE

105. In the 1999 Teacher Assessments of pupils aged seven years, the percentage of pupils attaining Level 2 or above was broadly in line with the national average. The percentage of pupils attaining Level 3 was below the national average. When compared with similar schools, the percentage of pupils attaining Level 2 or above was well above the average, whilst the percentage of pupils achieving Level 3 was broadly in line. In the previous report attainment was judged to be good for pupils aged seven years and also good when they left the school at age nine. In this inspection lesson observations and an analysis of pupils' work indicates that the achievement of pupils at age seven is broadly in line with national expectations. The achievement of pupils at age nine years is also broadly in line with national expectations. Girls achieve better than boys. Progress is good in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory in Key Stage 2 for all pupils, including those with special educational needs. Standards of attainment overall in the school are adversely affected by the high percentage of transient pupils.
106. By the age of seven years pupils know where light comes from and why we are able to see things. They are able to name parts of the body. They can describe properties using everyday terms and sort materials by properties such as metal, wood, glass and plastic. They also know that some materials change shape when heated. Pupils are beginning to make simple predictions, for example what will happen to chocolate, butter, or ice when heated. Findings are recorded in a variety of ways including simple charts and tables. Their knowledge of electricity includes knowing which appliances use mains electricity and which can run off batteries. They can draw and label a simple circuit using the appropriate symbols for a battery, a switch and a lamp. Work on foods has enabled them to understand the need for a healthy diet.
107. By the time they are nine pupils are able to record their work in a more structured way and provide better explanations. They know that most metals are good conductors of electricity and that other materials, such as rubber and plastic, are good insulators. From their work on magnets they understand and can use vocabulary such as 'repel' and 'attract' appropriately. Their understanding of habitats has developed well. They can explain why humans cannot live in water but sharks can, because their gills enable them to get the oxygen they need. They also know about food chains. They have developed their understanding of the concept of fair tests, predicting outcomes and drawing conclusions on the basis of observations. This was shown in an investigation into the melting of insulated and non-insulated ice-cubes. Investigations also involve more accurate observations and the ability to measure accurately. They can use a thermometer to record temperature or a spring balance marked in newtons to record the amount of force needed to move an object.

108. Pupils have positive attitudes to science. In lessons they listen well both to the teacher and to each other. They are keen to contribute and show interest in the activity. Not only are they eager to answer questions posed by the teacher, but, also, ask intelligent questions such as in a Year 3 lesson on magnetism: 'Is it magnets which keep stars in the sky?' Relationships with teachers and between pupils are good.
109. Teaching is never less than satisfactory and is good overall. Lesson planning caters for the needs of all pupils. Teachers have a good level of knowledge and understanding of the subject. They teach with confidence and this promotes learning. Teachers use a range of strategies to enable pupils to achieve the learning objectives. The use of questions, both closed and open-ended, encourages pupils to think and put forward their ideas as in a Year 1 lesson on sound and hearing. Questions are also used to check on learning during the plenary session at the end of a lesson. Good use was made of a 'Big Book' on magnets to assess learning at the end of a Year 3 lesson. Learning is also promoted and consolidated by linking it with other subjects. In the Year 1 lesson there was a good link with music. A display in a Year 3 classroom showed how work on materials had been incorporated into a topic about the Romans. All teachers make good use of regular half termly assessments to record the progress of pupils. At the end of Year 4 the optional standard attainment tests are used measure the level of achievement of pupils who transfer to a middle school at this point in their education.
110. The school policy, guidelines and scheme of work ensure effective delivery of the National Curriculum. Resources are good both in quality and quantity. Use is made of the school grounds, for example when looking at habitats. Good use is also made of commercially produced videos, for example on 'planet earth', 'ecosystems' and 'life processes'.
111. The coordinator has good science qualifications and has attended appropriate in-service courses on 'Science in the National Curriculum' and 'The Role of the Coordinator'. An audit of resources has been carried out in readiness for the next School Improvement Plan. The school is moving from its present scheme and progress in this is being monitored. The coordinator monitors termly the planning of work across the school and receives samples of work done by pupils with comments and sometimes levels given by the teachers. A small amount of release from the classroom has been provided to help her in her role. Monitoring has not yet extended to observing teaching. The immediate priorities as a coordinator in relation to Curriculum 2000 are appropriate.

ART

112. It was not possible to see a range of lessons throughout the school due to timetabling. There was insufficient evidence on which to judge the quality of teaching. Judgements are based on the one lesson seen in Key Stage 1, photographs, scrutiny of some pupils' work, teachers' planning and discussions with pupils and teachers. The evidence indicates that progress for all pupils, including those with special educational needs, is satisfactory. Pupils achieve standards that are typical for their age. The satisfactory standards have been maintained since the last inspection. The key elements of art are taught, statutory requirements are met and much of the art work is effectively linked to the topic work.

113. Observational drawing and sketching form the foundation of the pupils' two-dimensional work at Key Stage 1, they have experiences of a range of media and apply colour in pastel, chalk, paint and crayon. Pupils are developing satisfactory observational skills and produce still-life drawings of what they see, remember and imagine. Work on the school building and compositions of fruit and wine on a tray, show a developing eye for detail and a growing awareness of perspective. Throughout the key stage, pupils develop their skills and increase in confidence in the subject. They learn to be increasingly creative as they learn new techniques and use a variety of materials, such as salt dough. They make satisfactory collages and models with care and confidence and are aware of the work of famous artists such as Monet. They paint lively and colourful paintings of themselves. Reception pupils are given opportunities to explore colour, shape and pattern. Younger pupils paint boldly, using vibrant colours reflecting their interest of houses and people in their imaginative paintings. They paint from memory following a visit to the hall grounds and produce black and white pictures linked to their topic 'Night and Day'. Older pupils link their art with design technology and design and make wrapping paper using repeating patterns. Planning shows that throughout the school some teachers use computers to enhance their art work.
114. Year 3 and 4 pupils continue to develop their understanding of the formal elements of line, tone, pattern shape, texture and colour. They make satisfactory progress as they acquire increasingly accurate observational skills and techniques. They use hard and soft pencils to produce satisfactory still-life drawings of flowers, leaves and cross sections of fruit with a good eye for detail. They build on their knowledge of famous artists and produce paintings in the style of Van Gogh, Paul Cezanne, Wassily Kandinsky, and Hans Holbein. They use a wide range of suitable materials to capture the 'feel' of the masterpieces. For example Year 3 pupils paint vivid sunflowers in the style of Van Gogh and Year 4 pupils use 2-dimensional shapes to create abstract work in the style of Wassily Kandinsky. Pupils encounter an increasing variety of media, both two and three dimensional, as they progress through the school. Three dimensional work and work on textiles are less well represented. Regular sketchbook work is not yet recognised throughout the school as a valuable contribution to the development of ideas, knowledge and understanding.
115. In the one lesson seen, teaching was satisfactory. There was a satisfactory balance of discussion and activities. Sound support was given to the pupils to extend their knowledge of the artist Katsushika Hokusai and their knowledge of colours. Pupils used their knowledge of colour mixing to produce the required shades and tones of blue. They then painted their own drawing of 'In the Well of the Great Wave of Kanogawa' with careful attention to line, shade and tone. The lesson was well prepared and the support given to pupils of different attainment did not stifle creativity, thus allowing for individuality of expression.
116. Productive links are formed with other subjects of the curriculum, such as history, where the Roman shields and mosaics reflecting the study of the Romans and the works of Hans Holbein compliment the work undertaken on The Tudor period.
117. Some of the criticisms of the last inspection have been addressed, for example, there is a wider range of studies of famous artists present in the curriculum, but artists from other cultures are less well represented. The co-ordinator has a clear idea of how the subject needs to be developed and implemented, and work has already begun. The art scheme of work has been reviewed in the light of the new national art policy, and there are plans to further develop and deliver the art curriculum in a systematic way throughout the school. Attractive displays, throughout the school highlight key skills and techniques and celebrate individual achievement. Resources remain adequate overall,

but the range of materials illustrating the work of famous artists is inadequate. Resources continue to be well organised and the 'wet areas' remain suitable for art activities. The school has a pottery kiln which was not in use during the inspection.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

118. It was not possible to see a range of lessons throughout the school due to timetabling. There was insufficient evidence on which to judge the quality of teaching. Judgements are based on the one lesson seen in Key Stage 1, photographs, scrutiny of some pupils' work including products, planning and evaluation, teachers' planning and discussions with pupils and teachers. The evidence indicates that progress for all pupils, including those with special educational needs, is satisfactory. Pupils achieve standards that are typical for their age. The satisfactory standards have been maintained since the last inspection and there is now evidence of the provision of construction materials for the Early Years children. The supervised access to 'real' tools has not been resolved, but the school has issued a recent policy stating its reservations about young children handling and using 'real' tools. A review of design and technology has taken place and further resources are now available. The key elements of design technology are taught and statutory requirements are met.
119. At Key Stage 1, all pupils are developing satisfactory design skills, although these are not practised on a regular and frequent basis. Pupils communicate through simple drawings and make a suitable range of products for a variety of purposes. They are beginning to evaluate the finished product by seeing whether it fits the purpose and compare it with their original intentions. They develop skills and techniques in handling paper, card, malleable materials and learn to satisfactorily cut, shape, join and combine materials to make models and objects for a purpose, such as Christmas cards, paper hats, puppets made from paper bags and simple musical instruments. They build up their techniques of cutting and joining materials when they draw round templates, cut out components and join with split pins, for example when making jointed puppets such as clowns and teddy bears. Pupils develop ways to introduce movement, such as simple levers and use construction apparatus to make models with wheels. No evidence was seen of pupils using large sized construction sets to make moving vehicles with axles and wheels fixed to a simple chassis, such as a child's tricycle. Planning shows that pupils have opportunities to make boats from small construction apparatus and test them for floating and sinking.
120. Year 3 and 4 pupils have a sound knowledge of the designing and making process. Pupils have opportunities to plan their work, decide what materials they will need and critically assess their work to see how they can improve their designs. For example, planning showed that Year 4 pupils engaged in a 'Classy Chassis' competition, measured and marked the chassis using appropriate tools, made, then tested it, in a science experiment and made the necessary refinements. In a parallel class, pupils made attractive books with pages which incorporated moving parts, designed a money box to specifications and made purses and wallets using suitable fabrics. Planning shows that in Year 3, pupils investigate, disassemble and evaluate a range of packaging materials and design and make a package in card from a cube or cuboid. By Year 4, pupils are beginning to understand that a successful product is based on detailed research, careful design, skilled making and modification after evaluating its performance. There was only limited work on texture seen, but a variety of skills and media to create the appropriate texture are used, such as the weaving of a duck on a pond. Year 4, pupils build upon their previous knowledge by designing and making rigid structures and by making simple machines using axles and wheels.

121. There are effective links with music, religious education, history, mathematics and science. For example, in Year 1 they make musical instruments and in Year 2, Easter cards. Year 3 pupils design and make Roman chariots and slings using wheels and axes and make and decorate Viking long boats. They use nets of shapes as starting point for packages. Year 4 make banana fool in food technology lessons and mobiles of authentic food chains. Satisfactory use is made of information and technology by some teachers to help pupils learn. It was used effectively, when pupils used different fonts and colours to produce an attractive book review.
122. Teaching was satisfactory in the lesson seen. Pupils were given opportunities to choose from a range of boxes, materials and adhesives to assemble a product, which could be used as a musical instrument, such as a drum or a shaker. They showed satisfactory skills in cutting and joining the materials together and worked with enthusiasm and considerable concentration. In a few instances the keenness to produce a finished article outstripped the relevant skills, particularly when adults were engaged elsewhere. Design and technology vocabulary are not sufficiently extended to challenge pupils' thinking.
123. Pupils have positive attitudes towards design technology and are eager to talk about their work.
124. Design and technology are making an important contribution to the development of pupils' cultural awareness and social skills. They are enabled to explore aspects of the local environment and their historical heritage. They are given the opportunity to work together, to make decisions and solve problems. Good opportunities also exist for using literacy and numeracy skills when evaluating their work and their products and in measuring components.
125. The co-ordinator's specialist knowledge and command of the subject has raised the profile of design technology in all the classes and staff training is a priority. A thorough review of the subject has not taken place since the last inspection, but considerable input has taken place. The school is conscious of the need to develop the design technology policy and scheme of work to further develop progression and continuity. It is working towards this, in consultation with all staff, through the evaluation and modification of the QCA guidelines. The purpose built art/design technology area allows pupils to work in attractive, appropriate surroundings with resources easily at hand. Currently, resources are being transferred to this area and an audit is being carried out by the co-ordinator to ascertain the range, quantity and quality of resources, currently housed in the classrooms or around the school.

GEOGRAPHY

126. Only two geography lessons were seen during the inspection. However, sufficient evidence was available through the examination of pupils' work, class displays and discussions with pupils and teachers to enable judgements to be made. By the end of Key Stage 1 and by the age of nine in Key Stage 2, the standards that pupils achieve are typical for their age and have been maintained since the previous inspection. Pupils make steady progress in the development of geographical knowledge, understanding and skills, which is an improvement on the previous inspection when some less than satisfactory progress was seen in a Year 2 class. This is no longer the case. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress against the targets set for them and pupils with English as an additional language make good progress in lessons.
127. Pupils in Year 1 begin to learn about journeys and routes to school, looking at local features on their way to school. Traffic surveys resulted in a booklet on *Making Wallsend Safe*. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have had experience of using maps, atlases and globes to study places near and far. In Year 2, pupils learn about Barnaby Bear's special holiday visit to South Africa and Tenerife. They use photographs to examine different localities and know that journeys to far-away places involve long journeys in aeroplanes or ships. Higher attaining pupils in a Year 2 class were able to immediately state that Tenerife was an island because it is surrounded by water.
128. In Key Stage 2, pupils in Year 3 learn about village life in Chembakoli in India and use their previously-learned skills to locate the area on a world map. Pupils use a map of the Indian village to plot the route children in the village would take to school. Social and moral issues are discussed as pupils learn that children who work in the rice fields may develop cataracts. In Year 4, pupils learn about the island of St Lucia, study local, national and global weather patterns and develop further knowledge of their own locality by examining land use in Wallsend.
129. Pupils' interest in and attitudes to their geographical studies are good. They enjoy learning about far-away places and comparing their lives and experiences to those of children in other countries. Steady progress is made in the geographical skills of using maps, atlases and globes and in the understanding that life in an Indian village, for example, has many differences but also some similarities; for instance the children still go to school.
130. Teaching in geography is always at least satisfactory and often good. In lessons where teaching is good, resources are used effectively to motivate and interest pupils. Teachers have a secure subject knowledge and use questioning effectively to develop knowledge and understanding of other people and places. Lessons are planned thoroughly and teachers have good behaviour management skills, ensuring that the majority of pupils behave well. Information technology is used, particularly to analyse traffic and weather data.
131. The subject co-ordinator provides satisfactory leadership. She monitors teachers' planning and resources and examines pupil's work, but observation of teaching does not form part of her role. No formal assessment systems are in place, which limits the co-ordinator's ability to gain a secure knowledge of standards. Resources are satisfactory.

HISTORY

132. Only two lessons were seen during the inspection, but discussions with teachers and pupils and the examination of teachers' planning, classroom displays and previous work provided sufficient evidence for judgements to be made. By the end of Key Stage 1 and by the age of nine in Key Stage 2, the standards that pupils' achieve are typical for their age. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection. The progress pupils make in their developing sense of chronology and in the awareness of similarities and differences between cultures in the past is at least sound. In some lessons, pupils make good progress when historical objects or pictures are used to stimulate interest; this was particularly evident in a class of Year 4 pupils when they were looking at an Aztec god. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in line with the targets set in their individual education plans. Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress in lessons.
133. In Year 1, pupils begin to understand the passing of time by looking at the life of Edwardian schoolchildren and comparing toys with those of today. Pupils learn that their own school was built during the Edwardian era and can see how the building has changed over time. An older member of the local community, who attended the school as a child, spoke to pupils about how the school and school life has changed in her lifetime. By the end of the Key Stage, pupils in Year 2 know that a time-line can be used to illustrate the passing of time and can relate the chronology of events to specific periods in the past, for example the birth of Jesus. Pupils are beginning to interpret events from the past from the perspective of people living then; pupils wrote very interesting letters from Florence Nightingale to her parents and family, describing the conditions she found in the hospital in Scutari.
134. In Key Stage 2, pupils in a Year 3 class use information technology to explore the life of Anglo-Saxons in Britain by using a CD ROM to research information. In Year 4, pupils study the life of Henry Tudor including social conditions experienced by the rich and poor in Tudor times. The history and chronology of flight from Daedalus and Icarus, to the modern space programme, provides pupils with stimulating learning experiences. An effective link is made with geography as pupils study the travels of Christopher Columbus and his journey to Central America and Mexico to discover the Aztec civilisation. Good use is made of the rich local Roman historical archaeology and artefacts, with pupils visiting the Roman fort at Arbeia.
135. Pupil's' interest and response in lessons are satisfactory, particularly when they are presented with stimulating resources to use. However, when lessons are split to allow physical education to be taught, pupils are sometimes restless prior to their physical education lesson, or tired and hot afterwards, and this does sometimes affect concentration. Teaching in the two lessons observed was at least satisfactory, with good teaching seen in Key Stage 2. When teaching is good, lessons start with a brisk and interesting introduction, are well planned and the teacher has high expectations of pupils' interest and attention. Pupils are able to make good gains in their understanding of past cultures because of the effective use of interesting resources. In satisfactory lessons, sometimes too much information is given to the pupils, leading to a lack of concentration and time being wasted. All teachers now group pupils effectively and give tasks and activities appropriate to their ability. Teachers have very good relationships with pupils and as a result, behaviour is good. Effective links are made with other curriculum areas, particularly in geography, and good links are made with technology within the study of Roman weaponry and construction. Literacy skills are developed as pupils are encouraged to write letters and reports.

136. The subject co-ordinator is presently in the process of reviewing the curriculum by looking at new guidance from the government and a new curriculum plan will be written as a result of this. The co-ordinator monitors teacher's planning to ensure a broad, balanced and worthwhile curriculum and looks at pupils' work in their books. Her monitoring role does not include an observation of teaching. There is no formal assessment of pupils' work at the moment, so the co-ordinator is not able to have a secure view of standards. Resources for the curriculum are satisfactory and the co-ordinator ensures that visits and visitors are used to provide first hand learning experiences.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

137. Owing to timetable constraints only two sessions of information and communications technology were observed and an overall judgement on teaching cannot be given.
138. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is below national expectations and by the end of Year 4 it is below the expected level. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils use information and communications technology to assemble text and symbols. They generate text and save and retrieve information with assistance. Their keyboard skills are generally slow and underdeveloped. For example, in a Year 3 session to produce graphics for a box designed in a technology lesson, pupils were slow when changing fonts and needed assistance to change colour. In another Year 3 session, pupils word processed information on the Anglo-Saxons and some were able to save it. Year 2 pupils were able to control a programmable "robot" appropriately to move in specified directions. Cross- curricular links are being suitably developed in subjects such as art, history and geography. Pupils' attainment in monitoring and modelling is unsatisfactory. They are not being given the opportunity to develop these key skills. Whilst standards in information and communications technology are improving, they have not improved sufficiently since the last inspection. The delivery of the subject does not meet statutory requirements due to the absence of the required aspects of monitoring and modelling.
139. Progress is unsatisfactory in Key Stage 1 and in Key Stage 2. There is not a sufficient amount of whole-class direct teaching of keyboard skills. Information and communications technology is not yet recognised throughout the school as a discrete subject for timetable purposes in addition to its cross-curricular links. Although the school benefits from a computer in each classroom coupled to the internet, these are not yet used, for example, to build-up skills of monitoring and modelling at Key Stage 2 and modelling at Key Stage 1 due to a lack of additional software resources. The school has invested in a collection of five laptop computers that are moved from class to class but because pupils' basic keyboard skills are so underdeveloped, their productivity and pace of working on these machines is unsatisfactory.
140. Pupils' response is good. They show eagerness for and interest in this subject. When the teacher or support assistant is instructing knowledgeable, the pupils want to know how to carry out particular operations and they listen carefully.

141. The co-ordinator for this subject is knowledgeable and keen to spread her skills through the school. Whilst she has already provided some in-service training for colleagues, she has not yet been provided with time to monitor and evaluate the teaching by colleagues in this core subject.

MUSIC

142. It was only possible to see teaching in two lessons, both with Year 1 classes, during this inspection because of timetabling arrangements. The limited opportunities available during the inspection to gather a wide range of evidence prevents an overall assessment of the levels of attainment reached by the time pupils leave the school at the end of Year 4. In the previous inspection it was judged that pupils made good progress and their achievements by the age of seven were in line with national expectations. This is still the case.
143. By the age of seven standards are in line with national expectations. In a science lesson Reception pupils knew that musical sounds could be made by blowing, hitting, plucking and shaking. They made simple instruments to demonstrate this. Year 1 pupils could name and play percussion instruments such as cymbal, drum, castanets, claves, tambourine and Indian bells. They could use these and other instruments to make a 'Music Man' and sing the 'Music Man' song in tune. Year 1 pupils were beginning, using the notes C, D & E, to understand the term 'pitch', listening carefully to the sounds then demonstrating with hand and arm actions. Progress in their knowledge and understanding of instruments was shown in a Year 2 display of a 'Mini-beast Garden' which included instruments such as maracas, triangles, castanets and bells. Composition skills were shown by the display captioned "We composed some musical cartoons and asked our friends to help us play them".
144. During Key Stage 2 pupils continue to be given opportunities to listen to music such as the 'Music for the Royal Fireworks' by Handel and extracts from Gustav Holst's 'Planet Suite'. In an R.E. lesson on Hinduism Year 3 pupils were able to listen to some Indian music. In connection with a history topic on the Tudors, pupils learnt the song 'Greensleeves'. Year 4 pupils had also been to a live performance of ballet featuring music by Edward Elgar. Composition and performing skills were shown in a display of very simple rhythms composed by Year 3 pupils. However, there was insufficient evidence to assess progress and achievement.
145. Attitudes to music are good. Pupils behave well. All, including those with special educational needs, are keen to respond to questions and to take turns playing instruments. Relationships are good and pupils are supportive of each other. They learn to take turns and are appreciative of each other's performance.
146. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teachers have a sufficient level of knowledge and understanding of the subject to enable the pupils to make satisfactory progress during the lesson and over time. There is no provision for peripatetic instrumental teaching. Pupils learn to play simple tunes on the recorder in Year 4. For performances for parents the school is heavily dependent on commercially produced works supported by tapes. Recently, successful and much appreciated performances of 'Dumble the Dinosaur' were given. Assessment and recording is based on key stage level descriptors. The school has identified that assessment needs to be further developed.

147. The coordinator has an appropriate level of knowledge and understanding and has attended the relevant courses. She monitors planning. The school is in the process of changing from a heavy dependence on programmes such as 'Time and Tune' to a scheme which is more teacher led. Whole staff inset for the new approach had to be postponed by the course deliverer. The coordinator has, however, used her initiative and made a start by providing some inset for the other Year 2 teacher and the Year 1 teachers, who now use the new scheme. Resources are adequate to meet curriculum requirements. They include some music from other cultures such as the songs in 'Mango Spice' and, for pupils to listen to, Buddhist Chanting and Moslem Call to Prayer. The school has appropriately identified a need to add to existing resources by purchasing more instruments, CDs and songbooks to support teaching about other cultures.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

148. The previous report stated that attainment at both age seven and age nine was satisfactory with some above average achievement. This is still the case. By the age of seven pupils have made satisfactory progress and their achievements are in line with national expectations. They continue to make satisfactory progress and when they leave the school at age nine standards are also in line with the achievements of other children of their age..
149. In Key Stage 1 pupils learn to change independently and without fuss for P.E. Transition from class to the hall or to the playground is generally done quietly and sensibly. Activities promote the development of coordination skills that enable them to move safely and with control at different speeds. Jumping with two feet together they can move in different directions and land quietly. Also they can hop on either foot in and out of hoops placed on the floor. They can throw and catch a ball with two hands. In Year 1 lessons pupils make good progress in bowling a ball underarm. They are able to bowl the ball at a bench and catch the ball as it returns. They are also able to bowl a ball reasonably accurately to a partner. Year 2 pupils learn to catch with two hands and one hand. Most can throw a ball in the air and let it bounce before catching. Girls generally perform the activities in a more controlled way than boys.
150. By the time pupils reach the age of nine skills used in games are further developed. In a Year 4 lesson most pupils were able to throw a ball up then catch it using two hands in a downward cradle. Most could also throw a ball up and catch with one hand. One boy had very good skills and could throw the ball high and catch with either hand with some facility. Pupils work well as individuals and in pairs and small groups.
151. Pupils go to Tynemouth Pool for weekly swimming lessons from the February half term in Year 3 to the February half term in Year 4. The level of attainment in swimming is good. Of the pupils currently in Y4 almost half can swim at least 25 metres (the level required of pupils by the age of eleven) and of these some can swim several hundred metres. A further seven pupils can swim at least 20 metres. In a Year 3 lesson, pupils who have only had swimming lessons for six weeks, made good progress. Pupils in both pools showed confidence when learning to swim on their backs with the help of a float. About 40 per cent of Year 3 can already swim at least 10 metres and are taught in the main pool.

152. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, have a good attitude. They are interested, listen to instructions and try hard to do what is asked of them. Behaviour is never less than satisfactory and is good overall.
153. Teaching is never less than satisfactory and in Key Stage 1 is occasionally good. Lesson planning is satisfactory with appropriate activities and resources to develop the skills identified in the lesson objectives. The needs of pupils with special educational needs are identified in lesson plans. This helps to ensure these pupils make progress within the lesson. The warm up activities do not always lead in to the main activities and there is a need for more refined progression in them. Teachers are particularly conscious of the safety aspects, particularly in ensuring that pupils remove any jewellery before the lesson. In one lesson the teacher set a very good example by removing her earrings and necklace and placing them in the same drawer as the children were using for safe keeping during the lesson. Assessment of individual achievement and progress needs to be developed.
154. Resources, including small and large apparatus and music for dance, are satisfactory for the delivery of the curriculum. The new storage trolleys in the hall for small apparatus facilitate the orderly collection and return of, for example, ball and hoops by pupils. The hall is sufficiently spacious, though not good acoustically. The playground and field are of a good size for outdoor physical education lessons. Occasionally outside specialists come in to support the teaching, for example with rugby. The teaching of swimming is carried out by the qualified swimming instructors at Tynemouth Pool. A parent with the Preliminary Swimming Teaching Certificate helps on a regular basis.
155. Extra-curricular provision is limited to a lunch-time PE club and a lunch-time football club. Pupils do, however, participate in multi-sports day for first schools at the middle school in the summer term. They also participate in a 'Quick Cricket' tournament at Tynemouth Cricket Club.
156. The coordinator has a cricket coaching qualification and is keen to add further qualifications when the opportunity arises. She monitors planning and has a clear view of the needs of the subject and priorities the school should address. These include inset for all staff on the dance element of the curriculum, a review of the scheme of work and guidelines to meet new requirements and the development assessment procedures for individual pupils.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

157. It was only possible to observe two lessons during the inspection. However, an examination of pupils' work, displays in the classroom and a discussion with the subject co-ordinator, all indicate that the pupils are achieving the expected standards. By the end of Key Stage 1, and by the age of nine in Key Stage 2, pupils have an effective working knowledge of the themes contained within the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils make satisfactory progress and have skills which enable them to relate what they learn in religious education to their own life and experience. This fully meets the requirements for pupils to learn about and from religion. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress against the targets set for them and pupils with English as an additional language make good progress in lessons.

158. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 learn about the life of Jesus and the effect His life had on people, including the story of Jairius's daughter. They listen to creation stories, talk about moral issues relevant to their own lives and celebrate special events in the Christian calendar. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have learnt that the Bible is a special book to Christians and have been introduced to Judaism and the celebration of the Passover.
159. In Key Stage 2, pupils in Year 3 learn about the life of the Buddha and appreciate that he was not a god. They learn about the Buddhist *eight-fold path* to enlightenment and in their studies, make links with geography in their work on India. Links with literacy are made as pupils prepare to interview the Buddha in the style of a BBC reporter. In their work on world religions, a Year 3 class learnt about the Hindu festival of Raksha Bandham, with pupils making bracelets to give to special relations. In Year 4, pupils study people who have changed their lives to care for others, for example Mother Teresa of Calcutta and the former singer, Cat Stevens.
160. All pupils make sound progress in religious education. They cover a range of work, building up their knowledge and understanding of Christianity and major world religions. Pupils respond well to their lessons and their attitude to learning is good. Pupils listen with respect to the views and opinions of others and their behaviour in class is good.
161. Teaching of religious education is good. Planning for lessons is thorough and resources are used effectively to develop interest, knowledge and understanding. Teachers make good links with other curriculum areas, for example in one lesson both Indian music and the use of the computer made a positive impact on the pupils' enjoyment of the lesson. Teachers ensure that moral, social and cultural issues are discussed, and enable pupils to explore their feelings. The daily act of collective worship makes a useful contribution to the religious education of pupils. They incorporate singing and prayer and give pupils the opportunity to think about moral issues.
162. The subject co-ordinator provides satisfactory leadership. She monitors teacher's planning and pupil's work, but no observation of teaching takes place as part of her role. Resources for the subject are satisfactory, but at the moment, no visits to local churches are made and therefore an opportunity enabling pupils to gain first hand learning experiences is lost. Visitors are encouraged however, and the pupils will shortly benefit from a visit by two Buddhists in the local community. Formal assessment of pupils' work does not take place at the moment and therefore the co-ordinator lacks an informed view on standards.